

If the reports that have filtered out of the Student Senate meeting Wednesday are a true representation of what actually happened, a significant trend is beginning to show itself clearly in matters of student government. The problem up for discussion was a motion to recommend to the Housing Committee that all College restrictions as to off campus housing be removed where those regulations apply to individuals who are 21 years old and older. In itself this proposal is not a great issue. But it has pointed up a very basic feature of campus life.

ARE THE STUDENTS OF OSC WHO ARE 21 YEARS OLD REALLY ADULTS? And should they be granted the privileges, rights, and responsibilities which come to every other American citizen at age 21? If we are not adults at 21 then Oregon State College, its administration and faculty have failed miserably--failed completely--failed.

Admittedly there are some other considerations which deserve thought. What about all the Seniors that would move out of fraternities and sororities? What about vacant rooms in the dormitories? What about the possibility that a mass exodus of students from college approved living would jack up rents in Corvallis?

First, if the sorority and fraternity programs are not attractive to Seniors, then the fraternities and sororities ought to change to meet this problem or find some other way of keeping their houses filled. Second, if the dormitories are not attractive then we ought to use our bonding capacity for other projects and cease to build new dormitories. Third, there is now a surplus of housing in Corvallis. Not only are there vacant apartments, but there are over 200 houses for sale.

Here are some questions to ask your student representatives and College administration. Why was the minimum age at which a student could take "unapproved" housing lowered from 25 to 23 within the last three years? Was it because the average age of the students had declined since the influx of the veterans? If it was, then is it likely that the minimum age would be again raised if the average age of college students were to increase? This leads to the quite obvious speculation: is the college keeping the minimum age at which one may take "unapproved" housing just out of reach of the great majority of the students? This, of course may not be the intent. But if it is, then WHY?

What is the significant trend to which the first paragraph of this article alluded? It is this. At last the students and their representatives in the Student Senate are questioning some of the rules and regulations that they are subject to as students of Oregon State College. This is healthy. This is wonderful. This is the dynamic process of learning by questioning the existing order of things. Though such questioning may incur the disapproval of some of the administrators, one can be sure that such questioning would not be scorned by Newton, Locks, Socrates, Mill, Jefferson, Luther, Russel, Galileo, or Einstein.

Let's hope that one thing does not come to pass as a result of this questioning. Let's hope that the staff and administration will not panic or adopt ideas that arise from the students and have the support of the students. If the administration were flatly to deny the students requests, or if the Student Senate were to ignore student opinion, a grievous injustice would have been done to the principles of democracy and democratic change upon which our nation is based. Similarly, if the students' feeling is ignored or if student action is frustrated, it will only be more fodder for those who claim that student government is a farce. I hope that they are wrong. I hope that Student Government is a force not a farce.