

May we offer A FEW SUGGESTIONS?

The ASUO elections are over and now it's time for the Emerald editorial board to offer suggestions. Nilda Brooklyn and Joy Nair emerged the winners of the ASUO Executive race, but only after a somewhat haphazard campaign season.

Perhaps it was the shortened time span of the election, due to a hastily assembled elections board, but we were left with the impression that any real campaigning happened behind closed doors. We certainly didn't see it on the streets, with the students. Except for one or two days when the ASUO sponsored a candidates fair, and again before the election, all of the vote-for-me efforts seemed to be aimed at ASUO student groups.

A more concerted effort by all the candidates to directly engage the masses of the student body would be nice, especially as everyone talked extensively about representing every student voice. In the pages of the Emerald and in campaign literature, the idea of involving every student in the grand experiment of campus democracy was rampant.

But we saw little new and exciting ideas or campaigns to actually reach out to those students. Next year (and here's our first suggestion to the new executive) let's hope there will be enough advance planning to allow candidates to try to reconnect students with the government that distributes more than \$8 million of their money every year. In other words, do the housekeeping. Get the ASUO rules and the election rules clarified and watertight, so that next year we don't have to put up with grievances about grievances regarding misunderstood rules.

With that said, let's look ahead to more positive things. Brooklyn and Nair were very promising candidates, and we hope they will become capable leaders. Besides getting fully immersed in the rules and policies that make student government run, we'd like the new executives to focus on the campaign ideas that made them good candidates (and we have a few suggestions of our own). So Nilda and Joy, here they are:

First, it is absolutely imperative that every student group, every clique, contingent, stakeholder and "traditionally underrepresented" group feel welcome and have their concerns heard in the ASUO. This was promised during the campaign, it was an issue that affected our endorsement, and it's important if the ASUO ever wants to be relevant to the 91 percent of students who didn't vote.

Currently, we have the sense that many student groups talk mostly to themselves. The ASUO leaders should be creating interaction, getting student groups to work together on projects and have conversations about difficult issues that so often divide us. A once-a-month forum involving different student groups, where they could have a chance to talk to each other, instead of simply bringing their personal concerns to the ASUO, would be invaluable. Maybe provide food and a hot topic, and an old-fashioned "salon" could take place, with ideas and information flowing freely.

This idea needs to be applied to the general student body, as well — to the people who aren't involved in student groups. Cheesy as it sounds, ice cream socials are a fun and low-key way to get students to interact. Bringing lecturers to campus is a good way to educate students, but only if students come. Creating friendships first at a social gathering can encourage students to attend lectures in the future, because they know other people who attend them.

As to the renters rights campaign, why not stand in front of Johnson Hall in the afternoon a few days in a row and solicit students' concerns about their landlords? Make it like a mock protest, and tell passing students to write down one thing they would like to see included in a housing code. Then take that to the City Council.

To improve relations with University President Dave Frohnmayer, we'd like to see a suggestion box outside the ASUO office, where students can leave their suggestions for Frohnmayer. Then meet with him once a month to talk about students' concerns.

Students and the police need to understand each other better, and currently they only seem to interact when things are bad. Invite police to sit in on an ASUO staff meeting or two. Perhaps you could go on a few ride-alongs with police and set up a system so that other students could

get that firsthand experience, as well.

Maybe it's because our windows face the EMU Amphitheater, but we're tired of DJs and bands. It's not that music is bad, but that's all that ever happens down there. How about having a free-speech open mic once a month. Except for hate speech, allow anyone to say anything for two minutes. It facilitates dialogue, and it's a lot of fun to hear what's on students' minds.

Parking is always a problem. Maybe the ASUO could invest in a hundred or so used bikes. Lock them all over campus with the same-keyed lock, and set up a key check-out system for students. You could take a bike from the EMU and ride it to class. You could take a different bike after class and ride it to 13th Avenue, etc. Systems similar to this work all over the world.

Finally, we strongly encourage you to sit down with the other candidates and gather their ideas. Most of the candidates had good ideas, and it would show you were concerned about every student if you listened to what they had to say.

Wait a minute. Now that we think about it, we could have saved a lot of words if we had just said, "Do the opposite of Jay Breslow and you'll be great."

Just kidding, Jay.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Frohnmayer's ad arguments not persuasive

GUEST COMMENTARY

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University President Dave Frohnmayer has criticized David Horowitz's argument that "reparations for slavery is a bad idea — and racist, too" ("Our purpose is higher than that of Horowitz," ODE, April 20). Frohnmayer makes three claims: That Horowitz's purpose may be to sell books, that "Horowitz lobs simple catch phrases and slogans into a set of issues that are complex and divisive" and that "Our purpose is a higher one" than his.

Frohnmayer's claims are not persuasive. He admits that he does not know what Horowitz's purposes are. But even if Horowitz's only purpose is to sell his book, what's wrong with that? The University of Oregon Bookstore shows no guilt in trying to sell books every day of the week. Horowitz may be a typically poorly paid professor who only wants to feed his family. But more importantly, speculation about Horowitz's purposes is an argument ad hominem and irrelevant to any assessment of his argument. He may have evil purposes, but his argument may still be sound.

As to Frohnmayer's second claim, an advertisement for a book should not itself be a book. It must be brief and avoid technical detail. Just look at any dust jacket. Moreover, in this case, Horowitz does not "lob simple catch phrases." He provides us with a full-page summary of his 10 premises. People who are interested in more detail can always buy his book.

