

What Do You Think

Conducted by
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At the outset, that big chunk of humanity called the HOI POLLOI must be apprised of the fact that we are gunning for the hornet's nest. Secularism to be precise. And just to show that we mean business, we aim to rattle that dogmatic bugaboo even if we are stung on the nose. Or, if you prefer another way of gabbing, we have a feeling some people will be mighty eager to upset the applecart again. And so, if monkey wrenches come wanging in our direction, we don't have to skeedaddle like we are wont to do, eh? Let all the monkeys do the monkey business but we will hang on to our bananas.

But first . . . an explanation is in order. Here's a morsel for Peeping

Tom:

To set the record straight, we are retrieving the nation of religious education from the trashcan because we were yanked out of dreamland when Congressman Miguel Cuenco, a Papal awardee, disclosed that Godless education has proved to be a colossal fiasco! Right Congressman? Well, we don't relish the idea of napping while we have the whole of a problem in our midst. If growling or sniveling can help our fighting congressman in his crusade, he can be sure that we will growl and snivel like nobody's business.

We had to undergo a lot of pawling, prying and rubber-necking into other people's business before we could find out who kicks land who wants to have his face on paper! At any rate, here's what they say:

— About Religious Instruction in All Schools —

● **Esperanza Fiel** — College of Liberal Arts says: There should be no more misgivings ament the fact that there is a pressing need for a reevaluation of morality in its true perspective and standard. Man simply has to be man enough to wake up to the fact that he has gone backpedalling in his concept of right and wrong. Under a morality gone haywire, man grobs anything that suits his fancy even if he has to stub other people's corns. But who is to put morality back to where it should be? Surely, not brother Joey Stalin! He is one dang yoke!



Esperanza Fiel

who messes around with things. So why don't we acquiesce to religious education to resolve our quandary?

● **Nick Añano** — Pre-Law Class President, says: Religious education presents ideals worth living



Nick Añano

for. There are so many sadsacks in this cock-eyed world today because there are scores and scores of people who have nothing to live for except their pocketbooks or perhaps their stomachs. Well, their pocketbooks are prone to undergo relentless laxations and their stomachs are in no way a palladium against occasional annoyances of hunger. There is only one millionaire that I know of who knows neither depression nor hunger — God!

● **Ophelia Bajamonde** — Home Economics. Says: Times and events have proved that neither the hangman's noose nor the electric chair have mitigated the

callousness sported by hard-bitten criminals. Personally, I think these methods are a backward step in civilization. What is really needed to soltten man's stubbornness is an environment



Ophelia Bajamonde

where the air of Godliness permeates. Such environment will give man's poor soul a chance to grow. This means Godliness from the cradle, through religious education, then to a cold, cold grave.

● **Leonora Penserga** — Pharmacy, says: Essentially and basically, man is good in spite of his foibles so that religion is never a pressure brought to bear upon him. On the contrary, it fulfills



Leonora Penserga

and complements a nature already destined for Him. So . . . there is neither rhyme nor reason
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"Lina, please come down. Let's meet the fishermen. Mother wants me to buy some **bindingen**."

Hand in hand the two either run or skip spritlike toward the beach, with the lightness and agility characteristic of vibrant adolescence.

Once on the seashore they would eagerly watch the approach of bancas, getting a better view of an exquisite picture.

After making their purchase, the little girls would still have time to wander on the beach. To feel the salty sand under their feet. The sun, a golden yellow, still was low in the eastern sky. And they would hang their baskets on a branch and race the length of the beach to the old schoolhouse. Scattered all over the beach were pretty, lovely, sea things. Shells aplenty. Shells horny and smooth. The sparkling sea water, shiny stones, and the deep blue sea.

Bertha used to be her classmate in the old days. There was that particular afternoon of long ago when darkness pervaded the mossy walls of the old schoolhouse. It was raining hard outside. The pupils submitted to the sullen atmosphere by crumpling their arms over their breasts, bringing their legs together to preserve so much body heat as possible. The door slammed open letting in a cold rush of wind. From the door emerged the dripping figure of Bertha.

"Bertha!" their teacher exclaimed. "How could you come in this rain?" But Bertha was unmoving. Tiny streams of rain water rolled from her bare legs on to the concrete pavement.

"Go back home, Bertha, and change into something dry and warm. Come back when the rain stops."

For her part, Lina understood the gnawing bitterness in Bertha's little heart at that moment. She knew how poor Bertha was. In their house, there was almost nothing she could wear to school. Poverty stalked in their dilapidated dwelling. In such a home Bertha lived a part of a large but indigent family.

Other girls were buoyant and gay, Bertha was seldom that. It was Lina who gave her gaiety and laughter with her companionship.

One day Lina learned her family was returning to the City. With much effort she told Bertha her sad story. "You will soon forget me,

Lina, because I am poor," Bertha sobbed.

"No, Bertha, no." I won't forget you. Never. Please don't cry anymore, Lina said as she embraced her passionately.

The last time she saw her, Bertha was standing near the bend, the wind blowing her curly black hair. Her tear-stained face was grave with sorrow.

There were times when Lina would dream of her. In her dreams Bertha would smile at her and showed her slimy, black-dotted jelly fish. How Lina would struggle to reach for Bertha's extended hand, only to awaken, that she had slipped from her clutches as slippery as the jelly fish she held.

From an adjoining room a key was turned. The clacking gave Lina a start: Other teachers were going home. Slowly she made for the door and left for lunch.

That afternoon, a senile looking woman came — leading Julito into the room.

"Good afternoon, Miss Rico," the woman greeted Lina. "Julito is my grandson. I'm taking care of him . . ." She faltered, searching her mind for the next words. Faint ripples twitched around her mouth, while her frail body shook momentarily.

"He was my son. The boy's father was my son. Honest, Miss, Bertha's husband didn't kill that man! I knew it all along. We can not fight a case in court without money. Cold money!"

"Bertha is dead, Miss. Poor child! A broken heart . . ."

Lina was not prepared for it. It struck her hard. To her the world seemed to have snapped from its orbit. Suddenly she gained composure.

"I'm sorry," Lina sighed, her voice sounded strange.

THE MOVIE MANIAC . . .

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I'm sure she won't forget or neglect to mention the boys who unflinchingly put up their feet on the back of the seat in front of them; or the inveterate chain smoker. Of the men, the most enthusiastic and omnipresent is the whistler or the clapper or shouter who whistles, shouts, or claps indignantly when the reel suddenly stops. Brother,

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in divorcing education from religion because if the former aims at man's physical or intellectual perfection the latter tends to enrich and harness his spiritual potentialities. Education and religion as one will undoubtedly cure man of the moral astigmatism which has disquieted him in the past.

● **Joe Ricamora** — College of Liberal Arts, says: I think its time we clamp down on the superfluity of youth by instituting religious education. It will do a lot towards tempering a youth gone wild in regard to sensualism and lempérance. A generation drunk



Joe Ricamora

with inordinate desires for material things but famished of God is a generation gone to the dogs. Well, before we are dumped into the kennel and while we can still help not joining the canines, let us do away with our sluggish systems and join hands in sweeping the cobwebs of indifference so that we may be nearer to God and farther from the dogs.

what a racket these guys create when the screen goes blank all of a sudden.

At the end of the film some guys inevitably turn around to look for some friends, stand up, or give forth clearly audible call whistles. This is called The Search. Others neglect to bring their own matches or lighters to ignite their butts. And these are the Pests.

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