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PERSPECTIVES

Moving on... or giving up?

College is always challenging and sometimes unpleasant, but it's worth it to hang in there

A friend of mine came up to me the other day looking as if a garbage truck had just run him down like an old and pestilent mongrel. Covered in filth, stinking like a swine. His countenance was weary, eyes red and swollen, the grim smile displaying a yellow keyboard permanently damaged by the long years of nicotine and poor brushing.

The guy looked as if he'd just got the boot from a longtime girlfriend, or maybe the ax at his high-pay job or something. But the fact is he had neither, so I figured it had to be something else.

A second later, while I'm still thinking of what to say, I capture what appears to be a tear furtively snaking its way down the prematurely tortuous features of his face.

The man was crying. "What's wrong, Kirk?" I asked, playing the righteous role of the good, sensitive and understanding friend that I am.

An eternal stillness ensued, the prick staring at the kindergarten kids across the street, his face about to burst into a river of tears. The scene was actually making me kind of sad until he finally spoke.

"I'm quitting," the miserable bastard moaned, now sobbing as if he were a little kid who had his lolly snatched by the burly, mean kiddie up the street.

"Quitting? What the hell do you mean, quitting?"

Kirk later explained. And he sounded pretty resolute, too, as if nothing in the world would ever change his mind. The

man was actually quitting.

He told me he could no longer handle the pressure, all the sleepless nights were killing him, the fees were eating up all of his money, roommates were a pain, all that story. Plus, he was suffering from this kind of life's-passing-me-by syndrome. It was his sixth year in college, all his classmates were immature, stupid grooms, he was feeling old and worn and thought he couldn't make it through another year of school.

Besides, the job opportunities after the degree weren't looking any too bright, either.

So, my good friend Kirk, after six years of school, was throwing his college career to pursue other activities. But what activities? I longed to know.

"I'm outta here ... gonna go to New York City, become a taxi driver. At least you don't have to think much."

Taxi driver? Now, nothing's wrong with the honorable profession of taxi driver, but after all these years of paper-writing, all the slogging in order to nab those attractive marks that would make his GPA look as hot and fit as those Victoria Secret girls, after all the sacrifice and money and now he was going to quit and become a cab driver?



Giorgio Salimena/Emerald

Well, weak bastard, I know.

But just like Kirk there are many others out there in whose minds the emasculate thoughts of underachievement and defeat are constantly present. And many wind up quitting. Pricks who were not strong enough to cope with all the obstacles and frustrations that have to be faced in the process of acquiring a higher education. Now, they are just like any other fat slob out there, getting off on cheap-beer sessions at the local titty club, drilling holes in the street, working the drudgery of nine-to-five or living on the dole because they were too decadent even for a crappy six-bucks-an-hour job.

Poor sods.

Now, I'm not saying I've got all the answers. If I had my way, I'd be living on a wave-soaked island in the Pacific, surf-

ing the bejesus out of my board and rolling up joints with \$100 bills. But that's not the case. And I certainly don't believe that a degree is going to sort out all of your problems. Nor do I think a corporate job in the middle of downtown is going to make you happy. But what I can't understand is those who quit. Those who have had the big chance and consciously let it go by.

Like my friend Kirk, just a year away from a degree and now U-Hauling his way up to New York City.

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

Opinion



Vince Medeiros

Letters to the Editor

Regarding the letter saying that KWVA won't play Phish or the Dead (ODE, Jan. 29), thank God they won't! We need a station that plays cool music that you can't hear anywhere else in town.

This is Eugene. You can hear those awful bands everywhere. Besides, if you want a station that the most people would enjoy, perhaps you should try one of the commercial stations so you can enjoy the Titanic soundtrack over and over (and over). Thank goodness for an independent and cool true college radio station like KWVA.

Ryder Greene
Eugene

Student support vital

The Athletic Department should have asked the Lundquist Business College about the term "opportunity cost" before announcing its new plans for raising ticket prices for students or eliminating student seats (ODE, Feb. 2). This must be a joke. The last four Oregon men's basketball games I went to, I felt incredibly dismayed

of these games by four points or less? Now, as a fan, not as a student, I would probably not buy another ticket to a Ducks game this season. When I do go to the games, unless I show up an hour and a half early, the seats I will get as a student are not that great. Now, the last game (the Arizona State game), that I attended, I noticed that about one quarter of the seats were empty.

This week, what do I read? The Athletic Department wants to raise the price for student tickets. After the Athletic Department does this, Mac Court would only be half full and would not have that "Pit" feel. Moreover, because most nonstudent fans would not want to come to the games because the Ducks are not playing well, the Athletic Department would lose money. The claim that the student seats are worth twice as much as students pay for them might be true, but back to economics, something the Athletic Department must not know much about: If the next best use for the seats is for the seats to remain unoccupied

ball games, but what is going to happen when the Ducks are not ranked in the top 20 for the entire year? The Athletic Department's entire argument for higher student ticket prices is based upon ludicrous economic assumptions. I feel sickened as a student. The players are students, and without students Oregon athletics do not exist! Without students Ducks games will be half as loud and half as exciting.

Philip Smith
Accounting/German

Boycotts voluntary

I wish that Jessie Wofsy, Kyla Schuller and all the other "anti-Gardenburger" people would stop speaking on my behalf without consulting me (ODE, Feb. 3). You see, these people keep saying that I, because I am a student, do not want Gardenburgers sold on our campus. The issue has been around for the three years that I have attended the University, and each year the tactics of some of these "anti-Gardenburger" people have frustrated me.

But I want Gardenburgers in the residence hall cafeterias when in fact Gardenburgers continued to outsell other vegetarian burgers when offered side by side on a trial basis.

Last year, some left several "programs" for senior awards scattered throughout the EMU that, when opened, contained a political message about Gardenburgers. Then when University President Dave Frohnmayer addressed the issue, they called him a racist for the innocent misuse of the word "oriental."

Yesterday, I found a similar unsigned message in the EMU about people of color and tenure at the University. Ironically, it ended with the same "Whose University is this" message found throughout Wofsy and Schuller's letter to the Emerald.

This is the second time I have written in defense of Frohnmayer because, despite claims, he has in fact addressed the Gardenburger issue. He said boycotting should be the decision of the individual, not the institution.

spent more time complaining and distributing unsigned propaganda about FLAV-R-PAC and Gardenburgers than they have educating about the real issue — exploitation of farm workers.

Although I have eaten only five to 10 Gardenburgers in my entire life, I have done so by my own choice. If people want educate others about their views, please do so; but be honest and straightforward and stop trying to pin the blame on an individual, especially on my behalf.

Erik Talbert
Journalism

LETTERS POLICY

The Oregon Daily Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be limited to 250 words. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, clarity, grammar, style and libel. Letters may be dropped off at EMU Suite 300.