Finally, Frohnmayer claims that "our purpose" is "higher" than Horowitz's. But it is a mystery to me how he can make this claim when he doesn't know what Horowitz's purpose is. However, he does tell us what "our" purpose is. It is "to build community, to honor identity within community and to engage in thoughtful and respectful conversation."

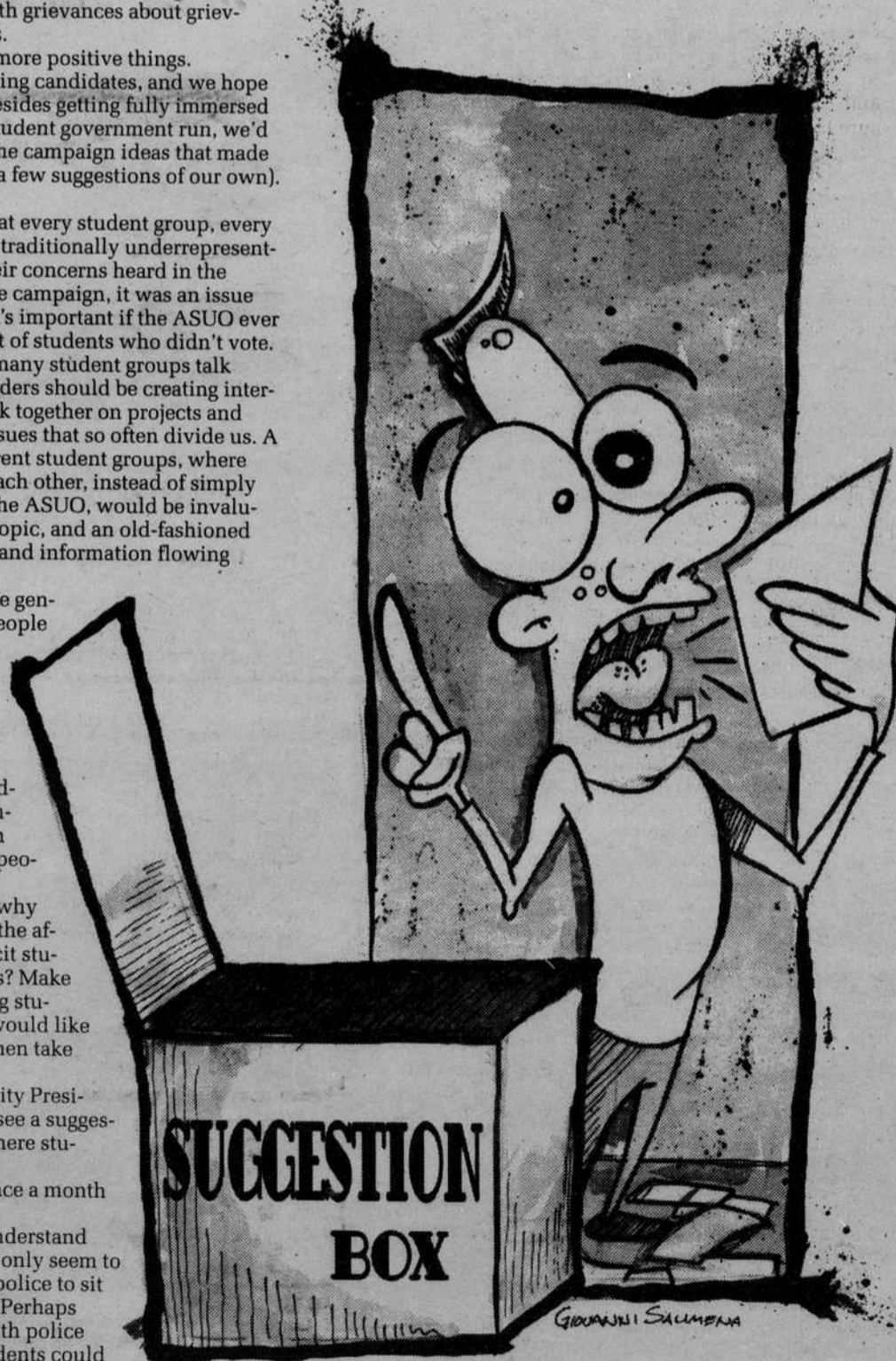
I'm disappointed to learn this because it has the frantic high pitch of multicultural politics, and I had hoped this fine institution would avoid partisan politics and would remain dedicated to the purpose given to it by the state of Oregon — higher education.

But times change and partisan political ideologies suddenly look as pure as the driven snow. The best that can be hoped for now is that everyone will understand what is going on. Not everyone will be pleased.

Students may be angered to see that there is an institutional conspiracy to get inside of their political heads, parents may wake up to the fact that they are paying dearly for the political indoctrination of their children, the faculty and staff may be insulted by Frohnmayer's assumption that he has the right to engage in politics on their behalf, and legislators and the general public may discover that they are subsidizing and giving tax benefits to an institution that may be opposed to their best interests.

As someone somewhere said, "Any attempt to use the university as a means for the realization of putative moral ends subverts the very institution which makes it possible for individuals to understand what ends are moral." Or as someone else has said more poetically, "A university has no mind; therefore, it should have no mouth."

Henry Crimmel lives in Eugene.



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