

Hate crimes stem from ignorance

Moving is a pain in the butt, right? Especially when it's a family affair. Anyone who has moved with children in tow can attest to that; it's no small undertaking, to say the least.

So, guessing-game time: What would make a middle-class couple with two small children decide to up and move at the drop of a hat?

Sudden increase in rent? Strike one. The new dog next door barks all night? Strike two. The state decides to construct a city bypass route 30 feet from the front door? Strike three; you're out.

No, they're out, and it's no game. Why the sudden move? Try cross-burnings, stoning, and death threats.

William Kennedy and Jessica Davis recently experienced such courtesies, compliments of local bigots. The interracial couple finally said "enough" when they received the death threat, which came after two cross-burnings in their front yard and various rock-throwing incidents.

That this is no isolated occurrence makes it worse. Area police say the acts of hate are part of a recent series of harassment crimes against Portland interracial couples. Last month, two other couples found "KKK" painted outside their house, and one also found a swastika.

If nothing else, one can find solace in the fact that what goes around comes around.

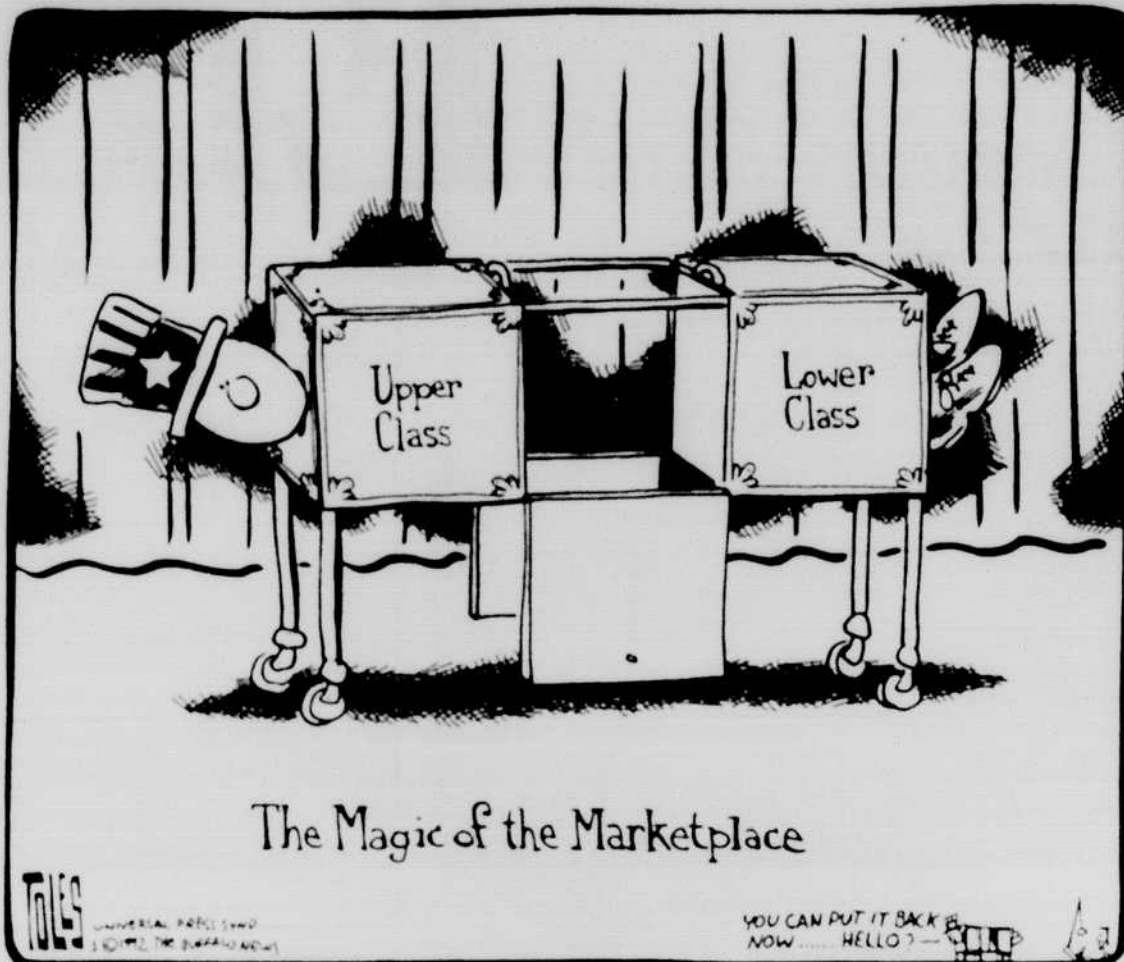
Think about this. There is now a documented, consistently increasing number of various hate crimes happening in this country. Crimes against other people driven by nothing more than hate for their race, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender. (Unfortunately, these are only a few of the things people have learned to hate about each other. Due to lack of room, only the major examples are listed.)

