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PERSPECTIVES

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Campus bar scene loses its *appeal*

There is not much of a choice for students in terms of a good all-around campus bar

Lately I've been feeling old. Well, not exactly old, but older. Maybe that is how I am supposed to feel, considering that this is my fifth year at the University of Oregon. But should this recognition of age be the worst at campus bars?

This column is a reflection of the disgust a former barfly feels when he realizes his old stomping grounds have turned in to an underage and under-mannered Abercrombie and Fitch fashion show where shoulder punches and dirty looks are just a few of the requirements needed to muscle your way to the bar for another drink.

Opinion

Aaron Artman

Message to all patrons of Taylor's Bar & Grill: We realize that your fraternity decided to go dry, but please take your immature belligerence — along with your fresh from the high school football team physique — to the dorms where your attempts to score can make somebody else keel over with laughter.

Taylor's used to be a place similar to the bar made famous by the television sitcom "Cheers." You could walk in, take a seat at a booth or the bar itself and exchange pleasantries with the bartenders before indulging in an extremely stiff drink. It should be noted that Taylor's still has the best bartenders in all of Lane County, but it is less obvious now because they also have to deal with the same annoying crowd mentioned in the previous two paragraphs.

Once seated, people watching was just one of the many ways to pass the time before the next friendly exchange with the bartender. The crowd was much more diverse back in the good ol' days. Hippies would dance with sorority girls while some 40-year-old street person saluted the band by holding up his drink and bellowing out a drunken scream.

And the live music, although grossly amateur on occasion, offered a range of styles from the whaling blues of J.C. Rico to the moving acoustic sets by the late Pete Ellis. Now patrons are lucky to see the Zoo Keepers, complete with their party hard persona that mixes 80s pop sounds with L.A. cheese. It's not sexy. It's not fun. And you sure as hell can't dance to it.

As for people watching, you can quote Al Pacino's character from "Donnie Brasco" and say, "Forget about it." There is better people watching on "Beverly Hills 90210." Well, perhaps not better, but equal in the sense that the homogeneous nature of the characters is the same. The one exception, however ironic it may be, is that there are more girls with bleached-blonde hair and suntans in Taylor's than there are in Beverly Hills.

Rennie's isn't much better, but at least you can walk up to the bar without testing your manhood.

The problem is that once you reach the bar, the wait can be long. The word hustle is definitely not in the vocabulary of the resident bartenders. Instead, some hidden agenda fueled by the ego of the bartender dictates when your request will be met.

After the exaggerated wait, make sure you request beer instead of a mixed drink. With the exception of a "Long Island" or "Rennie's Lemonade," the mixed drinks here are more mix than drink. This money-making conspiracy results in morning-afters where, unless you can strike a conversation with somebody drinking one of the above-mentioned fruity cocktails, you wake up alone with no hangover, having spent 20 more dollars than you wanted to trying to get a buzz off drinks that contain less alcohol than vanilla extract.

The campus bar scene here in Eugene offers students a dilemma. You must make a choice: Either get hammered with the juvenile and ill-mannered crowd at Taylor's, where at least you can count on the bartenders to treat you right with a stiff drink, or head to Rennie's, where winning a popularity contest plays more of a role in getting a drink than it ever did in winning a high school student body election.

My advice to all patrons of the campus bar scene: Quit fronting.

Say "excuse me" if you are bumped or somebody bumps you. It's a common courtesy, not a test of your manhood. Remember, we all have the same agenda.

If manners are too much for you, or if your toughness relies on the bar scene that much, then please stay home for the next two terms until I graduate.

There will still be plenty of time for the fashion shows and egotistical posturing after I'm gone, but at least I won't have to deal with it.

Aaron Artman is a columnist for the Emerald. His views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.

Giovanni Salimena/Emerald

Letters to the Editor

University is big business

Perhaps all those people who have such low opinions of University students would like it if we went away? (ODE "Problems result in low opinion of University students," Nov. 17). We could stop patronizing their stores, stop supporting their medical and dental facilities, stop buying food and beer from their grocery stores and stop bringing thousands of people into their town to spend gobs of money. We could also stop subsidizing their public transportation system, stop paying their rent and stop hiring hundreds of them to work at the University and city businesses. Whoever has a low opinion of University students should take a close look at their pay check and figure out how much of it is linked to the University.

The police would actually be the least happy of the bunch if we went away. Without students as an excuse, the city government might take away their little toy helmets, their shiny shields and their oh-so-neato gas canisters. After all, use it or lose it boys.

Chris O'Connor
Economics major, class of 1998

Duck Call pitfalls

I am writing to warn fellow students of the perils of using Duck Call and the precautions that should be taken when doing so. I hope that students will read this and avoid future mistakes.

After registering for my classes and attending them, I realized that one was not going to work with my schedule and proceeded to drop it via Duck Call. Then during finals week one of my professors told me that he had me marked down as being withdrawn from his class. I immediately went to the Registrar to straighten out the matter. I had to petition to reinstate the course. At that time, even after explaining my situation of how I tried to drop one class and mistakenly dropped two at the same time, the clerk did not mention to me that I was still registered for the class I had tried to drop in the first place. I found out at the end of the term when I received my grades an received an F for a class that I had never even been to. Although this was a scheduling error, both of my classes were numbered 199 so I got them confused, my petition was denied to remove the grade. I have an F on my transcript that I did not deserve to receive. I made an honest mistake.

Please be careful when using Duck Call. Even though it is incredibly tedious to sit on the phone and listen to the automated woman drone on, it will save you a lot of trouble in the long run if you pay attention.

Angie E. Valinoti
Junior in Philosophy

CORRECTION
In "Storms bring leaks, damage" (ODE, Nov. 30) Dana Winitzky should have been identified as EMU Facilities Manager.