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# Perspectives

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**Emerald**



Photo illustration by the Emerald

## Afraid to get along?

Do you remember the Summer of Love? Well, welcome to the Summer of Fear, Eugene style.

Civil protesters are afraid that their basic rights to assemble and peacefully demonstrate are being trampled on. The anarchists — at least the small group within the larger congregation in town that continually pushes the envelope when it comes to protesting — are afraid that the police are not only out to torture them, but are keeping tabs on their personal movements as well.

The police and city officials aren't without fear. The police sense that protesters are out to truly harm them, with rally chants of "Kill the pigs!" as evidence to back up their claims. Business owners are also watching their backs, scared by masked marauders terrorizing restaurants and banks, toting signs declaring "Kill the Yuppies" and "Rob the Rich. Arm the Poor." And city officials are seemingly afraid to make any decisions that don't please all parties, which of course is impossible.

And some of us in the media are afraid, as well, but in a twisted way. As one Associated Press reporter told an Emerald reporter at Sunday's anarchist gathering in Washington-Jefferson Park, "If this doesn't turn violent, then there's no story." Thanks pal, for making the rest of us sound ethical and responsible, in contrast to your fear of not being able to write about mayhem and bloodshed.

How did we get to this point people? When did our Emerald City, historically known for its desire to hear all sides, become a "They said / They said" community, a mumbo-jumbo of rhetoric? At what point did our strive for diversity turn into suspicion, and fear?

Laying blame, or pinpointing the exact incident that caused problems, is like trying to answer the age-old chicken-egg question. This past weekend, did the riots occur because of the anarchists' tactics? Or were the police intimidation and harassment?

So who's guilty? Realistically, it's a combination of actions from all the groups involved, though neither group is willing to admit to any wrongdoing on their part.

Are the police non-tolerant? People walking down the streets, essentially causing little to no trouble — reports are that just one window was broken over the four-day ordeal — certainly

doesn't warrant the response of a police saturation throughout the downtown area. Yet, is it any surprise that the police took action when the activists' game of Red Rover stopped traffic in the street? No.

But releasing a homeless man from the Lane County Jail and refusing him possession of his own shirt and coat, his only protection from the elements and insects, is spiteful.

The anarchists' "Carnival Against Capital" at Washington-Jefferson Park caused little fear to anyone who attended. The heavy police presence just blocks away while the rally played out probably caused little fear to anyone passing the forces. City officials certainly weren't afraid Sunday afternoon in the light of day — several councilors were on

hand at the rally — but what about when they return to their chambers? Will they have the bravery to make tough decisions?

And what about Joe and Jane Citizens? Fear shouldn't be a part of our vocabulary, yet approximately 45 Eugene residents — business owners, protesters from all slices of life and just concerned citizens — got up at a June 8 Police Commission public forum and expressed just that sentiment: fear.

That's wrong no matter how you look at it. We're not so idealistic to think that the Summer of Love will ever return. But, we do want to see the Summer of Fear end before it really gets started.

This editorial represents the view of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

"Eugene appreciates the good intentions of its police and anarchists. We just wish they would play more basketball."

"There are two types of people in this crowd: participants and observers. One hundred years from now, the participants will be heroes and the observers will still be losers."

"I'm tired of the vocal minority influencing decisions. I want everyone's voice heard, even those who are not here tonight."

"Maybe if we feed the anarchists, they won't get so grouchy."

— **Unidentified male speaker**, at the rally.

— **Steven Heslin**, speaking at the June 18 anarchist rally in Washington-Jefferson Park.

— **Tom Simms**, while addressing the Eugene Police Commission meeting in a public forum on June 8.

— **Tom Atlee**, carrying the above words on a home-made sign at the rally in the park.

— **Todd Young**, a downtown business owner, speaking at the Police Commission public forum.

— **Katie Guske**, who was serving free food at a Food Not Bombs set-up.

## Anarchist protest gets us nowhere, so what's the point?

Oh, crap. Just as I was beginning to peruse the pages of the Wall Street Journal to consider future investment plans I find out that the awesome mechanism of capitalism is about to be destroyed. And that end is starting in our very own hamlet of Eugene because the beacons of wisdom that are our friendly local anarchists have kept their movement alive by taking to city streets and clashing with police to enlighten the rest of us about the error of our ways.

Termed as the "one-year anniversary of the insurrection that started it all," by Steve Heslin, described by some as an anarchist leader — wrap your head around that one, if you can — the event was attended by about 300 people in the Washington-Jefferson Park and

turned into a melee as police dispersed a small group that had broken off and was blocking several local streets.

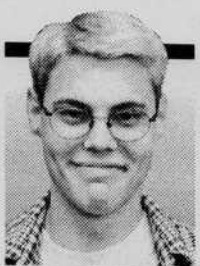
Of course, as per the Eugene usual, the protesters were the real victims. Victims of police brutality, victims of a harsh capitalistic system. Victims, too, I suppose, of a righteous cause they are but mere pawns in.

We should all take a moment to realize what a great service the anarchists do for our community. They give police overtime to collect and they keep insurance companies on their toes so they can pay out claims of shops damaged by the holy

crusaders.

To those who would argue that the crowd has no business disrupting life for the rest of us, I say this is just political speech in the nonviolent heritage of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mohatma Gandhi. Never mind that little detail that our protesters throw rocks and bottles at police and damage local businesses and infrastructure.

Also, I say forget that the necessarily unorganized group hasn't put forth any realistic social alternative to that which they protest. It's not important that their ideals, when they



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