

But no one gave a damn

Under the Influence with Otis & Arthur

Otis

You know Arthur, it's students like you that make me want to protest something, like the admissions standards for students here. While dorks like you were burning your draft cards about the financial aid cutbacks, I was going to class. Which is fine with me, you do all the protesting you want, but next time don't block the Moyer Student Union. You know I need my daily super pretzel, and yet you block the path to appetite righteousness.

That rally was pretty useless, wasn't it Arthur? There were more media people than students. You should have used those poster people that Hollywood uses in crowd scenes. It would have made that crowd of twenty five students that showed up seem larger.

There were a couple of non-students at the rally. One of them happened to be Regent Shelly Berkeley. That's funny how a Regent that I've never seen on campus before shows up when the press happens to be here also.

The thing that Arthur and his hippie friends don't understand is that the students do care about these cutbacks. I mean, this issue directly affects us, right? I just don't feel like wasting my time at a bogus rally; especially with Arthur.

It's funny how that rally was in front of MSU. Why not in the spanking new amphitheater like everything else? Because of the media, they wanted to make a commotion so that all the students would congregate for the media. Otis don't play that, I've got a rally in my pants.

Another thing, I didn't think the rally was well advertised. Sure there were signs out, but why not a full campaign to make this rally sound as important as it wasn't? I think if Joe Mills emceed like he did the pep rally, then the students of this University would have risen to the occasion like the football team did at the big game.

I think one thing Arthur and I can agree on is questioning the mentality of Vern Williams, Chairman of UNLV's Republican Club. This dude spoke in favor of the cuts in financial aid of college students to supplement the national debt. Vern you're a student, you can be a republican when you grow up.

I'm not going to deny the sense of apathy from students at UNLV. But we are a commuter school and this is Las Vegas, a live fast, die hard town. We are not like other schools around the country, that's what I like about it here. We are older and more savvy than the average college student and it takes a while to rile us up. We know how the system works and we don't want to play the game unless we have to. That rally was a big joke and students knew it. None of us want cuts in financial aid. That's why a great number signed the petition led by David Turner to stop it. We are not as apathetic as we may seem, it just takes the right outlet for the students here. It's obvious that no one can attend a 10:00 am rally. Even Joe Mills knows to host pep rallies in the afternoon.

Arthur

I didn't see you at last Monday's rally to protest cutbacks in education funding, Otis. I guess you were too busy finishing that biscuit we left in the refrigerator for you. (I don't care what you say, it is *not* better than strawberry jam!)

You missed a good chance to speak your mind, though. Since only about 25 students showed up, they probably would have had time for you to dazzle them with a word or three. Don't strain yourself, Otis.

I really don't see why more students didn't show up. They can't all be like you. I mean, the issue was one personally impacting everyone on campus. If education funding gets cut, so does financial aid, raises for faculty and staff, and the amount of new equipment that can be purchased. I don't know about you, Otis, but I'm sick of chiseling these columns out on stone tablets.

Judging by President Carol Harter's State of the University address last week, we'll probably be getting new computers about the time your grandchildren graduate. Hey, that's neat, Otis, there will be four generations of you in freshman composition!

The organizers of the rally did their job. I saw flyers about it all over campus a week ahead of time. Two newspapers (three counting *The Yell*) and three T.V. stations had news crews there. Everyone was there but the very people the whole event was supposed to benefit: the ever-politically-aware-and-active students of UNLV.

The whole idea of holding an event like this was a great one. Campus needed this event, and more like it. As a chance to educate students about

the issue, it was an opportunity hard to beat.

It also gave everyone a chance to speak their mind, fostering cohesion in the rank and file. But with the tiny turnout, that won't happen.

How often do students have within easy grasp a means to focus the public's attention on funding cutbacks and the need to increase, rather than decrease, the amount of money put into education. But they blew it.

