



Video Ad Feedback

Outsiders left UCLA protesters beaten and bloody

05:10 - Source: [CNN](#)

[See More Videos](#)

Unmasking counterprotesters who attacked UCLA's pro-Palestine encampment

Lah and Anna-Maja Rappard, CNN

🕒 11 minute read · Published 11:06 AM EDT, Thu May 16, 2024

(CNN) — A young man in a white plastic mask beats a pro-Palestinian protester. Another in a maroon hoodie strikes a protester with a pole. A local instigator pushes down barricades.

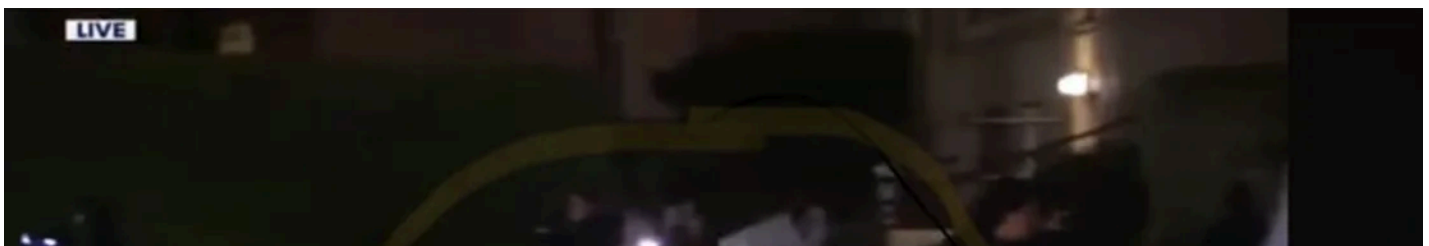
Law enforcement stood by for hours as counterprotesters attacked the pro-Palestinian encampment at UCLA on April 30, which erupted into the worst violence stemming from the ongoing college protests around the country over Israel’s war in Gaza.

While a criminal investigation is underway into the assaults that occurred at UCLA, the identities of the most aggressive counterprotesters have gone largely unknown. A CNN review of footage, social media posts, and interviews found that some of the most dramatic attacks caught on camera that night were committed by people outside UCLA – not the university students and faculty who were eventually arrested.

Many at the scene appeared dedicated to the pro-Israel cause, according to social media and their own words that night. The violent counterprotesters identified by CNN, which included an aspiring screenwriter and film producer and a local high school student – were joined by unlikely allies, several of whom are known throughout southern California for frequenting and disrupting a variety of protests and public gatherings.

The young man sporting the white mask and a white hoodie in widely shared video clips is Edan On, a local 18-year-old high school senior, his mother confirmed to CNN, though she later said he denies being at UCLA. Video shows On joining the counterprotesters while waving a long white pole. At one point, he strikes a pro-Palestinian protester with the pole, and appears to continue to strike him even when he was down, as fellow counterprotesters piled on.

“Edan went to bully the Palestinian students in the tents at UCLA and played the song that they played to the Nukhba terrorists in prison!” his mother boasted in Hebrew on Facebook, referencing Hamas. She circled an image of him that had been broadcast on the local news.





An image from Fox 11 Los Angeles posted on Facebook by Sharon On-Siboni shows her son, Edan On, with a white hoodie throwing an object into the encampment created by pro-Palestinian protesters at UCLA. On-Siboni highlighted the image. From Fox 11

“He is all over the news channels,” his mother wrote in a now-deleted post.

Some counterprotesters had been spotted on campus days earlier, drawn by a high-profile pro-Israel rally as inflammatory videos and claims rapidly spread across social media.

Many at the scene Tuesday hid their faces behind masks and scarves. Some attackers sprayed protesters with chemical irritants, hit them with wooden boards, punched and kicked them and shot fireworks into the crowd of students and supporters huddled behind umbrellas and wooden planks, attempting to stay safe. For hours, they sought to pull away pieces of the barrier, scooping up fallen wooden planks and poles to use as makeshift weapons, lunging toward pro-Palestinian protesters who emerged from the camp to protect it from being breached.





