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Spotlight on the Faculty: Harry Pratter

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When Professor Harry Pratter met with incoming freshmen this fall, he expressed his opinions about youth to them. He told them to take a critical look at what the middle class way of life is for them, and yet not neglect looking at the virtues of this life. He also told them that if they did accept the standard life styles of our society, they should open their eyes and take a good look around them.

Pratter practices the theory in the classroom that it is most important never to be dull. "I may have more humor in my teaching than is advisable," Pratter said, "but I feel it is crucially important to keep the classroom from being dull."

What he enjoys doing in his classes is in a sense indulging his philosophical interests into his courses. "Even courses that don't have intellectual and philosophical content do need to be understood in larger perspective," Pratter said.

Pratter feels the single most important moral and intellectual value is the development of "self-critical sense".

Pratter pointed out in the classroom that he was one of the few people he knew who didn't like the movie "The Graduate".

Pratter clarified his statement by saying that he really hadn't met anyone as foolish as the son was depicted. Also Pratter said, if the father was such a successful lawyer they pictured him as being terribly foolish.

"The character of the youth in "The Graduate" was such a frail symbol of youth," he said. "I refuse to believe youth from an eastern school does not even know how to register in a hotel," Pratter added.

Pratter and his wife, Maryrose have three children. Their Jewish family has always worked together, even when Pratter studies at home, it is usually in the livingroom.
The family enjoys many kinds of music, and Pratter's interest in The Doors, the Rolling Stones, the Beatles and rock music developed from his son's interest. His son will be a freshman in college in the fall.

"I liked the Beatles from the beginning," Pratter said. He also likes Billy Butterfield and some of the blues music out today. Pratter said this type of music is similar to the jazz when he was in school.

Pratter did his undergraduate work at the University of Buffalo in New York, and went to law school at the University of Chicago.

In rating I.U.'s Law School, Pratter said he felt it did not have quite the reputation that Chicago has. "Beyond four or five schools, that are mostly built on reputation, there are about 10 or 11 schools where you can get an acceptable education. I.U. is in that group, he said.

Pratter came to I.U. in 1950. He spent some time in New York working at Columbia University on sabbatical. In 1967 he spent eight months in England studying modern English linguistic philosophy. While in London Pratter used the libraries and worked with the office of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies.

Pratter is an avid sports spectator, and a member of the I.U. Athletic Committee. Pratter said he always goes to football and basketball games. "I enjoy these sports as my sons do", he said. He enjoys football, and swimming and wrestling which are his son's interest.

Pratter enjoys reading and tries to keep up with this interest. "I used to be an avid mystery book reader, now I only read them occasionally," he said. He also reads Encounter, and N.Y. Review of Books, and the New Yorker.

Pratter has many other interests outside the classroom. His main concern is young people, and he does all he can to try and understand them, and educate them as best he can as one of the "other generation".

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FEDERAL PRISON CLINIC PROGRAM
by Anthony Granucci

This semester marks the beginning of a new clinic program at the School of Law. With the approval of the Federal District Court and the Federal Bureau of Prisons, twenty first and second year law students have begun giving legal assistance to inmates of the Terre Haute Penitentiary. The program will be launched formally by a trip to the penitentiary, sponsored by the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Work has already begun, however, with a lecture series on past conviction remedies. In addition, many students have begun work on several requests for assistance which filtered into the law school during the fall. This semester's program is experimental and, if successful, may be expanded to a credit offering in the fall.

-8-