

Missouri campus protests illustrate new trend for college millennials

BY JESSE J. HOLLAND
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON—Few paid attention when a black student started a hunger strike at the University of Missouri to protest racial strife on campus. As soon as the football team supported that hunger strike by refusing to practice for or play in the school's lucrative NCAA games, the university's president and chancellor were forced out and changes were discussed.

The stand taken at Missouri illustrates a new trend for college millennials. Frustrated with what they perceive as insensitivity by school administrators, they are taking their generation's penchant for social media protest to the next level: Using their on-campus celebrity to pose a threat to the bottom line.

"They forced the administration to take the protest seriously, given the money that is generated via athletics. To say that you will not play on Saturday is tantamount to a major donor pulling their funds," said D'Andra Orey, a political science professor at Jackson State University in

Jackson, Mississippi.

Students have been organizing and protesting racial strife at universities all year - from a noose being found on Duke University's campus, to spray-painted swastikas and nooses at the State University of New York's Purchase campus, to a fraternity video at the University of Oklahoma using a racial slur to describe how the Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity would never accept black members.

Last month, a popular marching band at Howard University, one of the nation's premier historically black colleges, wore all black during a halftime football show in a show of solidarity with students frustrated about financial aid and other problems.

This week at Yale, students took to the streets after an Oct. 28 university email warning about racially insensitive Halloween costumes prompted a professor to complain that Yale and other campuses were becoming "places of censure and prohibition."

But nowhere have stu-

dents been able to force change like they have at Missouri, the state's flagship university and a relatively new member of one of the nation's premier football conferences, the Southeastern Conference.

The student government president reported in September that people shouted racial slurs at him from a passing pickup truck, galvanizing a weeks-long protest movement by concerned students. On Nov. 2, with little fanfare, graduate student Jonathan Butler went on a hunger strike to demand the resignation of university system President Tim Wolfe over his handling of racial complaints.

On Nov. 7, more than 30 members of the Missouri football team went on strike in support of Butler's protest, with support from their coach.

That act got attention. A disruption of the Missouri football schedule - the Tigers play the Brigham Young Cougars in Kansas City, Missouri, on Saturday with at least two more games in the season - could have cost the school



Michigan students stand in solidarity Wednesday, Nov. 11, 2015, with University of Missouri protesters and students, in Ann Arbor, Mich. A march and rally offered a show of support to University of Missouri students whose protests led two top administrators to resign.

millions in revenue and penalties, not to mention negative publicity to outsiders and potential recruits.

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill, and other lawmakers issued statements and the national media flooded the Columbia campus. Wolfe resigned, followed hours later by the top administrator of the Columbia campus, Chancellor R. Bowen Loftin.

"It's much easier for them to ignore students that aren't in the public eye than for them to ignore those who are in the public eye," said Sarah Jackson, a communications studies professor at Northeastern University.

Protests on college campuses are nothing new, even during a year marked

by a nationwide debate over police brutality. Universities and colleges are used to protestors going back to the Vietnam and civil rights era, and have developed methods to deal with objections.

Institutions know they can offer to set up committees and discussion groups to bleed off the passion and publicity of student protesters with minimal changes and negative publicity. But that approach doesn't work as well when applied to student athletes, band members and other school representatives who help bring much-needed publicity and funding to the institution.

"Universities increasingly care about the bottom line," Jackson said. "They care about students wanting to come to their universities."

Putting financial pressure on an organization is a tried-and-true pressure tactic, said Lonnie Bunch, director of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, which opens in the next year.

In the 1920s through the 1960s, civil rights organizers put together "Don't Shop Where You Can't Work" campaigns, organized sit-ins at lunch counters, and refused to ride in public transportation that forced blacks to sit in the back - including the famous Montgomery bus boycott. The goal was to change Americans' hearts and minds, but also to damage the profit margin of discriminatory businesses, Bunch said.

"Hurting the financial bottom line is a long tradition," he said.



Photo by Tevin Stinson

A memorial service for Anthony White Jr. was held on the campus of WSSU on Thursday, Nov. 12. White was shot and killed on campus on Sunday, Nov. 1.

WSSU reflects on the life of Anthony White

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

As evident by the kind words and hundreds who attended a memorial service last week, Anthony White Jr. touched the lives of many on the campus of Winston-Salem State University.

White, was fatally shot in the early morning hours of Sunday, Nov. 1, near a campus dormitory just a few hours after homecoming festivities came to a close. Jarrett Jerome Moore has been arrested in the slaying.

Political science professor Dr. Larry Little said he was emotionally unsettled by the news of White's death.

"I have never experienced such emotional highs and lows than what occurred during homecoming," he said. "I was so happy to see my former students, then I got that call on Sunday saying Anthony had been killed and I was messed up."

According to Little, White was a student in his civil rights class and he was

always one of the most prepared students.

"I really enjoyed having Anthony in my class," he continued. "They say you don't question God but I do, because he should be here today, but as the older people say, we'll understand it by and by."

During the ceremony a number of students recalled White as a person who was happy and always had words of encouragement for those in need.

Anthony was the type of person who would give his last to make sure his friends and family had what they needed.

"I spent I lot of time with Anthony and we talked about a lot of things," said a former roommate of White. "He was always happy, if he wasn't laughing or joking he was giving me or someone else encouraging words of advice."

Chancellor Elwood L. Robinson said receiving news of White's death was one of the most difficult moments he has experienced in a long time.

"I haven't experienced this type of pain in a long, long time," said Robinson. "I don't think I've felt this type of pain since my father died."

As he held back tears, Robinson encouraged students to stay together, not just in times of mourning but in times of happiness as well.

"These are the moments when your humanity comes out," he continued. "Anthony's message is to each one of us, and that message is life is a gift, and what we do with our gift is totally up to us."

He didn't know White personally but, by speaking to students and professors, Robinson said he knows White was a determined individual who was proud to be a part of the WSSU family.

Following of the ceremony, a number students said White will forever be in their hearts, and they will take his memory with them when they walk across the stage to get their degree.

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