

Campus lacks common cause



OUR OPINION: The decline in protests at the University reflects a change in society and strategy for enacting change, not apathy

There's nothing quite like a good old-fashioned sit-in. That's what students at the University of Massachusetts learned last week when their protest for greater minority enrollment ended, drawing national recognition.

"United we fought, together we did this," student government president Maurice Caston-Powe declared as he and 300 other students emerged from a school building they had taken over for their six-day sit-in.

It was a protest reminiscent of the 1960s. A united student body taking drastic actions to accomplish a common goal. It wasn't too long ago that protests like this were common at our University as well. What happened?

It certainly isn't true that students today are completely satisfied with what's going on at the University and in the world. From human rights to the environment, there are plenty of issues that students feel strongly about. But large-scale

protests like the one in Massachusetts are increasingly rare these days.

That doesn't necessarily mean that students here care less than students in New England or students of the '60s. Things are just different here. First of all, students are finding smarter ways to change policies. A large-scale protest is dramatic, but it may not be as effective as lobbying policy makers and organizations with the power to make change.

Also, the fact that today's problems don't often turn into large-scale protests is a reflection of the general receptiveness of our administration to students' needs. While not everyone will agree with their decisions, our administrators are generally willing to hear students out and try and reach agreements in a way higher-ups at other universities aren't.

However, the most important reason we don't see large-scale protests today is that there isn't one all-uniting cause for students to rally around. Today, there is no single issue like the Vietnam War that motivates everyone. Instead we have a variety of smaller issues, each with its own group of students fighting for it.

For instance, MEChA has concentrated on a Gardenburger boycott, while USSA is fighting for a tu-

ition freeze. There are student groups that focus on the environment, groups that focus on gay rights, groups that specialize in religious rights and literally hundreds more.

What this means is instead of getting large numbers of students all engaged in one struggle, we have small groups who dedicate all their time to specific issues. This makes it less likely that a student-wide protest will emerge in support of any one issue. This isn't a bad thing; it just means that with the large variety of issues students are engaged in today, huge protests simply aren't the most effective way of enacting change.

Our University has a reputation for being one of the most politically active in the country. Just because students haven't seized Johnson Hall in protest doesn't mean they aren't actively fighting for change.

If an issue does arise that can unite the entire student body, it wouldn't be surprising if we see more protests at the University. Until that does happen though, don't look for students to riot in the streets anytime soon.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board.

LETTERS

Footnotes in danger

I am disappointed in Angie Suchy's portrayal of Footnotes (*ODE*, March 11). The article presented an erroneous perspective and perpetrated an inaccurate depiction of the EMUB-Footnotes space situation.

The mysterious "threats" mentioned in Suchy's article were simple reminders that EMUB members are in political office and can be voted out. Members who struggle with the pitfalls of political life must ultimately determine whether these reminders are tolerable to them.

The fact is that Footnotes is the one whose life has been threatened! Several members of the EMU Board have threatened to kick us out of the EMU, to double our rent and to put us in 200 square feet if they even allow us to stay. In essence, to get rid of us.

As students, you have a right to be disgusted that one of these student representatives has the audacity to use Footnotes herself and to cry "personal attack" when she was denied her notes for one day.

Despite all the adversity, we remain committed to our 30-year mission of providing high-quality jobs and learning support services to students. We continue to emphasize the positive effects of Footnotes on students and to attempt to negotiate a

workable solution to the space problem — one that puts students, not politics, first.

We appreciate the overwhelming support of the 1200-plus students who signed our petition to stay in the EMU. We look forward to your continued support and to 30 more years as a University tradition. Please take the opportunity to show your support when you vote in the spring.

Kristin King
Footnotes Coordinator

Apology is in order

I have a few things to say regarding the article in Tuesday's edition of the *Emerald* (*ODE*, March 11). Never in my life have I been so offended.

To Angie Suchy: Have you ever heard of a little something called "libel"? I think a retraction or public apology is in order. It is obvious that proper research did not take place on your part. Had you read the entire letter, you would realize that the excerpts in your article were completely out of context. Kristin King is one of the nicest people I know. Her intent with the letter was to show Jenna Wasson the value of Footnotes — not to threaten.

Footnotes is *not* threatening the EMU board — if

fact, I believe it is quite the opposite. The student employees, staff and SPI board have spent countless hours trying to work something out with the board, only to be threatened in return.

They've threatened to kick Footnotes out of the EMU completely, to double Footnotes' rent and to relegate Footnotes to a paltry 200 square feet, all the while knowing that Footnotes cannot operate in under 500 feet. The threats seem clear to me.

To Jenna Wasson: I hope the Ethics class you're taking has been educational for you. It has been my experience that learning something I know nothing about is enlightening. Don't forget to come pick up your notes for that class later!

Jennifer Lindsey
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All thumbs



Eugene athletics

Sheldon, Churchill, North Eugene and Marist High Schools all did well in last week's OSAA high school basketball championships. The Sheldon boys made it to the finals of the 4A division, and the Marist girls won the 3A championship.

Book changes

Used book markets on the World Wide Web and campus help students save money by buying and selling textbooks. Bookstores are taken out of the equation. Now students can screw each other over.



Register-Guard

The Eugene newspaper and Oregon Forest Service recently settled their dispute stemming from two Guard reporters entering restricted land. Basically, each party apologized to the other and stated they understood the opposing side. Rights of the press? Forget it. It's too much trouble.

Footnotes dispute

EMU Board members and Footnotes affiliates are both to blame for the ridiculous state of affairs in the fight for EMU space for the note-taking service. Both parties have valid concerns, but their absurd squabbling is far from justified.