What really steams me, Otis, is the total attitude of unconcern found on this campus. That only 25 students should make an appearance is absolutely incredible. Just who does this group of young adults think is going to stand up and speak for them? You, Otis? I'd rather have Joe Mills negotiate my pay raises and vacation schedule!

When will students at UNLV, all over the country for that matter, get it into their heads that it's up to them to advocate for themselves? Is it better to speak up today, or learn to adjust to whatever life hands you down the road, no matter how messed up the deal? I guess we'll find out, down the road.

I hope the people who organized the rally weren't disappointed at the almost non-existent support demonstrated (almost a crime to use that word) by the student body here. Now that I think about it, the reason it was held in Pida Plaza instead of the amphitheater is because they knew what to expect. They counted on the activity in the background to create the illusion for the viewing public that you cared.

Politically correct curriculum: Will it get you a job?

PART 1 OF 2

Students arriving at the "Ivies" this fall are encountering a surprising phenomenon.

Women's studies courses outnumber economics classes, often by as much as two to

one. Princeton remains the lone exception, but not by much: 25 women's studies courses compared with 32 in economics.

This phenomenon has something to do with the fact that

over 50 percent of those who graduated from college in May still cannot find jobs appropriate for their degrees. But that's only half the picture; the following anecdote completes it.

New Republic editor and outspoken liberal Michael Kinsley wrote this of his attempt to hire a recent college graduate as his research assistant: "The government makes it comically difficult for the honest citizen to hire a single employee."

Comical to some, but not to the new graduate. Kinsley said government regulation "plunges you into an entirely new dimension of complexity as an employer "with a minimum of 37 different forms and 50 separate checks to hire a single employee for a year."

As a result of government regulation, Kinsley's young assistant ended up right back where he found her: in the unemployment line.

Two simple reasons explain why half of today's college graduates cannot find jobs befitting their degree.

First, colleges are not preparing students adequately and employers know it. They are focusing on fads such as women's studies rather than spending limited resources on core academic subjects.

And second, burgeoning government regulation is having a pernicious, and often under-

Guest Column

KATE
OBENSHAIN
GRIFFIN

estimated, impact on the job market.

Thanks to a dramatic shift in the direction of college curricula, a degree no longer indicates proficiency in the basic skills. *The New York Times* reported that employers, "express a lack of confidence in the ability of schools and colleges to prepare young people for the workplace."

According to a major report by the National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce, employers, well aware of grade inflation, "pay little attention to measurement of school performance."

Nevzer Stacey of the Department of Education went one step further: "Employers have given up on the schools."

What are our colleges and universities doing wrong? While skill requirements for employment are increasing (57 percent of employers say skill requirements have increased), the quality and substance of our educational institutions are eroding.

Except at a few select schools which have maintained their commitment to quality academic instruction, multicultural and politically correct courses supplant classes that have practical value for future employment.

What courses are now preparing our students for the work force? At Columbia University this fall: *Race, Gender,*

and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll and *The Invisible Women in Literature: The Lesbian Literary Tradition*. At Penn: *Search for Extraterrestrial Life and (Im)possible Animals*. At Brown: *Unnatural Acts and Split Britches, Circumcision: Male and Female, Jewish and Gentile*. And Harvard, not to give students the idea that the free market might be a good thing, offers *Alternative Economies: The Case Against Capitalism, 1648-1848*.

Other courses influencing students' outlook on the free market include Cornell's *The Selfish Individual and the Modern World* and Princeton's *Income Distribution*.

According to a recent survey in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, finding a good job is the number one reason students attend college. Yet schools are so caught up in hot political issues that they have lost sight of a critical aspect of their mission: training students for the workforce.

As Wendy Bounds of the *Wall Street Journal* said, "After an outlay of thousands of dollars, college graduates discover that a bachelor's degree doesn't buy what it did 10 years ago."

Part two of this column will appear in Thursday's issue.

—Kate Obenshain Griffin is director of Program Development for the Young America's Foundation.

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