

SHUT DOWN MILO Yiannopoulos

No White Supremacist Neo-Fascist at UC Berkeley

TODAY, Wednesday Feb. 1

Pauley Ballroom of UC Berkeley's MLK Student Union
(Telegraph and Bancroft, 10 min. walk from downtown Berkeley BART)

Arrive early at 5pm (Milo intends to speak at 8 pm)

Wear a white t-shirt and blue jeans to show solidarity and ensure safety for protesters on our side. Bring something to cover your face and head in case the police try to use tear gas. Be on the lookout for Yiannopoulos to come out and assault the protest early, before he's scheduled to speak, as he's been known to do. If we are determined and united in the course of defending ourselves, we can shut him down. Yiannopoulos' appearance at UC Berkeley poses a direct threat to students and the campus community. He wants to build a proto-fascist youth thug organization at UC Berkeley that will, if he's allowed to speak, feel emboldened to openly attack and terrorize immigrant, black, Latina/o, Muslim, women, and trans students. We need to send him a strong, loud message that he is NOT welcome at Berkeley. He was shut down at UC Davis two weeks ago. He was forced to cancel at UCLA and will not be allowed to speak at that campus in this tour. UC Berkeley needs to be the place where we make sure that he never feels like he can set foot in California again.

The Berkeley College Republicans and UC Berkeley plan to host an event by Milo Yiannopoulos, a racist, misogynistic demagogue whose speaking tour, the "Dangerous Faggot Tour," has incited a rash of hate crimes and physical confrontations at numerous universities, and even the shooting of an anti-fascist protester by a Trump supporter at the University of Washington. Protesters at many campuses in the U.S. have cancelled his engagements. Yiannopoulos notoriously riles up a lynch-mob mentality in his audiences, promoting violence, rape, harassment, and repression against minorities, women, and immigrants. His "speeches" are a bombast of racial and sexual slurs, provocations, and curse-laden threats. His various YouTube videos are a catalogue of hate and bigotry. Yiannopoulos is not a stand-up comedian. He is a twisted psychopath and defender of rape who claims that all women who charge men with rape are liars. Now an editor for Breitbart, his career and infamy began through his internet harassment campaign against women and led to his prominence as an "alt-right" personality and news editor, who calls Donald Trump "Daddy."

If Yiannopoulos is able to go forward with his speech, Chancellor Dirks and his administration will be directly responsible for aiding and allowing this neo-fascist to come and endanger students at UC Berkeley and all the fallout that takes place as a result. It is clearly dangerous for Dirks to be allowed to make decisions for the UC Berkeley campus. There is no question that he should leave his position as chancellor of UC Berkeley immediately. The President of DePaul University was forced to resign by anti-racist struggles on his campus that included student mobilizations to shut down Milo.

The Milo Yiannopoulos tour represents an imminent, physical threat to the students and faculty of UC Berkeley. By hosting the event, the UCB administration would be giving direct license to the incitement of bigotry and terror across the campus. Hate speech is not free speech—a primary aim of demagogues like Yiannopoulos is to repress and silence the speech of minorities and women, to eradicate from all social life everything that Yiannopoulos labels as "political correctness." His aim is to create a hostile climate in which free speech becomes impossible, in which the rights and obligations of civil discourse can no longer be upheld because civil discourse itself will cease to exist.

UC Berkeley should follow the example of other campuses that have canceled Milo's tour engagements: NYU, University of Miami, Florida Atlantic University, Villanova University, and the University of Maryland. The alternative is the prospect of clashes between white and minority students, anti-fascist and fascist sympathizers as occurred at places like UC Davis, University of Washington, DePaul University, UC Irvine, Rutgers University and others. Yiannopoulos incited, escalated, and promoted the confrontations, as his audiences chanted "grab her by the pussy!" and other hate speech. This is not an event that any college campus should condone—it threatens the safety and well-being of the students and faculty, and threatens the academic mission to promote learning and leadership. The confrontations will not be confined to the time and place of the event; hate crimes will escalate, and innocent people will suffer verbal or physical abuses. This is the established pattern of the Milo Yiannopoulos tour—that hateful pattern must be broken at UC Berkeley.

The faculty of Berkeley have already rightly demanded that Milo be kept off the campus. The faculty understands that this is not a question of abstract free speech, it is a question of the right of immigrant, minority, and women students to attend Berkeley free to live and learn in a safe environment. Dirks' failure to recognize that warrants the faculty to call for his immediate removal now, and not wait until his scheduled departure in June. Students and the Bay Area community must also stand up against the proliferation of hate and the prospect of a lynch-mob, race-riot mentality spreading across campus. The instigator of this phenomenon must be stopped. Milo Yiannopoulos intends to speak at Pauley Ballroom in the MLK Student Union Building at UC Berkeley (corner of Telegraph and Bancroft) at 8pm. This event must not go forward on this campus. UC Berkeley prides itself as a diverse, international community, with students of many nationalities, ethnicities, religions, and cultures. We must defend the very best of that tradition now, against the threat that Yiannopoulos or other demagogues may seize upon the current political climate of the Trump presidency to build a fascist youth movement in America. The threat is real. Our stand must be clear: no white supremacist neo-fascists at UC Berkeley.

BAMN Meets Mondays 7pm at 225 Dwinelle Hall, UCB

Coalition to Defend Affirmative Action, Integration and Immigrant Rights and Fight for Equality
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