

UC Berkeley's Shame

by Gary Fouse



The dust has barely settled on the UC Berkeley campus after Wednesday night's riot. The cause? The College Republicans had invited Milo Yiannopoulos, a conservative, gay, British editor from Breitbart. Yiannopoulos was making the next-to-last appearance of his "Dangerous Faggot tour" in which he uses comedy and sarcasm to mock political correctness and the left. His appearances at other campuses had already stirred protests and cancellations, most recently at UC Davis. At the University of Washington, a raucous protest outside the event actually resulted in a shooting. The event went on. Now we have Berkeley. What happened at UC Berkeley was an embarrassment for the university. To make it worse, the events leading up to and after the incident itself have brought embarrassment to a supposedly great university, which hardly needed any more bad publicity.

The announcement of Yiannopoulos' pending appearance on

February 1 set the left-wingers on campus-and off- into motion. Over 100 professors signed off on two open letters to the chancellor, a hapless individual named Nicholas Dirks, asking him to intervene and force a halt to the appearance based on their claim that Yiannopoulos was a bigot who engaged in hate speech. The school's campus paper, *The Daily Californian*, published the two letters sent by the professors, but with a header that advised that they had [edited](#) the letters "for style and clarity." Imagine that. Student journalists have to edit open letters written (or signed off on) by professors for style and clarity.

Dirks is actually a lame duck chancellor who has been forced out by UC President Janet Napolitano over alleged [misuse of official funds](#) to further his own interest. This is a guy who had an escape hatch built into his office in the event of student protests that might get out of hand. UC Berkeley is currently searching for a new chancellor. In a rare display of gumption, Dirks [announced](#) days before the scheduled event that as much as he didn't like Yiannopoulos himself, the principle of free speech dictated that the event would not be blocked.

Then the *Daily Californian*, arguably the worst campus paper in the nation when it comes to publishing outrageous and profane prose, put out an [op-ed](#) on January 31 by a student urging students to show up and "kick Yiannopoulos off the campus." Nowhere was there the word "peaceful" in the op-ed. It was downright inflammatory and possibly contributed to what happened the next evening.

As we all know, a violent protest (or riot if you prefer) forced a cancellation of the event on Wednesday night. Fires were set, windows smashed, and some people were beaten up both on and off campus. Incredibly, only one arrest was made, according to the police, a man who refused orders to move. The ones doing the damage wore masks, and in all probability, many were outside agitators and anarchists.

But it didn't end Wednesday night. The next evening, UCB professor and former labor secretary, Robert Reich [appeared on CNN](#) with Don Lemon. He stated that the rioters (who were masked) were not UC Berkeley students-because he knew the students (apparently all 38,000 of them). In addition, he told Lemon that he heard rumors that the rioters were actually right wing types trying to discredit the school's reputation for free speech. I would love to get a peek at Dr Rumor's lesson plan some day.

And the *Daily Californian*, not to be outdone, is running a [cartoon](#) showing Yiannopoulos being kicked-literally kicked-off campus by the righteous students standing up to right-wing hate. An accompanying [staff editorial](#) claims that the protest actually showed that free speech was present at UCB. In other words, the rioters were expressing their free speech. (Maybe that's why there was only one arrest by campus cops.) To be fair, [one op-ed writer](#) expressed disgust.

UC Berkeley is not the only university that has been caught up in left-wing assaults against free speech and open discourse of controversial issues. This is a problem that extends from West Coast to East Coast and north to south. It is all part of the university culture, a culture that is robbing much of our youth of the quality education they and their families pay for. UC Berkeley is supposed to be one of the top universities in the nation. It is the flagship campus of the University of California system, and as such, we expect more. Instead it an embarrassment. It is an institution with poor leadership and infected with left-wing professors who feel it is their mission in life to indoctrinate our children to their world view, whether it be bashing Israel or bashing America or bashing Western civilization in general.

One positive result is that the American public has awakened to the rot that infests our universities. I predict that we will soon reach the point where donations from rich alumni will start to dry up. In addition, tax-payers will start

demanding that their tax dollars no longer be used to fund places like UC Berkeley.