

Riot violence hurts, but forces attention

The violence resulting from the Rodney King verdict is bad. And it's good.

Last Wednesday's acquittal of four white Los Angeles police officers charged with last year's videotaped beating of the Black motorist kicked off the biggest and bloodiest wave of rioting in the nation's history.

Forty-five riot-related deaths have now been reported by L.A. County coroners, topping Detroit's 1967 record count of 43. L.A.'s 1965 riots in the Watts area had 34 fatalities.

The recent riots aren't limited to L.A., either; beating, burning and general destruction have spread throughout the country, stretching from Atlanta to Manhattan, Seattle to Southern California.

The source of the violence is obvious. Acting as the release valve on a pressure cooker full of long-brewing frustrations, the King verdict was the catalyst in the inevitable spewing of steam.

It boils down to pain and anger. These people are angry. Who wouldn't be? They've been betrayed by a judicial system labeled an equal protector of this country's public. They are sick of continuing prejudices long gone uncalled. They are hurt by a hypocritical society that claims to be founded on equal rights but refuses to see and/or acknowledge its biased slams.

White America has comfortably worn the blinders of ignorance for too long.

The violence finally brought to light a problem most of white America has long been ignorant of: Native American, Black, Hispanic, Asian and all other non-white Americans very often do not get a fair shake in this land of the free and the brave, and they are getting sick and tired of it. Prejudice continues to exist, living off the souls it steals.

One speaker at last week's EMU rally said it best: "It's not a black thing, it's a human thing." It's true. The pain caused by America's prejudice must be shared and acknowledged by every citizen of this country, as well as the struggle to right the long-committed wrongs.

The lives lost are the worse part of this scenario. Most were innocent bystanders; many were Black or Hispanic. One should consider the fact that if a cause is worth dying for, it's fairer to sacrifice one's own life before taking another's.

Some say it's crazy for the crowds to destroy their own neighborhoods, and that some jumped on the destruction train not in an honest effort to protest the verdict, but to destroy and loot because it was the thing to do. Some fret that absolutely nothing good can come of this.

Regardless of one's opinion on these or related topics, one must see the violence for what it is — a backlash against a system of continuing oppression with years of hurt and anger behind it.

It apparently took an extremist action like this to finally call attention to a problem that everyone should have been concerned about a long time ago — not just people of color. That's the productive part of this whole thing. The ugly part is the reality of the death toll, and the physical as well as emotional havoc wreaked on those affected.

White America has comfortably worn the blinders of ignorance for too long. It's in the best interest of those still wearing this outdated accessory to take them off. It's "our" problem now; the time of "their" problem is over, and it will remain "our" problem long after the violence fades.



LETTERS

For Wooten

I am writing in support of Cynthia Wooten, Democrat, for state representative, District 41.

Wooten, a former Eugene city councilor and legislative assistant, has the experience to be an effective state legislator. Her record of accomplishments and caring is too long to fully list, but her experiences range from chairing task forces on homelessness and affordable housing, to working on the Committee for Economic Diversification, and owning her own small business.

Moreover, not only does Wooten bring a wealth of experience, but she holds strong convictions that are truly representative of the people of District 41. She unequivocally supports a woman's right to choose, while the incumbent Marie Bell is anti-abortion.

Wooten seeks tax reform to protect the quality of education at the University, while Bell has refused to even talk to concerned students. Wooten envisions a diversified and productive economy with a growth plan that focuses on worker training programs, an enhanced public works infrastructure and support of small business, while protecting the quality of life we hold sacred. The incumbent, on the other hand, lacks vision altogether.

If you're as embarrassed as I am to call inexperienced, anti-abortion Republican Marie Bell our representative, then do something about it. Let the voice of the majority be heard at the state capitol. Our best choice to retake the district in November is to elect Wooten in May. Vote for Wooten on May 19.

David Frost
Students for Wooten

Railing

I would like to express my admiration for Melissa Stahlecker's amazing abilities of perception (ODE, April 24). Few people are able to examine a seemingly harmless advertisement such as the banner she refers to and find in it such obvious promotions of oppression and terror against humanity.

The University thought people would believe that it's an ultra-liberal, diversity-minded

institution by offering a multitude of courses teaching white people to apologize for being born. This was only a ploy, however, to get people to register for summer classes so they could be indoctrinated in the ways of "high-minded, classical scholarship with a token tip of the hat to those pioneers of the women's (she must mean womyn's) rights movement."

However, the University failed to have its propaganda department supervise the creation of this particular banner and in doing so, its true motives were revealed. Stahlecker has foiled the University's dastardly plan by exposing its blatant disregard for diversity and informing us all of its true intent.

It may appear to some as if Stahlecker has merely invented something to rail against for the pure, liberal joy of railing, but be assured she has saved us all. Thank you, Stahlecker. By using your time to expose such a bold lack of concern by the University for people of non-white races, you have freed up time for me. I think I will use it to engage in activities of a lower moral order, like making money.

James Schaan
Marketing

Pathetic

According to the *Emerald* of April 24, approximately 13.1 percent of University students voted in the primary elections. That's roughly 2,292 students out of 15,500. This number is really pathetic.

Every time I turn around, I'm constantly hearing people whine about the escalating incidental fees, departments being cut, and faculty losing their positions. Well, stop whining and do something about it! Vote!

This is your government — control it, don't let it control you! Don't become one of the faces, become one of the

voices! Vote! Not only is it your duty, but we're talking about your freedom. Don't let your freedom be controlled!

Control your freedom!

Kristi Miller
Student

Language abuse

There is prestige these days in being politically correct, and to these politically correct people, the adjectives I have most often heard applied are "enlightened" and "liberated." I am speaking out in hopes of drawing attention to the gross misapplication of these qualities. Enlightened means freed from ignorance. To call a person enlightened merely because they follow newly formed social etiquette is to dilute the connotation of a great quality.

The word liberated denotes one who is free. From my experience, politically correct people are hopelessly enslaved in an effort not to break the sensitive codes, which give them their identity. In the liberated '60s, sexuality was freely discussed. All points of view, no matter how perverse, were open for consideration and often embraced; in the politically correct '90s, such conversation is a stifling entanglement of do's and don'ts — anything but liberated.

Finally, the words enlightened and liberated imply someone who is internally strong, but the politically correct people I see are easily (and amusingly) riled at anything which doesn't fit into their narrow view of what's correct. This doesn't appear to be a display of strength. Surely we can find more appropriate words to attach to the politically correct — perhaps "enslaved," "puritanical," and "myopic."

Ted Golder
Student

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3189, EUGENE, OREGON 97403 (503) 246-5511

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press. The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

Managing Editor	Editor in Chief: Christopher Blair	News Editor	Chris Bounieff
Editorial Editor	Pat Malach	Editorial Editor	Don Peters
Graphics Editor	Cathie Daniels	Sports Editor	Jake Berg
Entertainment Editor	Jeff Pasley	Night Editor	Christopher Blair
	Layne Lankish		

LETTERS POLICY

The *Oregon Daily Emerald* will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.