

# DEPRAVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The reason why people catch demons instead of opening the bright mirror wisdom when they begin to meditate is because their precepts are not solid, that is to say, their moral foundation is not firm. And the reason why morality is not solid, it seems, is because education doesn't do its job. The Venerable Abbot recently made a public statement on education. It points to the root cause of why so many people today are subject to deviant influences and why this is so strong now in the world, especially in the United States. Two places in the Statement I find particularly accurate and pertinent:

*Students are enticed to go along with the crowd and become involved in impure practices until they sink lower and lower into moral and spiritual depravity. In fact, students are openly encouraged to kill, set fires, steal, rob, use drugs, test out all forms of contraceptive devices, engage in sexual promiscuity, and casually seek abortions. Such activities are common among most youth of today because they are condoned or even advocated in all levels of the educational system .*

In a later passage is the statement:

*Although some educators try hard to give their students a proper foundation in learning, there are others who abuse their right as educators to the point of offering statistical data to support their students' involvement in corrupt and vile practices and who publicly endorse their students' immoral behavior. The result is that, before these young people ever get a chance to learn wisdom, they learn to be upside down instead.*

This certainly agrees with my university experiences. The statement is not the least bit exaggerated. When I was in the university in the 60's as a student, some professors posed as high-priest gurus. For example, a certain Harvard professor came to the university and thousands of students went to listen to this man talk. He came out on the stage dressed in long white robes and sat down in full lotus position in the middle of the stage. He proceeded to entrance everyone by speaking the "LSD Sutra," which was "turn on, tune in, and drop out." He was saying that the real world, the enlightened world, could be found through taking acid and other drugs. At the same time his cohort, another professor from a top university in this country, went to India, changed his name, and published a book combining the aspects of drug-taking and meditation. At that time, also in university circles, it was popular to read books by a certain scientist who condoned and encouraged people to take mescaline and drugs to experience the ultimate realities. Not only that, in the hospitals where I worked, the university's research was conducted on patients. LSD and mescaline were being used to try to cure alcoholism and mental diseases. Doctors even gave these drugs to terminally ill patients with the hope

of getting them to "experience enlightenment" before they went to death. Not only that, but one of the top government-awarded professors, who was doing research on monkeys, was a hopeless alcoholic--a fact which greatly influenced his students. Also there was one professor--quite young and popular--who would lecture to his psychology class while tripping on acid, and in this way influenced a lot of young people to feel that tripping was really "out of sight."

On an even more subtle level, there were many professors at this time, especially younger ones, who were openly pushing for liberalization of what they called "crimes without victims." This was very popular in sociology, especially. The crimes they said that didn't have victims were abortion, gambling, and prostitution. Now the list has expanded to include taking marijuana and engaging in homosexuality. This was going on in the classrooms and students were pumped full of statistical information and data supporting abortions, gambling, prostitution, and the taking of drugs.

This same type of content was used in the counseling system. The counselors were unofficially informed about the use of birth control devices and about where to get abortions. It was their job to encourage students to be liberal regarding the use of drugs and eventually to push for coed dormitories. Now I understand that this is official in many universities. As a result of the shift to coed living on the campus of the university I attended, in a very short time, a huge abortion clinic opened right on the edge of campus where thousands of abortions were performed yearly. Then the university clinic, in response to the shift in students' lifestyles, had to start a roaming medical clinic to take care of the hepatitis and venereal diseases that were breaking out in the student community because young people were becoming more and more liberal. These facts coincide exactly with what the Master describes in his statement.

This type of moral depravity has all sorts of branches. For example, it quickly spread into radical politics. Students became very unfilial--they were encouraged to be unfilial, and especially to be unpatriotic, in just the ways the Abbot describes in his statement--*"openly encouraged to kill, set fires, steal, rob,"* and commit all kinds of immoral acts. The classes in my university encouraged this kind of revolutionary thinking, which eventually led to sit-ins and demonstrations.

Some students first of all burned down a huge supermarket--just because they didn't like the politics of the store. They thought it was too conservative. Next they tried to drop a bomb on an ammunition factory outside the city from a smallcraft airplane. Finally, they succeeded in blowing up a huge campus building and killing an innocent graduate student who was also a father. One of the reasons these incidents took place is because there was a professor encouraging them. I know of many people who went to the first sit-in and as they sat there, some of them had doubts about what they were doing, but then that professor came and made it seem like it was legitimate, so the students went along with it. Of course very few people at the time knew that this professor was homosexual besides. And so it gets really messy.

The point I am trying to make is that such experiences are not uncommon or atypical of what goes on in most people's university experiences. Probably it's worst in the better

universities. The better the university, the easier it is for a person to follow evil advisors and get "possessed" by these totally deviant and upside-down influences.

I want to tell a story about one man who came out while we were on our bowing pilgrimage--someone who had gone through this kind of university setting and had been really damaged by it. He liked to meditate, but his method of meditation was to take drugs, especially acid, and go to the mountains. He was married and the father of three children. One time he came out of the mountains while still "tripping" and found us bowing on the coast highway. He came up to talk to me. At the time he was totally confused and full of hate. In the course of the few minutes he talked, he called his parents mass murderers, indicated that his business was a mess and that his family situation was also bad. For instance, on that occasion he had taken his three-year old son with him to the mountains while he tripped on acid and as we stood and talked, he denounced the child to his face and threatened to disown him in one breath and then turned around and admitted to thoughts of incest. That was how confused he was, yet he thought he was enlightened. He asked us, basically, what Buddhism stood for. We told him about the five precepts and he kind of shrugged it off and went home. But the next day he came back and said, "You know, I contemplated those five precepts you told me about last night and I had the most peaceful and clear night of my life. Moreover, as I thought about them, I remembered back to how all my troubles and confusion began during my student days when I started taking drugs in Colorado. Where can I find out more about these precepts?"

We gave him the addresses of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and Gold Mountain Monastery. About seven months later, he stopped again with his family. You wouldn't have recognized him. He was so clear and together and the family was so peaceful. His children were filial, secure, and happy. His business had picked up and he was no longer in debt. He had made amends with his parents and he said, "I can't tell you what a big difference in my life that book I got from the monastery has made. It changed everything around. I'll be forever grateful."

We asked him, "What book did you get from the monastery?"

He said, "I got that one called *Vinaya and Rules of Deportment*." That book is just the ancient, eternal rules of morality that the Buddha laid down.

So the point is that people catch demonic states because when they start to meditate their foundation in morality isn't firm. And by this Statement on Education, the Abbot is pointing out one of the major sources of immorality that young people are exposed to. His statement is right on the mark. Now the situation I've just described which was taking place in higher education a few years back, has already crept down to the high school level and even into the grade schools. Unless we do something quickly about it, it will be too late.