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Speaker outlines white supremacy

RACISM: Supremacist ideas are on a rise

By Doug Irving
Student Activities Reporter

American politics have "shifted drastically to the right" and "ideas that had been incubating are coming back to haunt us," research director and author Steve Gardner said Tuesday night.

The result has been a rise in white supremacist ideas and factions, he told about 20 people in his lecture, "The Changing Face of White Supremacy."

"There's really very little understanding about the spectrum of different goals and tendencies," he said. "Groups of the so-called extreme are integral to the process of politics as usual."

Gardner separated supremacist movements into two categories: those who believe in

biological determinism and those who believe in cultural determinism. Both are processes by which supremacists separate the white race from others, he said.

The Oregon Citizen's Alliance would be one example of cultural determinism, he said. They would see homosexuality as "a choice and wrapped up in politics," he explained.

However, Gardner concentrated on biological determinism because these are generally the more extreme groups. Many times, these movements "don't operate in electoral politics," and generally distrust the government.

These organizations often create "alternative institutions": common law courts and militias, Gardner said. Although these are not neo-Nazi movements, he said some believe in two creations, one for whites

and one for everyone else.

"Although the tactics they're using are a little bit wacky and illegal, what they're about is creating this white Christian republic one institution at a time," he said.

The traditional Ku Klux Klan, which is more extreme and less popular than these movements, has seen a drastic reduction in membership, he said. This is because some have "taken off their hoods" and openly joined less radical movements, while others have "become even more hardcore" and joined neo-Nazi movements.

One example, the Oklahoma City Bombing, has recently ignited interest in extreme white-supremacist movements, Gardner said.

"It was something that people had totally ignored," he said. "Then here was this new reality."

American Indian students lose federal aid

ASSISTANCE: A program intended to help Native-American students through graduate school was cut by 50 percent

Brooke Bryant
Freelance Reporter

Between rising tuition costs and federal cutbacks, finding enough money to pay for college is never easy.

For an estimated 300 American Indian students across the nation, including some here at the University, this year's 50 percent decrease in federal funding to the American Indian Graduate Center (AIGC) means yet another door of opportunity closed. These students will have to look elsewhere for the money to pursue their graduate education, or forgo it altogether.

The AIGC is a non-profit organization which was established in 1970. Its goal, according to Reginald Rodriguez, executive director of the center, is to provide more opportunities for American Indian students to pursue graduate studies.

"Not enough Indians were going to graduate school to get professional degrees and continue on with their education," Rodriguez said.

Working in cooperation with the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the AIGC has helped American Indians all over the country gain access to higher education.

In 1996, the AIGC's federal funding was cut from \$2.6 million to \$1.3 million, which means

that they will not be able to accept any new graduate students into their program for the 1996-1997 academic year. This is quite a change from previous years, when they have generally accepted between 300 and 400 new applicants each year.

"I guess it's a sign of the times now," said University graduate student Jason Younker, who receives money from the AIGC to pursue his degree in anthropology.

"Everything is getting tight. It's unfortunate, all of us having to rely on the government." Younker himself is unaffected by the cuts because the center will not discontinue its support of students currently in the program.

The AIGC will maintain the 425 students they are currently helping to support, and there is hope for other students sometime in the future as the current students graduate and no longer need the program's assistance.

Rodriguez said that in years to come, the 200 to 250 spots left vacant annually by graduating students will be filled by new applicants.

Students receive anywhere from \$250 to \$6000 from the AIGC, based on a scale of need. The scholarships do not provide any of the students with a full ride, but instead go to supplement funds they get from various outside sources, Rodriguez said.

"Congress has cut a lot of Indian programs. They just kind of hacked and whacked away at them," Rodriguez said. "We have been cut and it doesn't look like it's going to be put back in."

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Texans with oddest laughs compete for Ripley's recognition

DALLAS (AP) — Texans hoping their laughs will take them all the way to the bank are calling Ripley's Believe It Or Not! with their strangest chuckle, chortle or guffaw.

Ripley's is holding its "Oddest Laugh in Texas" contest, which offers a \$350 prize.

Contestants have until midnight tonight to call Ripley's' Laugh Lines and leave a record-

**STRANGER
THAN FICTION**

ing of their oddest laugh. About 200 people had entered as of Monday.

"Some of them are really funny or weird ... some people really put a lot of effort into it," said Scott Miranda, a spokesman for Ripley's. "But you're going to get some that just don't sound that good."

Fifteen finalists will compete for the title May 8.

D.C. Nix, 48, won last year with a laugh he said sounds like a "pig with asthma."

As the judge this year, the San Antonio resident will be looking for "anything that's different, unusual — or weird."

The Ripley's museums are named after Robert Ripley, whose cartoons on the world's oddities became famous in the 1920s. While there are 25 museums nationwide — two in Texas — the contest is only in Texas.

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