Video footage shows the young man in a white hoodie, identified as Edan On, striking at the barrier around the pro-Palestinian encampment. William Gude



In this still taken from a video posted on social media, Edan On removes his mask. From Social Media



From Social Media

As protesters chanted, “We’re not leaving” from the encampment, some counterprotesters shouted back, “You are terrorists, you are terrorists!”

Video footage shows that some counterprotesters instigated the fighting, while others did little to intervene. Then police did little as a large group of counterprotesters calmly walked away, leaving behind bloody, bruised students and other protesters.

The Los Angeles Police Department and California Highway Patrol referred all questions about the incident to the UCLA Police Department, which did not respond to multiple requests for comment.

Law enforcement did not track injuries from the attack. But according to the encampment’s organizers, more than 150 students “were assaulted with pepper spray and bear mace,” and at least 25 protesters ended up being transported to local emergency rooms to receive treatment for injuries including fractures, severe lacerations and chemical-induced injuries.

“I actually thought someone would get killed,” said Rabbi Chaim Seidler-Feller, UCLA Hillel’s Director Emeritus, who called 911 around midnight as he watched the violence on live TV. “They came to beat people up.”

The next day, Hillel at UCLA posted an open letter from student leaders denouncing what it called “fringe members of the off-campus Jewish community” who did not represent “the estimated 3,000 Jewish Bruins at UCLA.”

“We cannot have a clearer ask for the off-campus Jewish community: stay off our campus,” it stated. “Your actions are harming Jewish students.”

‘You guys are about to get f—ed up’

In one of the more dramatic [videos](#) of the night, a protester wearing the colors of the Palestinian flag underneath an LA Kings jersey was knocked to the ground and beaten by multiple counterprotesters as he guarded the encampment.





The footage appears to show Edan On, in the white hoodie, and others striking at a pro-Palestinian protester on the ground. Key News Network

One of those assailants was On, who rushed into the middle of the fray with his pole. When CNN showed On's mother a video of him attacking the protester, she said Edan, who she confirmed is a senior at Beverly Hills High School, was only defending himself. His mother – who previously described a smaller group of UCLA students protesting the war last year as “human animals” on social media – said dozens of his schoolmates had also gone to campus on the 30th and that her son intends to join the Israel Defense Forces.

The school district said federal law prohibits sharing information about students, including confirming their identities. On could not be reached for comment directly. When CNN contacted On's mother for an interview with him, she replied that her son was in Israel and that he claimed he wasn't at UCLA despite her earlier confirmation.

The man in the LA Kings jersey was ultimately dragged into a group of counterprotesters and kicked by an aspiring Los Angeles screenwriter and producer who CNN identified as Malachi Marlan-Librett, according to a review of social media photos, footage from the protest and interviews with multiple people who knew him. According to his LinkedIn, he graduated from UC Santa Cruz in 2019 and attended a UCLA professional film and television program the following year.

A man in a maroon hoodie joined Marlan-Librett in dragging the protester into the mob.





A pro-Palestinian demonstrator is beaten by counterprotesters attacking a pro-Palestinian encampment set up at UCLA's campus. The man in the maroon hoodie is among the attackers, which include Malachi Marlan-Librett (beige cap) to his right. Etienne Laurent/AFP/Getty Images



A counterprotester, identified by CNN as Malachi Marlan-Librett, pushes a pro-Palestinian protester in the barrier of the UCLA encampment. Wally Skali/Los Angeles Times/Getty Images



Marlan-Librett is seen throwing the bottom of a broom at a pro-Palestinian protester. William Gude

The protester was later seen in a video receiving treatment for a bloody head injury at the encampment. Marlan-Librett and the man in the maroon hoodie, along with other counterprotesters, such as an unmasked man wearing a red bandana around his neck, were seen committing multiple acts of violence throughout the night.

They became prime targets for online researchers who told CNN they had created internal nicknames such as #UCLARedBandana, #UCLANeffHat and #UCLAMaroonHoodie as they attempted to identify them.

