

Hate flyers don't help our situation

Love those hate flyers.

Office of Public Safety officers and janitorial staff recently found about 100 copies of two racist, anti-homosexual flyers in and around the EMU. The flyers screamed: "Special rights means less rights for whites! No special rights for dykes!" and "Hey fags your life stinks."

Yep, right here at the University, where phrases like "cultural diversity" appear often in textbooks and classroom lectures but horribly infrequently in real life.

The flyers, which were found about two weeks ago, appeared prior to the L.A. beating verdict and subsequent rioting. Interestingly, a good portion of the crowd listening at the University's rally protesting the verdict was white.

This is a good sign. It shows some of those needing to listen are listening. There's a heck of a lot of ignorance that needs to be addressed, racially speaking as well as otherwise, and it will take a heavy dose of talking and listening to begin to resolve it.

It also shows that a lot of whites are supporting minority groups on this campus, and hopefully in this town, and thankfully aren't at home writing imbecilic hate flyers. When flyers like these show up,

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The hate flyers are no doubt the work of a select few who fail to adequately represent the larger body of white heterosexual students. Unfortunately, flyers like these only serve to heighten the thickening walls dividing people rather than build necessary bridges.

But then that's probably what the authors want. It's an indisputable truth that when animals, including humans, feel threatened and afraid, they isolate themselves while lashing out for protection. The flyer authors easily fit the bill.

Blacks, as well as homosexuals, have the same rights to walk this campus as do the flyer supporters. In fact, those hate supporters should think twice about airing their stance next time because it's looking like there's a whole lot less of them than they may think.



"CALVIN, EVER NOTICE HOW the PRIMORDIAL GASES DISPERSED BY THE BIG BANG AND OVER SPACE AND TIME, EVENTUALLY COALESCING INTO ALL EXISTING MATTER IN THE UNIVERSE, IS LIKE DUST BUNNIES UNDER the davenport?"

OPINION

Eugene mob sends wrong message



THE FINE PRINT

BY GERRIT KOEPPING

The rally at the EMU Court-yard warned of violence.

Speakers who called for violent protest to the L.A. beating verdicts were cheered while more moderate voices were heckled. Our ASUO president Jennifer Bills called for a revolution, a call that was applauded by the gathered audience.

The impromptu march following the speeches was your standard Eugene fare. Semi-coherent slogans were chanted like some demented mantra. No doubt the chant of "people united, we'll never be divided" sent a shudder through "the Man."

But despite the chant, the people, once they reached the Federal Building, were not united. While most of the crowd hung back, groups of young men started pounding on the windows of the Federal Building after they found they could not get in. The same people who had put themselves forward as leaders at the rally, now resembled a mob let loose on the Federal Building. The accidental breaking of one window led to more deliberate destruction of some expensive windows.

This certainly was not the doctrine of non-violence that Dr. Martin Luther King espoused. This was just a mob with all the ugliness and brutality that comes with a mob.

But because a mob thrives only in obscurity, it was no surprise when it turned its aggression to the media when a young white male attacked a *Register-Guard* photographer. The wounded man was hustled into the building with a bloody nose and broken glasses.

The violence would likely have spread had it not been for the courage of a single woman who covered the retreat of the photographer by clutching at her head and screaming, "Stop it! Stop it!" She made a spectacle of herself, but she stopped the violence.

As the crowd quieted, there suddenly seemed to be self-styled leaders everywhere. One speaker further calmed the crowd by urging them to raise a silent fist in protest.

As the violence at the Federal Building subsided, with a wounded photographer and \$20,000 worth of damage to the building, Tanija Edwards spoke. Her primary concern seemed to have been negative press coverage. At her bidding, the crowd started to chant, "Cut the cameras." By then, however, it was a little late for spin-control.

Indeed, newly re-elected student senator Brian Hoop got a lovely photo of himself on the front page of *The Register-Guard* with his foot through a window.

After the violence, I asked people what they felt about what had just happened. The response tended to be that it wasn't right, but that frustrated people turn to violence. My other favorite response was that the action was sure to send a message, and it was appropriate for the moment.

None of the people who had earlier advocated violence felt responsible for what had happened.

When I heard these responses, I was reminded of a similar denial of responsibility. It came from Tom Metzger, who had been tried for inciting the murder of an Ethiopian immigrant in Portland; he also denied responsibility for violence that occurred after he had advocated it.

My point here is the people who took part in the riot should in no way be proud or rationalize what they did. It had nothing to do with justice; it had nothing to do with Rodney King. It was just a bunch of cowardly, childish opportunists who used the situation to break things.

As for those people who incited the violence and then denied any responsibility, I admit they have the right to speak as they wish. But with rights also comes responsibility, which they lack.

If those who condemned the violence truly wanted to stop it, they sure didn't show it while it was occurring. People who want to criticize the police officers for doing nothing while King was brutalized should remember that there were a lot of people who did nothing when the photographer was attacked.

But one thing they were right about is this whole incident sending a message.

One message went to Deborah Dealy-Browning, who is an assistant attorney for the U.S. Attorney's office. She is running the criminal investigation of the incident. In fact, she got the message so well that the Federal Bureau of Investigation is now involved. That's right kiddies, you made it to the big time. This was destruction of federal property, not just tearing down some University banner. You're not in Kansas anymore, and the people running this show aren't campus security.

Another message went to the voting public, whose representatives will soon be asked to decide whether or not to cut the higher education budget. Cutting the budget will now be easier because television viewers witnessed University students as young vandals who see moral responsibility and ethical conduct as optional parts to their personality.

Finally, the violence distracted from what should have been a focus on the injustice of the verdict, to a focus on violence. Many people now feel more vulnerable and more likely to trust police now that they've seen what the police are protecting them against.

By the way, don't be surprised if Bush suddenly changes his strategy and gets re-elected on a law-and-order platform.

The incident has hurt the University, its students and the cause of racial justice. No one should be proud of what happened. It was mob brutality at its ugliest.

Gerrit Koepping is a community beat reporter for the Emerald.

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.

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