Dean of Students Office will investigate QUEER

by JANINE BILLY
Daily Editorial Board

The Dean of Students Office ordered the removal of the sexually explicit posters put up last Wednesday by Queer United Enlightened Erotic Radicals and plans to pursue an investigation and possibly take action against the group, according to Associate Dean of Students Bruce Reitman.

Reitman said last week that his office had received several complaints about the posters from members of the Tufts community, adding that some people not affiliated with his office had also removed signs.

Reitman called the posters "graffiti terrorism" and "cheap shots," saying that members of the group refuse to claim responsibility for their actions. He described the posters as "one of the worst things [he has] seen on campus."

QUEER began posting campus late last semester but no members have yet identified themselves publicly. The group is believed by some to be made up of members of the Tufts Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual community.

Associate Dean of Students
Bruce Reitman

trying to promote gay visibility. Some of the most recent posters illustrated oral sex between members of the same sex.

"Public pornography... has no place on campus," Reitman said.

In addition, Reitman stated that the QUEER posters violate the University poster and banner policy, since the group is not recognized by the Tufts Community.

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Reitman says posters "backfired"

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lity Union Judicary. The policy states that all posters and banners must be approved by the Administration.

According to Reitman, the Dean of Students Office investigating the origin of the posters. He said that the Dean of Students Office would demand cooperation from the Tufts Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community if it were known that QUEER was a group from within the TLGBC, but added that this "is not the case."

TLGBC member Brian Egleston said he does not know who is involved in QUEER. He believes that the people responsible for the posting are not the "more vocal" members of the gay community, but rather those who do not want to speak out publicly.

Senior Derrick Jones, a TLGBC member, said that he does not know who is involved in QUEER but speculated that the group is related to Queer Nation, a national gay and lesbian activist group known for its use of pornographic posters.

He called Queer Nation a "very blunt political organization."

Jones said that the posters were not "in the traditional Tufts flavor" but added that all types of activism and politics are necessary when "the existence of a community is negated."

Reitman believes that Wednesday's QUEER posting "backfired" if "intended to increase awareness about the plight of gay individuals" and resulted in "gay bashing" regardless of the intent.

If the reaction of students coming into the Dean of Students Office is "indicative of campus feeling," then QUEER is "doing more to increase hostility toward the gay community than anything else could," Reitman said.

Egleston does not believe that the posters had any adverse effect on gay people or on the TLGBC. He said they brought out "the homophobia that's already there," but could not have changed people's beliefs.

Jones believes that though the gay community at Tufts is "recognized," it is only "tolerated." He does not believe the posters decreased tolerance toward gay individuals but that they will result in "badly needed" discourse.

Jones explained that normally a minority group is "uncomfortable" among a majority group. Though the majority may recognize the minority, it cannot empathize, he said. Jones added that the pornographic posters made the majority feel "uncomfortable" and thus he hopes will lead to "more productive change."

Most of the people within the TLGBC think the posters are funny, Egleston said. He said that most members have seen similar posters from Queer Nation in Boston and are indifferent to them.

TLGBC members Ellen Wong and Wayne Hoffman said that they were not on campus Wednesday and could not comment on the posters.

Faculty advisor to the TLGBC Donna Penn said last week that she did not see the posters and does not know who is involved in QUEER.