

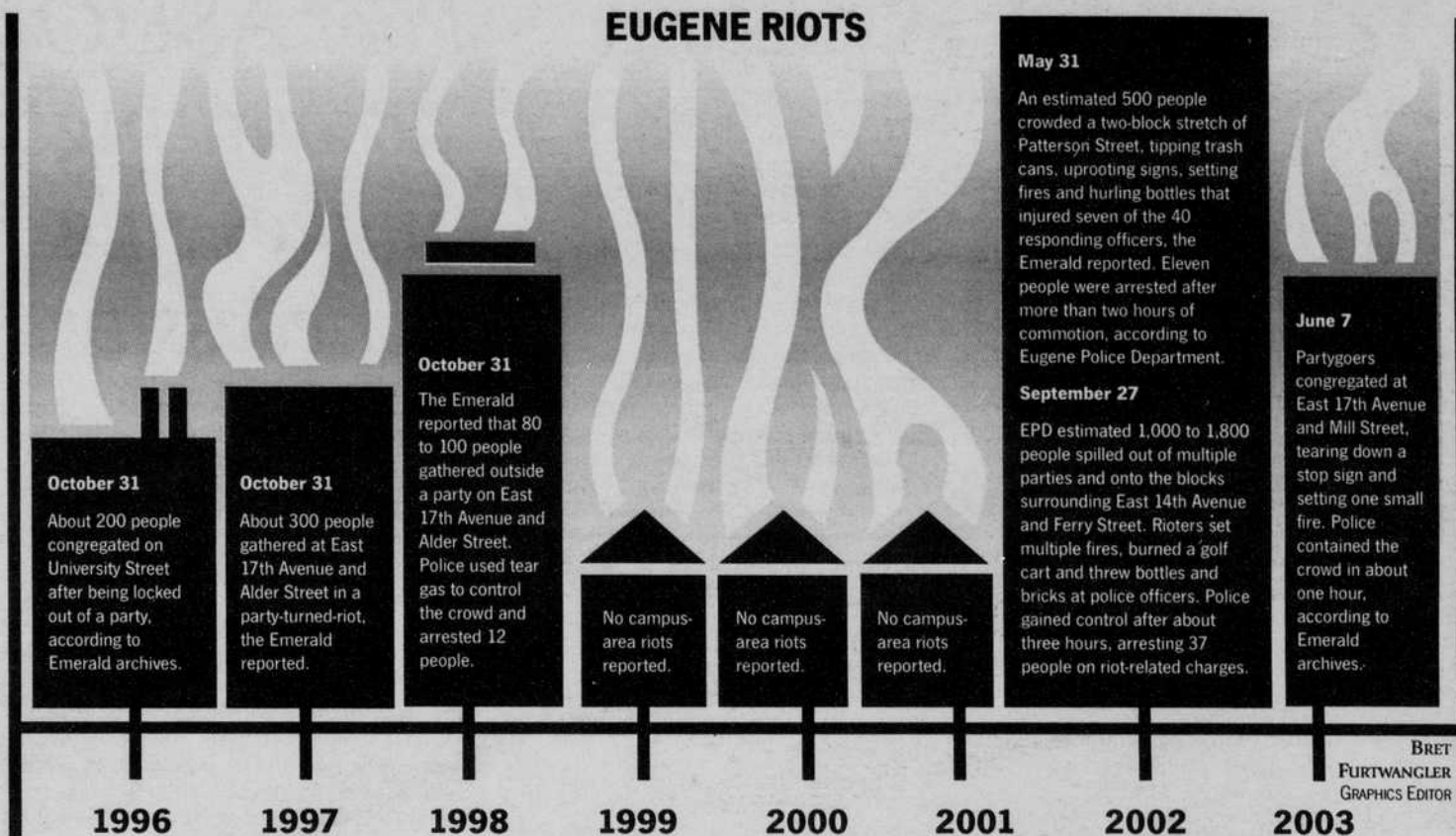
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EUGENE RIOTS



Students + Alcohol = Riots?

