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COMMENTARY

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Friday, September 30, 2002

Editorial

Throw rioters out with the burning trash

It's a sad statement that the University of Oregon received a mention on the national news for campus-area riots — which were about *nothing*.

CNN Headline News ran a segment Sunday afternoon featuring some of the University's finest students tearing down street signs, pushing Dumpsters into a giant fire and in general, acting criminally irresponsible. In video obtained by the Emerald, the police appeared to act in an exemplary fashion. What we saw looked like a careful, responsible attempt to bring the crowds under control.

It's not as if other, intelligent people haven't found real issues to protest. Between 150,000 and 400,000 people marched in London on Saturday to express their opposition to war in Iraq. Thousands of protesters spent the weekend in Washington, D.C., demonstrating for global justice. Bicyclists in Portland and San Francisco brought car traffic to a near-standstill Friday while celebrating the 10th anniversary of the monthly Critical Mass protests.

We're not saying we agree with those protesters. But at least they had reasons. Here in Eugene, the best students could do was destroy public property and physically attack police while chanting "U-S-A." There's the current state of youthful patriotism, proudly on display.

Many of the individuals involved were drunk at the time. We know alcohol is a dangerous drug, but this incident shows *how* dangerous it can be. And maybe the drunkenness, combined with newfound freedom, led the young adults to excess.

Maybe most of those involved were spoiled as youngsters and have never faced consequences for their actions. Maybe they don't yet know what it is to be a responsible human being. Maybe their parents didn't teach them.

Whatever the reason, they should know there are consequences. Police spent thousands of dollars on overtime and equipment costs. The city of Eugene spent thousands cleaning up the mess. Four hundred people lost phone service. Yes, rioters, adults do have to clean up the messes you make.

All of these costs are one of the reasons the Eugene Police Department instituted the Special Response Fee nearly two years ago. In a larger, more tangential sense, these costs to the community and to the state affect the ability of governments to provide services — including higher education. So when a tuition increase comes, know that rioters are one small part of the problem.

Given the effect on the community, the public relations disaster and the sheer indefensibility of the rioters' actions, the University needs to take a stand. This same sort of event happened only four months ago. If the University does not provide strong consequences for students convicted of these crimes, then it is tacitly accepting the behavior as a natural part of college life.

The Student Conduct Code must be amended. Any student convicted of participation in the weekend's riot should be thrown out of the University. We don't want them here. They aren't representative of this student body. We deserve national recognition for our accomplishments, not our wrongdoing.

Editorial policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submission must include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

Deeper than demographics

The University is woefully inadequate at providing an intellectual environment where all sides of any issue are represented equally. I have witnessed many debates of current events as well as course material that are blatantly one-sided, overly emotional or inexcusably ethnocentric.

Last term I took an ethnic studies class, and my professor took plenty of time to lament what he saw as a major contradiction in the image our school presents to the public and the reality of attending the University. He went on to say that the administration should put a major focus on increasing recruitment and hiring of minorities to more truly live up to the University's reputation as a diverse and multicultural institution.

I agree with him that the University needs a more diverse student and faculty body, but this cannot be achieved simply by reaching pre-set racial and ethnic quotas.

Following the atrocity on Sept. 11, all of my professors took at least a little time out of their lectures to discuss the event with students and share reactions to the military action in Afghanistan.

One of them voiced the opinion that the bombing of Afghan towns and villages where military forces were stationed was appalling and was not going to solve anything. He is a professor of religion, and his philosophy was that more killing could not bring back those who were already dead. He thought we should have been trying to understand the anger and frustration that had driven these men to sacrifice their lives and the lives of so many others in order to make a statement.

He posed the following question to the class: Was the terrorist act of Sept. 11 any different than U.N. forces killing Afghan citizens more slowly with bombs and bullets?

During our discussion, many of my classmates responded no, it was not, and

that President George W. Bush was a militant fanatic who would use any excuse to go to war. The professor responded to each student with a few words or sentences before moving on.

I raised my hand and said that, yes, it was different, because the United Nations only attacked military targets, never civilians. The fact that civilian casualties were so high, I said, was at least in part because of the intentional placement of military installations in highly populated areas. As soon as I was finished, the professor called on another student, and I received more than a few dirty looks from my classmates.

A few weeks later, a similar debate took place in a sociology discussion section. The GTF said the United States was even more guilty of terrorism than the perpetrators of Sept. 11 because there were more Afghan citizens killed than there were casualties at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon combined.

"Terrorism" happened to be one of our vocabulary words, and it was de-

finied as the deliberate attempt to harm civilians. I asked him if he believed the United Nations had intentionally killed civilians. He said no.

Then, I replied, by your own definition, that does not qualify as a terrorist act. To my surprise, he refused to admit his contradiction, doggedly repeating himself with no new explanation or qualification.

