

SE BUSCA AYUNDANTE

While walking down a narrow aisle at a local store, I passed a young Latino family. Dad moved aside and mom clutched her young son. Fear was in their eyes.

Based on Trump-incited anti-immigrant behavior and new immigration policies, their fear is reasonable. Any encounter that may draw attention — a false accusation, a traffic ticket, a misunderstanding or a cheating employer — could lead to jail, deportation and family separation.

During the election you couldn't miss the Trump signs in rural farm areas. If I were a Latino worker, undocumented or not, the last place I'd go would be a farmer's field, or a processing plant, or a site for day laborers — fish in a barrel for federal immigration agents.

Last year, before Trump's new, stricter and broader deportation rules that could victimize millions of immigrants, I read national stories of farmers forced to leave thousands of dollars worth of crops rot-

ting in their fields since they couldn't find enough workers local or otherwise for picking or processing. Farmers lost money and produce prices increased. And few Latino families spent money in local stores.

Perhaps all those Trump signs could be painted over to read: Help Wanted!

You reap what you sow.

Leslie Weinstein
Eugene

STOP THE REGRESSIVE LEFT

As *EW*'s letter's section reflects, many people are either pro-Trump, intellectually dishonest and insane, or anti-Trump, intellectually dishonest and insane.

Cooler heads are reminded of how racist and crazy the right was when Obama took office. Apparently, everyone is a Nazi and it's okay to physically assault people for exercising their right to peaceably assemble and freedom of speech.

At the F17 [Feb. 17] march downtown, rumors spread like wildfire that I

am a white supremacist because I dared to criticize Black Lives Matter for calling for violence and because one of the patches on my coat is the German flag.

So-called "hate-free zones" are full of hate. Many who preach tolerance are extremely intolerant. Many who claim to be against racism and sexism are "reverse" racists and sexists. But apparently, ignorance is strength, freedom is slavery, hate is love, violent authoritarians are peaceful anarchists, speech is violence and it's okay to violate civil liberties because hysterical mobs are good and wise enough to know who is a Nazi and who is not. Sure.

All of this is severely discrediting the left. Stop the witch hunt. How? Start by heeding the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who, despite what propagandists like Talib Kweli have recently claimed, unambiguously condemned riots.

Most importantly, be an individual: Refuse to simply believe what you are told, to give in to fear, hatred, hysteria and peer

pressure. Love, not hate, is the way.

Justin Antitheist
Eugene

SILENCE=CONSENT

There is no mercy in the current wave of dream-crushing selfishness and hate. Time to focus on a vision that includes the needs and voices of women, children, people of color and indigenous peoples, the under- and unemployed, financially struggling and medically fragile, immigrants, veterans and so many others who have become fodder for religious, financial and political gain.

Our hearts must remain open to those who view things differently from this vision. The Dalai Lama said "we are all one — all the same."

Love but resist, and advance a new vision.

We must draft ourselves into a revolutionary movement to salvage what little democracy remains and bring that original vision of liberty and justice for all to a new

DESIGN MATTERS BY JERRY DIETHELM

The Turning Point Downtown?

THE PARK BLOCKS AND KESEY SQUARE

When people come to Eugene for the 2021 World Track and Field Championships, they will, like all tourists, spend a large majority of their time in our outdoor public spaces. The most charitable way to describe our present situation is that we are not yet quite ready for them downtown.

A year ago last December people filled the LCC downtown center to express their revived hopes about improving our downtown park and open spaces and to let city officials know unambiguously that they didn't want to sell Kesey Square.

The upshot was that we needed help with our open space planning, and so the city hired The Partnership for Public Spaces from New York City. For the past 30-plus years, the firm has developed and successfully applied the ideas of William H. Whyte's *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* to cities around the country and the world.

So PPS came, consulted and emphasized that we weren't going to be able to realize our significant potential for vibrant and healthy downtown places until we came to grips with the negative social dimensions of our present situation. Successful placemaking, as they called it, needed to be understood as a socially driven, physical design process. Here is a partial critique of two of their proposals.

The Park Blocks

The PPS proposal for the Park Blocks is in happy agreement with the city's most recent decision to restore the northwest Park Block and build a City Hall that crowns it along 7th Avenue. Their "big idea" here: to restore the Park Blocks to central importance as "the civic square for all Eugene," overlaps perfectly with what has become our own idea.

We'd already made it easy for them by deciding that

this was the right place for a more permanent home for our farmers and Saturday markets, and that it was time to retire the "butterfly" parking lot. On PPS founder-president Fred Kent's first trip to Eugene, he looked down on the Park Blocks from the Hilton and said that this was where we should place our City Hall.

More controversial are their recommendations for the existing Park Blocks. We've grown used to their presence as passive park space downtown, our pastoral downtown green. In a word, they recommend that this is the time to reassess their potential and change from predominately passive to much more active use: the West Park Block to be redesigned for families and children; the East Park Block to better support programmed activities and events. Keep the trees, they say, but open them up.

The social strategy behind this is to enliven our downtown spaces with more regular round-the-clock and calendar use and to design them to purposefully serve a wider diversity of people.

The Park Blocks are great assets on market days, just as Kesey Square is just what is needed when events fill it with purposeful and passionate people. But our downtown spaces need to be transformed from empty, passive receptacles at non-event times and managed to become the social, political and commercial centers of our downtown living.

If there is an obvious missing element in the PPS plan, it is bathrooms. Ice cream doesn't just go in one end and stay there. No one is going to bring their kids downtown to play in the East Park Block if there is nowhere to take them nearby. The Eugene Public Library, which now bears the brunt for those in need of bathrooms and shelter downtown, is just too far away and is sorely in need of help in this regard.

This is of course a basic need for everyone, but it is important not to forget to design for the retired and the

elderly. Support for their growing presence and participation downtown should be much more present in the plan. They also serve who sit and watch.

Kesey Square

The PPS consultants said, "We're going to call it Kesey Square," and so should we officially and soon. Rumor has it that Dan Egan, of the Wildish Community Theater, is actively conspiring to steal the Kesey name and sculpture over to Springfield.

Here the proposed social strategy echoes the Park Blocks. The space needs to have a "24-hour" anchor, a built-in café or restaurant or beer garden, to keep it alive at non-event times. They show a number of examples where this has been done successfully, including possibilities for temporary cover.

The PPS proposal has essentially replaced the food carts, which reduce the impact of the high brick walls, with more permanent structures. The problem is that the carts can fill up too much of the square, reducing the center's flexibility and use for events. The obvious answer is still to open up the flanking walls to connect and overlap business with the square.

What is wanted is a better balance between commercially active, penetrated walls and flexible inter or space for tables and events. The Kesey sculpture doesn't want or need PPS's remodeled base, but it could be moved a bit closer to the corner to help form multi-useful central space.

Resolving the zoning, right-of-way and fire code issues that are needed to make wall penetration possible and economically attractive to the owner could still use a bit of an outside push. But what are consultants for? I've heard of a New York minute, but never about New York timid.

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