

## Too much violence at weekend parties

Last week, some University students received a letter mailed out by the ASUO. In it, ASUO President Andy Clark, University President Myles Brand, and Eugene Deputy Chief of Police John Rutledge responded to an increasing rift between students and police.

Several inserts were included in the mailout. One gave a list of how to throw a "great" party. Another tried to dispel some "myths" about police responses to parties. During the first two semesters of the 1989-90 school year there were several controversies over a recent increase of police crackdowns, particularly along 13th Avenue.

While this letter was not supposed to have a timely significance, it gained sudden relevance Saturday night when police used tear gas to break up two parties in the University area. There is almost an eerie coincidence between the ASUO letter and the two riots.

Most Eugene Police Department officials will not peg the increase in police activity to any one particular event, or even admit that there had been a recent "crackdown" among University students. However, the evidence is pretty conclusive. The local police have become touch-sensitive in recent months: first after the winter '88 snowball-fight fiasco, then again following last May's riot.

The ASUO letter has been criticized for pandering to the police department by concentrating on what they can do and ignoring students' rights. This sentiment has also been echoed in letters to this section, in which the EPD has been compared to everything short of the Gestapo.

EPD officials maintain they are following normal police procedures in regards to crowd control, and defend the use of tear gas on Saturday night. As can be expected, students have expressed outrage at what they consider an "excessive" use of force, without sufficient warning.

Who is right?

In cases like these, the lines between right and wrong blur. Neither the police or the students are totally to blame, or completely innocent. Subjecting parties to tear-gas attacks is overkill, and heaving beer bottles at patrol cars is just plain stupid. Neither action contributed to better student-police relations.

The events of Saturday night are still unclear, but whether police gave warnings before they fired tear gas, or the party warranted such an attack is moot. Both sides needed to show a little more maturity in their actions, and refrain from escalating potential riot situations.

The solution is communication. By talking, perhaps students and police can work out the recent problems. A good place to start would be the ASUO-sponsored forum, on April 11 at 3:30 p.m. in the EMU's Ben Linder Room.



## Toxic dump doesn't trump research park

The discovery of toxic chemicals dumped 20 years ago at the site of the planned Riverfront Research Park has done nothing to deter the University's plans to go ahead with construction. Opponents of the research park hoped to use news of the toxic dump as damning ammunition in their campaign to stop the park from being built, but their efforts haven't succeeded.

City attorney Tim Sercombe denied the request of park opponents to hold a public hearing regarding the dump and its implications for the future of the research park. And despite the questions regarding the University's role in the dump — and allegations of a cover-up by Dan Williams — the institution remains committed to breaking ground soon.

The decisions reached by Sercombe and the University are the correct ones. When one gets down to it, the discovery of toxics at the site has little to do in deciding the future use of the riverfront land owned by the University. After the dump is cleaned up, the land can then be developed at whim. The dump doesn't magically sanctify the riverfront land area by its presence.

The existence of the toxic dump also fails to validate claims that the University will continue to be careless in how it uses the land. The dumpings were made before

the research park was ever dreamed up. The dumps were certainly made at a time when the University did little to consider the hazards and ramifications of what it was doing, undoubtedly because there was little value attached to the site.

Now that the riverfront plot has become desirable, the University will take better care of its investment. Rather than questioning what happened 20 years ago, park opponents would do better to question how the University plans to use the land site now. On this matter, they've had some success in the past, saving the soccer field and the Silva Orchard from construction in the latest park proposal.

Lacking a valid argument in the dump itself to halt construction, park opponents have made better use of the bewildering reaction by some University officials to the dump's discovery to raise concerns about the park.

But again, opponents are missing the real question here. What Dan Williams did as news of the dump was revealed, and whether he was dishonest or incompetent as some allege, is a very small part of the total Riverfront Research Park story. Because opponents have failed to prove a larger University conspiracy in the dump, there's no reason to deny the University its opportunity to go ahead with development.

## Letters

### Imitations

In 1863, the year following the Emancipation Proclamation, vicious rioting broke out in New York in reaction against the North's recently-imposed military draft. The riots were largely an expression of fury over the idea of fighting a war for "nigger" freedom. Upon hearing of this, President Lincoln wondered, "Are we degenerate? Has the manhood of our race run out?"

Lincoln's anguished question reveal a concept of "manhood" that I find intriguing, both in his historic context, and in ours. Then, manhood was equated with certain character traits, including moral courage, personal responsibility and selflessness.

Do such traits have any relevancy today? Are honor and decency essential to our definition of "real men," or is manhood now merely a matter of becoming old enough to "go

for the gusto" and grab all you can?

Does a "real man" value "fun" and things above all else? Does he treat a woman as a sexual object, using her to gratify his desires and then abandoning her? Or coerce a woman into getting an abortion because he doesn't want to assume parental responsibility for the child he has fathered?

If we dare to look honestly, haven't we allowed the welfare of others, including our own families and the very lives of our children, to become expendable in our pursuit of immediate gratification and personal fulfillment?

Is this acceptable? Are we content being lightweight, morally-stunted imitations of men? We were surely made for greater things. May God grant that we seek them.

William Moore  
Music staff

### Wrong

I read with great interest Lt. Tom Brett's comments in the April 2 *Register-Guard* regarding the tear-gassing of the party on 14th and Mill on Saturday night, and those of us who were there can tell you that most of what he says is wrong.

Brett says: "The officers at the scene did give warning that chemicals would be used if anything was thrown." Wrong. No loud warnings, no bullhorns, zero.

He said "... a second warning was given after some people had thrown objects at officers. The throwing continued, and it continued at a greater rate. Wrong. One idiot threw one bottle, then Eugene's finest stormed at the crowd in full riot gear with tear gas flying, without warning.

The party occurred in a walled, three-sided courtyard with the fourth side, the only open and available exit, partial-

ly blocked by parked cars, and the EPD is very lucky that someone wasn't seriously hurt in the ensuing panic to get the hell out of there.

I'll admit that the party was a little loud, and that after last year's bottle-throwing fracas on 14th and Ferry, relations may be a bit strained between our neighborhood and the EPD. But is that an excuse for the Gestapo tactics used Saturday night on a bunch of people drinking a few beers and listening to a live band?

What next, tear gas the crowd in front of the University bookstore for blocking the bike path?

Steve Buck  
Eugene

### Open door

Congratulations to Steve Maples and Diane Cushman for being a set of ASUO candidates

stressing "open-door policies." I feel this is very important on a campus as large as the University.

Maples and Cushman truly impressed me as being down-to-earth people who want the students to play a larger role in campus decisions. Past presidents and vice presidents have been virtually invisible after the campaign, and you never here from them.

Maples and Cushman have made a big point to open their doors and seek out other doors of communication. Their meeting at Rennie's allowed me to get to know them as students and not simply candidates. I appreciate their efforts and hope their campaign is a success. They have my vote for open doors and student involvement.

Susie Bodman  
Journalism