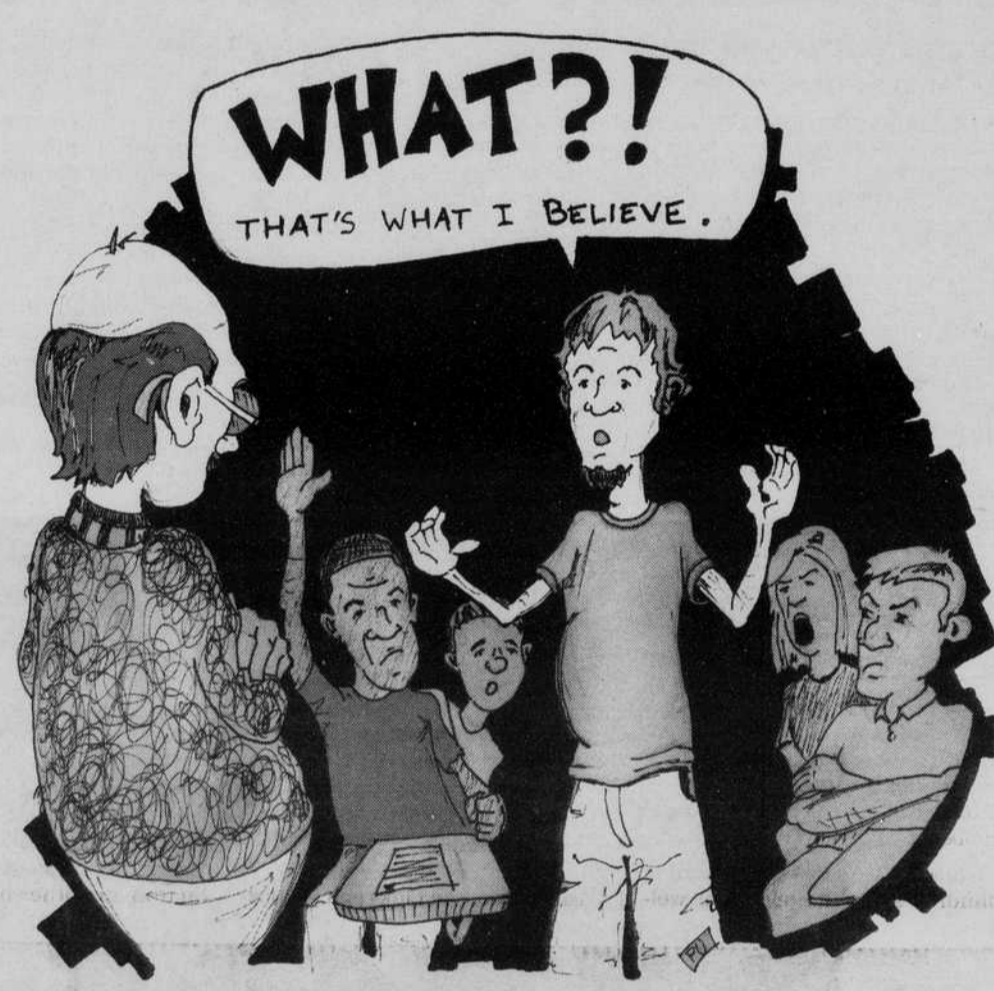
The University can live up to its reputation as a diverse, open-minded and balanced intellectual community only by redefining its concept of the word "diverse." If the University wants a politically correct number of this or that phenotype to parade in front of a national audience and use as leverage to sell itself to incoming freshman, fine.

I, on the other hand, care more about interacting with people who think in different ways rather than people who look a certain way or can claim a certain heritage.

Contact the columnist at mreillicogrove@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



M. Reilly Cosgrove
 Separate this



Peter Utsey Emerald

CORRECTIONS

The article "Where the money goes" (ODE, Sept. 23) should have said the total student incidental fee collected for this school year is \$8,496,967, the amount distributed by the Programs Finance Committee is \$4,294,948, the amount distributed by the EMU Board is \$3,032,860 and the amount distributed by the Athletic Department Finance Committee is \$1,169,159.

The photograph accompanying the article "Governor race heats up" (ODE, Sept. 23) should have identified Ted Kulongoski's party affiliation as Democrat.

The article "Governor race heats up" should have said Richard Alevizos used to serve on two committees of the Lane County Human Rights Commission. Although Alevizos' Web site states he "is currently on two committees," Alevizos himself said his committee service was in the past.

The Emerald regrets the errors.

CLARIFICATION

The article "Governor race heats up" said that Alevizos' platform is based on an independent candidate being elected to replace a major-party governor. The article should have made clear that Alevizos' platform is focused on states' rights issues. Alevizos said an independent candidate is needed because a major-party candidate will work with Attorney General John Ashcroft to erode states' rights.