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opinion

Racism, hate should be addressed

The Survey

The Little Hawk recently conducted a survey regarding racial perceptions at City High School. More than 350 students (about 23% of the student body) took the survey which addressed prejudices regarding race, religion and sexuality. While many students claimed to be neutral towards every group, a significant number of them chose to be honest with themselves in saying they had unfavorable views towards certain groups of people.

"Pretending that City High is hate free for long enough won't make it true."

Race

The most interesting numbers found in the survey were those regarding race. While only 2% of students

surveyed claimed to have an unfavorable view towards white students, a staggering 13% claimed the same against black students. The survey also revealed that people are remarkably neutral towards Native American students.

Religion

The religion questions yielded few interesting revelations. In true City High fashion, survey responses remained apathetic and few students took a hard stance.

Sexuality

In the racial and religion portions of the survey, the vast majority of students cited their views as neutral. However, in the two questions about sexuality, the votes for favorable, neutral and

unfavorable were split almost in thirds. It is clearly expected in a liberal town like Iowa City that around 30% of those polled would have a favorable view towards gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender/whatever students, but the fact that more than a quarter of Little Hawks are unfavorable towards gay teens is surprising, to say the least.

The Issue

Even though the survey was completely reasonable on a journalistic level, The Little Hawk went through a considerable amount of trouble in the decision of how to present the statistics, or even if we should print them at all. Students, teachers, administrators and even our own adviser and staff members often felt reluctant to address the issue of racism.

Our View

The editorial board of The Little Hawk is certainly not made up of experts in the field of racism. We don't have any clear-cut ideas on how to rid our student body of prejudice. However, one thing we are sure about is that ignoring a problem is not a good way to make it go away. Pretending that City High is hate free for long enough won't make it true. The students and staff at City High need to work together in addressing the issue of hate.

Numbers

350
 Number of students at City High who took the survey

2
 Percent of students surveyed who have an unfavorable view towards white students

13
 Percent of students surveyed who have an unfavorable view towards black students

28
 Percent of students surveyed who have an unfavorable view towards GLBT students



Editorial board vote

Should the City High community work together to stop hate?

Yes 6 **No 0**

Chalk one up for "The Man"

Unfair UI regulation outlaws chalk on campus and charges absurd "clean-up fee" to offenders.

A group of students, chalk in hand, to protest the War in Iraq walked in front of Jessup Hall. They wrote anti-war messages, and drew pictures of peace signs just like kids drawing hopscotch boards on the sidewalk on their front lawns.

Several days later, the University of Iowa Anti-war Committee received an e-mail from the University of Iowa administration informing them of the prohibition on chalking University sidewalks anywhere on campus sidewalks. Concerns voiced were that the University couldn't control the messages, and that could lead to obscenity throughout the campus. The University said that the UIAC would not pay for cleanup costs. The University threatened fines as well as disciplinary action by the Dean of Students.

"The only good chalking policy is to allow chalking on sidewalks," UIAC member and UI junior, Ryan Metz said. "The current policy is comically draconian."

Iowa's stance on such a harmless and trivial thing as "sidewalk chalking" can only be the result of an opposition to free speech. The UI Administration's concern is that they have no control over the message; however, there will always be forums for speech that are unregulated. In fact, the University does have control over the message in this instance-- they can throw water and erase anything they feel is inappropriate and it's as simple as that.

"The University should erase all offensive and derogatory phrases," Metz said.

Although the policy has stood for years, it is just starting to be enforced this year. The entire student body received an email on Sept. 12 from William (Bill) R. Nelson, the Associate Director of University Life

Centers and Director of Student Life. The message cited that Iowa was not attempting to limit free speech, only trying to determine an appropriate forum for it. The email also stated that student organizations would be subject to disciplinary action.

Though the University may mean well with this decision, they are only restricting liberty and free speech in a way that is unnecessary and unwarranted. The University's only alternative is posting 11 by 14 inch posters on dorm bulletin boards is a joke. Posting advertisements for clubs on computer paper on one of a few dozen towers doesn't nearly achieve what the sponsor's intent is. Seeing a flyer somewhere around campus can never have the same effect as a sidewalk covered in colorful writing and murals.

Chalking, as it has come to be known, also adds diversity and character by having art on the U of I campus. Anyone walking around can breeze by a kiosk filled with hundreds of flyers with everything from club advertisements to wanted roommates to guitar lessons, but the work and personal touch can't be replicated other than to spend time painting a mural with the tools of a second grade kid.

"I don't think they will fine us, because they know the policy is ridiculous," Metz said. "It's generally an unenforceable policy."

"...the policy is ridiculous. It's generally an unenforceable policy."
 -Ryan Metz

Editorial board vote

Should the UI allow students to "chalk" campus sidewalks?

Yes 4 **No 2**

Don't like what you see?

Do something about it!

The Little Hawk, being a student publication, is a forum for all City High students. Any suggestions you have regarding the production of the Little Hawk can be brought to Jeff Morris in room 2109 or any of the Little Hawk Editors.

The views expressed in columns and editorial cartoons are solely that of the author or artist. Editorials express the views of the editorial board.



The Little Hawk encourages letters to the editor, but reserves the right to choose which contributions to publish.