The University participates in a national study looking to explain why parties cause violent riots

BY KARA HANSEN
NEWS REPORTER

Take a few hundred college students, throw in some alcohol, loud music and the police, and there's potential for a riot, according to student accounts gleaned from recent University research.

The University joined 11 schools in a 2003 national study exploring

why off-campus parties occasionally turn violent. The project, which concluded Sept. 9, was the first of its kind in the nation and represented a step toward determining why the University and other participating schools have been subject to riots, said Sheryl Eyster, assistant dean and associate director of student life.

The West University neighbor-

hood has seen 11 riots since 1988, three of which occurred between 2002 and 2003 after three years without riot activity, according to University Director and Associate Dean of Student Life Laura Blake Jones. Partygoers spilled onto streets, and, in some instances, uprooted street signs, burned a golf cart and hurled rocks and bottles that injured police officers, according to police reports and Emerald archives. On the tail of a five-year increase in parties that sparked violence, University students blamed a dangerous combination of booze

and negative perceptions of police tactics for fueling violence.

The research summary also produced a definition of what constitutes a typical party. It included three ingredients: "boys, girls and alcohol."

Surveys of 381 University students and accounts gathered from six focus groups indicated that many students felt police-enforcement strategies, which they said were sometimes unnecessary and irrational, could lead to riots.

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UO rule expanded for gender concerns

The change allows transgender people to file a grievance if they feel discriminated against

BY PARKER HOWELL
SENIOR NEWS REPORTER

Transgender students and staff are now specifically protected from discrimination under a recent change to the University's non-discrimination policy.

The permanent rule change — which allows transgender people to file grievances alleging they were discriminated against because of their gender expression or gender identity — went into effect Sept. 14.

The policy forbids denying educational or professional opportunities to students and University employees on grounds other than intellectual merit.

General Counsel to the University Melinda Grier said the change was the result of concerns from members of the University community who did not feel protected by the existing language of the University's Prohibited Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment and Sexual Harassment policy, which also forbids discrimination or harassment on the basis of age, race, religion and other characteristics.

"There was a sense that some folks didn't have the level of protection they wanted," Grier said.

Before the new policy was effected,

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Bicyclists take 950-mile ride to end voter apathy

Ride4America begins its tour of western Oregon to visit college campuses via bike

BY MEGHANN CUNIFF
NEWS REPORTER

When a group of bicyclists departed Sunday morning from Lane Community College to begin an estimated 950-mile journey around Oregon, University graduate Jason Elmendorf saw it not just as an exercise of muscles, but also an exercise of civil rights.

The bicyclists are part of Ride4America, a volunteer organization based in Eugene that Elmendorf said is dedicated to ending voter apathy and encouraging political activism.

"We're trying to encourage our fellow citizens to participate in the political process," volunteer La Vonne Brous said. "It's the only way we can keep it our country."

Ride4America participants

will visit dozens of cities around Oregon, stopping at college campuses and town centers to talk to citizens about the upcoming election and issues that are pertinent to their lives before returning to Eugene on October 25, Elmendorf said.

Though Ride4America supports Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry, Elmendorf, who founded the organization, said its goal is not to encourage students to vote Democratic, but rather to simply encourage them to vote.

"My goal is to not make it overtly partisan, but more about showing people what it means to be an American and letting them figure it out from there," Elmendorf said.

Elmendorf said he never considered himself to be much of a political activist but was

alarmed by what he perceived as the current administration's disregard for the basic principles of democracy.

"There was sense that people had to fear repercussion for being critical of the government," Elmendorf said. "These are some of the things you don't do in a democracy."

Elmendorf decided to turn his apathy into activism and began searching for a creative way to encourage Oregonians all across the state to do the same.

With his love for bicycling and desire to see the Oregon countryside, Elmendorf said a bike trip around the state struck him as the perfect way to express his right to free speech.

Part of Ride4America's mission is to connect with younger voters, so Elmendorf designed a route that would allow them to visit the maximum number of

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TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Jason Elmendorf and five other riders left Lane Community College Sunday morning to complete another leg in their journey around Oregon in support of Presidential candidate John Kerry.