

Goetz acquittal symbolic of Americans fear of crime

When Bernhard Goetz shot four teenagers in a crowded New York subway in 1984, he was dubbed the "subway vigilante" and became a hero to many who feared or were victims of muggings.

Goetz also became a symbol for not only the increasing fear of crime in America, but the right for people to protect themselves. He was described as a small, quiet man who defended himself in the face of danger.

His case and subsequent murder acquittal last Tuesday parallels this view of American society. The jury recognized the underlying fear Americans have of being victims of crime and granted Goetz the right to defend himself.

Although the case may sound simple enough — a man attacked by four black teenagers shoots them in self defense — it has deeper ramifications. The path for more vigilante justice has been cleared, and unless stronger measures are taken, Goetz will not be alone in his notoriety.

Goetz was convicted only of carrying a gun. The sentence has a maximum of seven years in prison and a minimum that requires no prison time. Under the circumstances, Goetz should have received a heavier sentence.

Even though the facts about what really happened between Goetz and the four teenagers may never be clear, Goetz had several options that would have prevented any injuries.

Most importantly, he did not have to aim to kill. If he had fired over their heads, the same scare-tactic effect could have been achieved. By firing directly at the boys, he hurt them and endangered the lives of everyone in the subway.

Goetz also did not have to shoot all four boys. He pulled his gun and shot in self-defense. But self-defense ended when he was no longer in danger.

It is impossible to know what was going through Goetz's mind when he pulled the trigger. But we do know he deliberately shot four people and risked the lives of others.

By letting him off with an insignificant slap on the hand the jury judged crime

in America — not Goetz. It shifted the responsibility of protecting the public from the police and the judicial system to the people themselves.

We do have the right to de-

fend ourselves, but Goetz's case was an extreme. It should not be hailed as protection for the people because it is, instead, a new and widely accepted form of crime.

GARY MARKER



Cutting library expansion hasty, unnecessary action

Funds for the University library expansion project were cut from the budget last week by the Oregon Legislature's Joint Budget Committee because the project could not be completed in the next two years. The cut makes room for a more expensive production center for Oregon Public Broadcasting.

Although both projects are worthwhile, cutting the library expansion is a grave mistake. The library is the backbone of education for the University and the community. By postponing the expansion the Legislature is delaying learning and hampering research for students.

Legislators agreed the project should be top priority when they convene again in 1989. But the two year delay is unnecessary. The project for the Oregon Public Broadcasting will exceed the budget and require them to dip into extra funds.

Sen. Mike Thorne said the proposal was cut so the funds could be allocated to projects that could do the most immediate good. But the library is an important aspect of higher education that should not be ignored simply because it will not be finished in two years.

All projects funded by the budget are integral to a higher quality of education. The University library should not be ignored, however.

We understand the reasoning for cutting the project but we do not believe it is necessary.

Cover photo by Shu-Shing Chen
Models: Dominic O'Dierno, Al Busted, Curt Kimball

Letters

Disgusted

On June 2, 1987 an ad was placed in the Emerald personals depicting us and some very blatant Klu Klux Klan symbolism. We do not take this lightly. We would like to thank the Emerald for their expedient and sincere cooperation in admitting their error in printing the ad.

The perpetrators of such a disgusting and offensive act are Phil Levinson, former ASUO Presidential candidate ("The People's Choice"); and Charles Carter, his campaign manager.

Any hardships they incur as a result of this disclosure are well deserved and cannot begin to make up for the unhappiness, pain, and disgust experienced by us, our staff, and the countless other students they offended with such racist insensitivity.

We do not view this as a mere practical joke, and have already commenced legal action on this matter. Our commitment to the ideal that such racist and malicious acts and people can-

not be tolerated or excused by the University community or society at large, is unflinching.

Kasey Brooks
ASUO president
Karen Gaffney
ASUO vice president

Guidance

I am involved in the Council for Minority Education Mentor Program.

I agree with Carla Gary that being in college can be a traumatic experience. Being a freshman, I know that the freshman year is always a very difficult year because it is hard to be thousands of miles away from home, away from friends and finally being independent. In addition, it is not easy to be a member of an ethnic group.

I found the Mentor Program to be very beneficial to me in making the adjustment to college life. My mentor, Bunny Nosler, is an advisor from Academic Advising.

She really does know the University requirements, the classes, the professors, and most importantly, the Universi-

ty. She has given me much insight into requirements, classes and study habits.

I believe that the Mentor Program is very useful in helping one to survive in college.

As the word about the benefits of the Mentor Program gets out there will be more mentors and mentees joining the program. I believe that the program will gain more members by next fall.

Kent K. Hori
Business/sociology
Freshman

Unwarranted

To Kasey Brooks, Karen Gaffney and the Oregon Daily Emerald staff:

About the ad that appeared in the June 2 edition of the Oregon Daily Emerald...

I accept responsibility. And, in addition, I apologize for an action that was essentially caustic, unskillful, and unwarranted.

Phil Levinson
Student

Oregon Daily Emerald

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Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.