

Channeled Spirit

The trouble with school spirit has long been big trouble at Oregon. We've seen it fought out, fact or fiction, pro or con, in practically every season. The ASUO Senate has debated its existence, real and potential, in more than a few sessions and has made numerous organizational changes in attempting to do something about the stuff.

Whether or not school spirit is the stuff of which winning teams and institutional pride are made is not important at the moment. We are interested in the effective use of that substance when it appears.

The bonfire rally last Friday night exemplified the hopes of many who champion the cause of greater student spirit. And the activities following the rally exemplified the fears of the opposite group.

To say that the battle between the three to four hundred University students and a minority representation from the Eugene Police Force was an extension of the rally spirit is undoubtedly true.

And to say that the Eugene police force officer acted a bit unwisely may well be true. If he did, as reports say, wade into the action giving the "tough guy" impression that he would break up everything himself, he certainly was demonstrating a fundamental lack of knowledge of how to handle college students—especially in a near-mob situation.

But recognizing this mistake on the officer's part does not excuse the actions of the students in damaging his car and taking his equipment, although it may have been a "natural" reaction.

It would be easy to lay the blame at the feet of the Rally Board, claiming that they should have made provisions for a street dance or some other activity which had been cleared in advance. But this type of criticism cannot be too valid because the Rally Board certainly had no idea that this difficulty would follow the rally—probably no more of an idea than did most of the "riot" participants. And if something had been planned to direct this possible excess spirit into more reasonable channels, there is certainly no indication that it would have stayed there or even gone there in the first place; spirit is like that.

Then what can be done? Supposedly the matter has been turned over to the student body—in this case, ASUO President Jim

Lynch—for action as far as payment of damages is concerned. This payment should be made immediately, and Lynch should direct the Rally Board or take action himself, if it has not already been done, to apologize for the mob-fever damage of a few. This is not only proper, it is essential to any sort of continued good public relations with the Eugene police.

Secondly, the Rally Board should, taking this incident as a lesson, provide for some sort of a "cooling off" activity following future rallies—clearing everything with the police and asking their cooperation in proper direction of the spirit with something less than "tough guy" tactics.

Finally, the Rally Board must provide real leadership in these situations—formal or informal—as they develop throughout the remainder of the season. We are bound to have more of this spirit in one form or another if Oregon's successes continue on the football field. It is up to the Rally Board to make effective use of this through better leadership than has been demonstrated to date—even if it must go outside its own ranks to recruit the assistance of house presidents or the Order of the O.

Timely Topics

The first speaker of this year's Condon Lecture series has an extremely timely topic to present. Otto Struve (the second Russian-born scientist to speak at the University this month) will discuss "The Solar System" today and "Evolution of Stars and Galaxies" on Thursday.

We know that his topics must have been selected well before Sputnik hit the headlines, but what started out as dry science has now become immediate—almost newsy.

Before Sputnik, most students had no more interest in the heavens than an occasional reference to the full moon as seen from Skinner's Butte. But the "space fever" that is sweeping the country as a result of that little ball of metal up there has hit the campus. This was demonstrated two weeks ago when hundreds of students packed the S.U. ballroom to hear George Gamov speak on the origins of the universe.

We predict similar crowds for Dr. Struve's illustrated lectures—better get your seat early.

Editors Discuss Integration

(ACP)—Integration, a page one subject across America these days, gets lots of space in the college press.

Dave Palmeter expresses one view in the Syracuse Daily Orange:

"We fully realize that integration must be gradual. The Southern Negro, for the most part, has a very low standard of living and if the schools are all at once predominantly Negro catastrophic results could occur.

"But those who scream about

this should realize that the low standard of living, the results of which they abhor, is a direct result of lack of education and implied inferiority written into the law.

"Sacrifices are going to have to be made. What of the intelligent Negro who is denied the opportunity to the fullest extent his capabilities.

"Gov. Orval Faubus' stupid action is no answer. Gov. Frank Clement of Tennessee last year hit the nail on the head.

"He fully agreed, a year ago, with Faubus' contention that it is the sworn duty of the governor of a state to maintain the peace—but he went one step further...

"Clement used the National Guard to maintain the peace and enforce the law. Troops were available to see that integration went off smoothly, not to prevent it..."

Editors of Southern Illinois University's Egyptian urged their school's athletic administration to cancel the contract to compete with Arkansas State after a post-football game fight last month.

The fight was "undoubtedly precipitated in part by Arkansas' feeling on integration matters," the paper said. "The clash apparently stemmed from the slugging of star SIU lineman Willie Brown, a Negro, at the game's end."

Arkansas students are saddened by what the Little Rock events will do to their state. (They're not forgetting the hurt

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It's Got Body, Though



"If ya ask me - it has always had a 'funny' taste."

William Cook

Most Unpopular Course Is Actually Most Valuable

The most unpopular course in the University curriculum—at least among freshmen—undoubtedly is English composition. Freshmen seem to believe that composition is not only difficult to master, but what's worse, that it's not worth mastering.

English composition is designed to teach students the techniques of formal writing. To write formal English, students must know, or must be taught, the rules which govern the use of our rather difficult language. But students feel no need to learn to write and use formal English.

We have all heard—or maybe we've said it ourselves—that "composition will never do me any good...I'll never use it...I don't like to write that way...all we write in comp is stuff we make up...my other courses are more important..."

But we have also all heard professors complain after essay tests that "you people don't know how to write and that's one reason your grades on my tests aren't higher."

This is a key to the necessity and value of skill in English composition. Good ideas can be easily lost or corrupted beyond recognition through unskilled use of the language. Even the formation of ideas depends on language, for we think in words and sentences. The more skilled we are with the language, the more complex are the thoughts we can formulate and understand.

It's true that little of our writing and speaking is formal English. But skill in formal writing is the backbone of all our use of the language. Once we have facility with formal English, we can more easily speak and write effectively in any situation.

Even in everyday conversation, the habits which can be learned in composition are valuable. Sloppy and improper English marks a person as dull or uneducated—certainly not the marks of an university-trained person.

It's not hard to see why most students are not more interested in learning to speak and write proper English. Our grade and high schools do not seriously try to teach formal English. This is one reason why English composition in colleges is so unpopular. Composition instructors must start virtually from scratch to cover much subject matter in a short year since most students have had so little previous training.

Popular heroes of the entertainment world often use ungrammatical English, and make fortunes doing it. Advertisers are prime and obvious offenders. "Winston tastes good LIKE a cigaret should" is a notable example of this. And popular songs are often ungrammatical.

These influences on students (and everyone else) make proper English a not-too-important goal, and make English composition seem terribly unimportant.

But some of the blame for the unpopularity of English composition must be shared by those who teach it. Composition instructors often fail to impress their students with the vital necessity of their subject—an important factor in motivation. Composition is a required course, so instructors evidently feel no necessity for "selling" their courses to students.

Composition instructors also tend to regard the writing exercises they require of students as ends in themselves. Too often instructors don't teach composition as a means of expressing ideas and feelings in the best possible way, but merely as drills in developing writing skills.

Within the confines of formal English, widely different treatments may be given particular ideas. But students fail to realize this when composition is taught as stylized exercises.

The University cannot do much about a student's pre-college training or about the various influences which turn him from proper English usage. But once a student reaches the University, he should be given every opportunity to develop his skill in handling words and ideas.

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