

## Generation Gap? 1972

I wonder if the students in 1972 read the Principal's Report and if they did, what they thought of it? And what would they think of it today, 19 years later?

The following is an extract from the Principal's Report in the 1972 Pylon, written by Mr A C Balfour, Principal YHS 1970-1975.

*"Our youth loves luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority, disrespect for older people: children now-a-days are tyrants. They no longer rise when their parents enter the room, they contradict their parents, chatter before company and tyrannise their teachers."*

Sounds rather familiar doesn't it? It is interesting to realise that this statement was made by Socrates, the famous Greek philosopher, some 2,500 years ago.

Young people, it seems, have changed very little. Or perhaps young people might argue that adults' views of the young have always been the same.

The generation gap is not peculiar to our times. It has existed and I daresay will continue to do so. It is almost inevitable that young and old will see each other as holding differing values. It is the expectation of the older generation that the young will conform to traditional values.

How, then, may the generation gap be narrowed – for I dare not propose that it can be closed altogether? I believe that adults need to recognise the great pressures contemporary society places on young people.

By understanding the conflicting value patterns that confront the young. By tolerance of the outward display of the superficial rejection of adult values and authoritarianism (the long hair, the jeans and what have you).

And from the young people, I would plead for understanding, patience and tolerance. Surely reject adult values that on close and intelligent examination prove to be false. Remember that parents in particular and most adults in general, act in what they believe to be the best interests of the young. Make a genuine attempt to understand and tolerate the other point of view even if you can't agree with it. And remember, one day you will be on the other side of the generation gap.