The crime against this couple and others like it prove it's happening right here in Oregon. Bad feeling, huh? At least it should be. People find all kinds of reasons to justify their hate crimes, which aren't always as blatant as cross-burnings. No, they can be as simple as a cold stare; a slip of the tongue; a derogatory thought.

There is no excuse for these actions except ignorance and fear. Period.

What will it take to stop these crimes? Nothing one can find to resent about another is worth the pain caused by such acts. America, 1992. Hard to believe. Well, not really. When will it stop? Where will it stop?

If nothing else, one can find solace in the fact that what goes around, comes around.



The Magic of the Marketplace

LETTERS

Storytime

A parable for Bryan Westby: A man walks into a cheese shop to purchase his week's worth of curd. Upon entering the store, he sees not the warm familiar smile of Mr. McCafferty, the cheese store owner, but the shocked state of his Latin ex-lover from years past stacking the smoked swiss.

After all these years separated by the civil wars and increasing cola costs, their reunion was awkward. The only words the man could muster were, "Do you have any curd?"

His Latin lover stared with wide, questioning eyes. His only response was, "I love your fist."

With the owl on his shoulder, the shocked man ran from the store as fast as his legs could carry him, leaving his tasty curd behind. However, he did not count on the falling piano coming straight at him from a jealous Mr. McCafferty's window. Martial arts didn't help the curd lover.

I hope you finally understand, Westby.

Jerod Hume
Zoology

No apologies

Pastor Jack Davidson requested a "public apology" to Hiron's Drug stores for my family's personal decision last December to discontinue shopping at Hiron's because of their contribution to the Oregon Citizens Alliance.

Davidson chose to erroneously align No On Hate/Lane County for his gross misrepresentation of the truth.

My family does not use "hate tactics" (Davidson's words). When we first heard of Hiron's contribution to OCA, we were stunned. We left messages in hopes of private dialogue and resolution. There were no return calls. We discontinued our patronage.

The good news? John Hiron recently distanced himself from the OCA by publicly declaring he "saw no reason to contribute

to OCA's current campaign" (*Register-Guard*, Feb. 12). That day, my family hand delivered a letter thanking Hiron's for his words. We renewed our 21-year-long patronage.

My family makes no apologies, "public" or otherwise, for our initial refusal to support any business that supports a hate group. We'd do it again. But we now gladly extend a "public thank you" to Hiron's for their renewed sensitivity to human rights concerns facing our communities and our state.

Hopefully, others will consider Hiron's words and discontinue any support for the community-dividing OCA campaign against our neighbors.

Carol Berg
Eugene

A difference

Dear President Brand,
Your recent letter to students requesting that we write to our governor and legislators regarding funding for the University was informative and achieved its purpose (at least with me). I am enclosing a copy of my letter, inspired by yours.

I found your suggestions regarding calling a special session and sharing how continued budget cuts would affect me personally to be useful. While I don't believe that another tax solution would be reasonable, I did offer an alternative solution. I think this is an important step of grassroots, citizen self-empowerment (of which you spoke).

I'm sure that among our student population, graduate and undergraduate, there are solutions that have yet to be expressed. An encouraging word to simply "say what you think" is often all that is necessary for some people to take action. Would it be possible for you to come to some classes during the week and speak to students?

Sometimes, a personal visit can motivate a group when a form letter doesn't do it. Most students are deluged with print media, but rarely are visited by

school administrators. Your presence could make a difference.

Theresa Scott
Graduate student
Counseling psychology

Excessive force

Perhaps Officer Scarborough should have shown more discretion in his decision to arrest Professor Beebe.

Law enforcement officials categorically exhibit methods of interaction designed to place them in control of situations. This is hardly necessary in our civilized community.

Officer Scarborough could have simply followed Beebe up to the post office, noted his bike license and mailed Beebe the ticket.

Nobody likes to be confronted by someone dressed up in a uniform trying to force them into some kind of social confrontation demanding their time and attention.

Beebe was simply trying to remove himself from an undesirable situation, and Scarborough apparently felt his position of authority was being jeopardized.

Supposedly, Scarborough is employed to patrol the campus in the name of safety. I question his methods of maintaining safety when he finds it necessary to bring an elder of our community down to the ground and shackle his wrists in iron. What about his dignity? Is nothing sacred?

Shame on you Scarborough. The only injury suffered was to your ego, and you were quick to avenge this injury by taking control of the situation.

It would be a great loss to the University if Beebe decides to search for employment under friendlier conditions than those shown by Scarborough. Let's hope Beebe doesn't take the actions of our overzealous "hall monitor" to be representative of our University.

T.J. Highbee
Student

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