

Editorial

Activity disruptions require prosecution

A series of unfortunate incidents of harassment marred the conclusion of Gay Pride Week Thursday and Friday. Another incident involved interference with the Saferide van.

The University must act to enforce its conduct code against students who interrupt these or other University activities.

A group of students interrupted a movie Thursday night and harassed its audience. The group was made up of fraternity members from several houses who did it, according to one participant, "as a joke."

Ha ha.

Another group assaulted the Saferide van at the University Inn, rocking it and giving the impression that they were trying to break in.

The gay pride rally Friday was also disturbed by hecklers, some of whom behaved in a verbally and physically abusive manner.

The University's student conduct code exists to maintain an appropriate educational atmosphere for activities such as the gay pride events and the Saferide van.

The code prohibits interference with University activities. Both the van and the gay pride events are protected by the code.

Campus security must make a serious effort to identify students involved in acts of physical violence or substantial disruption of events. Student Conduct Coordinator Bill Ballester should consider these actions worth serious sanctions, not just a fatherly talk and a few hours of community service as a "penalty."

Heckling, if it doesn't physically threaten people or prevent an event from continuing, is fine. It's called free speech. It is just as legitimate to heckle a GALA rally as to heckle the CIA or the Marines.

Physically attacking a University vehicle engaged in official University business is not heckling. It is grounds for suspension from the University. It also raises possible criminal charges of harassment or assault.

Intentionally interfering with a University event, though less serious, raises similar problems. Doing so at a Gay and Lesbian Alliance event only points out the need for such events.

The people who chose to express their opposition to the gays' message by hassling their rally succeeded in giving GALA and its spokespeople substantial coverage on two television stations.

Gay people are a part of this University and are not going to go away. They are protected by the University's non-discrimination policy and are entitled, like all students, to organize and have activities free from unreasonable interference.

If lesbians and gay men did not face all manner of institutional and informal discrimination, as well as childish harassment, they would not need rallies, public discussions and films.

If women — all women, not just lesbians — could walk alone safely throughout the University neighborhood, the Saferide van would not be necessary.

We hope to see a day when gay pride rallies are unnecessary and men stop raping and assaulting women at the University and everywhere else.

The unfortunate incidents last week have postponed that day. The University can regain some of this lost ground by finding and prosecuting students who have discredited themselves and their institution.



Letters

Last laugh

Dan Martin.

It's getting harder and harder to tell who's kidding and who isn't. Once upon a time I could tell who the bigots were. Their messages were as unintelligent as their minds were small. The satirists were easy to spot, too.

They exaggerated hate and bigotry to the point of absurdity, and right away you knew what they really meant. Then the distinction began to blur. I listened to the LaRouche ads, laughed until my sides hurt, and then discovered it wasn't the DJ who thought it up. Oops.

It's not fair when life imitates art so convincingly. Bigotry and know-nothingness exaggerated to improbable extremes is no longer a sure sign of satire. It might be someone who really means it. That's why I was so slow to appreciate the humor in your letter.

Until I realized that nobody could be THAT bigoted, I thought you were one who really meant it. You really had me going for a moment. Damn. I hate to be the last one to get a joke.

Dale Huckleby
Student

Labor of love

I said I wouldn't comment on the Greeks again. However, I'll comment on the people who live at houses with odd-shaped addresses.

As a journalism major, I would hope you could point out where my letters accused people of a) raping their dates; b) flunking classes, and c) undermining the "community vitality" by quoting someone who called me "a fucking narrow-minded son-of-a-bitch."

I never even insinuated these points, though it's possible to make these accusations against you freakies.

I'm not sure how long you've been on campus; yes, these weird addresses are getting stronger. However, they were strong in the '50s and early '60s. Later that decade, and for a second, they fell into a hole they're just now crawling out of (might I remind your short memory). All good things must come to an end though.

Now, on the issue of charities. Don't you have a function where you beat on each other for a good cause? This is an odd money making idea. However, anything to sell that "new approach" you mentioned to take the heat off litter and lawsuits.

Why do you bait someone who slaps the face of the institution you represent with a smile? It's labor of love to sacrifice the scared cow in print for all to see.

I must admit, the only silly game on campus is having Greek letters for an address instead of numbers.

End of game, Ricky (dude).

Blake Louis Sliter
Political Science

Bummed out

I went to the EMU recently in hope of finding a quiet place to read. The Tom Taylor Lounge on the main floor offered just such a setting. Upon entering the lounge, I noticed a sprawled-out local vagrant using one of the sofas as a bed.

I could tell this guy wasn't a student by his filthy, grimey clothes, a sack filled with cans and other assorted garbage, a half-eaten pack of Hostess Zingers on the armrest and a toothbrush, stuffed with residual Zinger particles. Though I was totally grossed-out by the whole scene, I was, however, somewhat relieved to know the guy had good oral hygiene.

While taking up the only available chair in the lounge, I noticed the guy next to me was of the same caliber as the vagrant on the sofa. The only difference was he had more cans; no doubt a true "go-getter."

I found it difficult to concentrate as a result of the slurred, indecipherable verbiage which was coming from the bum next to me. When I asked if he could please be quiet, he replied by asking if I could spare 39 cents for a popcorn.

By this time, I had to go to class, having accomplished nothing, and having received only frustration and annoyance by bums that use the Tom Taylor Lounge as a plush substitute for a halfway house.

I believe that as students, our tuition and other University fees entitles us to vagrant-free facilities.

Andrew L. Smith
Rhetoric and Communication

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