

He entered Columbia University and was requested to leave after two years, having caused a scandal of such dimensions as to land on the front pages of four New York City newspapers by publishing in *Morningside*, the college literary magazine, a blasphemous playlet depicting Jesus Christ as a homosexual. **[9]** He spent the next year, his twenty-second, doing nothing. He then announced he was going to be a poet, made a trip to Europe, visiting France and Germany, to soak up culture, and abandoned that career in a matter of months. He landed a fifteen-dollar-a-week job at the New York Public Library, as mentioned above, until he was fired for stealing library books. He talked his way back into Columbia by convincing the dean that he had decided to become a teacher of history, and then, after three months, dropped out for the second time. His transcript was endorsed: "This man should not be allowed to register in any school of this university under any name." The reason listed for this banishment: "For stealing books." **[10]**

9. *The World*, a leading newspaper of the day, gave the story a big play under this two-column head: COLUMBIA EDITOR / WROTE BLASPHEMY, / STUDENTS DECIDE. The dialogue of the playlet, "A Play for Puppets," was so shocking, *The World* reported, that "most of the dialogue cannot be reproduced." Whittaker Chambers's treatment of Jesus, *The World* said in its lead, "has given the Columbia University campus the shock of its long life."