In one violent episode captured on video, Marlan-Librett is seen carrying the end of a broom in his hand, using it to strike a protester in the head before kicking him. Even after the protester retreats, Marlan-Librett sneaks up on him from behind and strikes him in the head once again. Marlan-Librett didn't respond to calls and texts from CNN.

In another video, the man in the maroon hoodie runs toward the encampment yelling, "You guys are about to get f**ked up." In the over 3-hour-long livestream, the young man is in the thick of the scrum and can be seen hitting another man with a pole before arming counterprotesters with wood planks. The man could be heard yelling at protesters, "F**k you, f**king terrorists," then, "The score is 30,000" – a reference to the number of Palestinians killed by Israel's bombing campaign and ground offensive in Gaza.

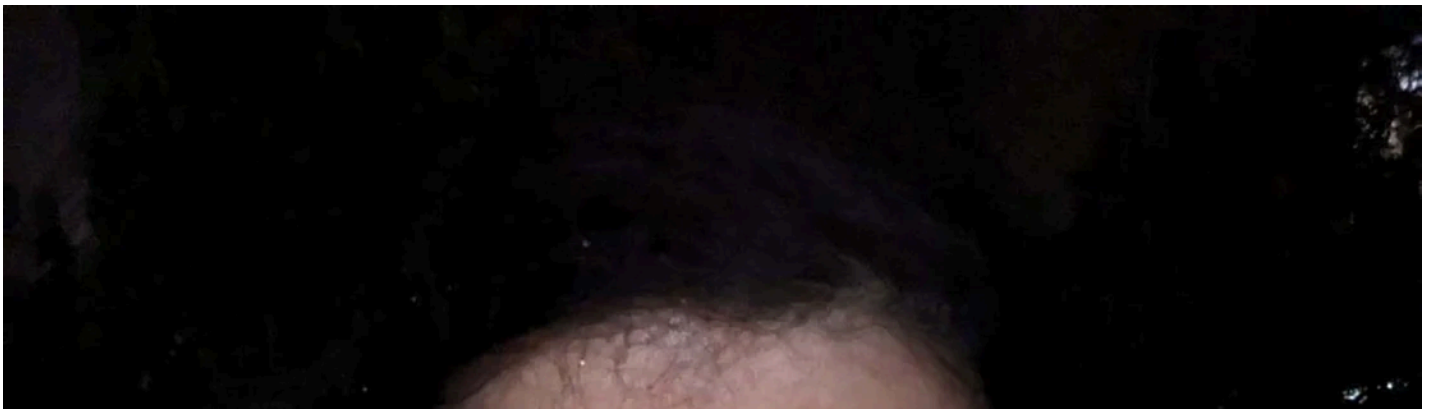


Journalist Dolores Quintana is pepper-sprayed by the man in the maroon hoodie and other counterprotesters. William Gude

Just minutes earlier, the man pepper-sprayed a journalist in the face, while she was filming the crowd. “I had to walk off because I literally could not see anything,” the local journalist, Dolores Quintana, told CNN. “And it was getting in my mouth. And so, I was starting to choke.”

She said a volunteer came out of the encampment to wash out her eyes with water and saline. Quintana took a selfie when she could open her eyes again. In the photo, her face was drenched and pale, with red blotches on her forehead.

“This was the worst situation I ever found myself in as a journalist,” she said. “I was afraid they were going to kill somebody.”





Dolores Quintana pictured shortly after being pepper-sprayed while covering the protests at UCLA in early May. Dolores Quintana

Local provocateurs in the fray

According to multiple acquaintances of the man in the maroon hoodie, he attended Los Angeles Valley College with his brother. Both brothers were enrolled at USC in the fall 2023 semester for a couple weeks before disenrolling, according to the school.

Neither did Tom Bibiyan, a 42-year-old who was once a local Green Party official. Bibiyan was stabbed at a KKK rally where he was a counter-protester in 2016 and has since become an ardent Trump supporter. His colorful Instagram page is a mix of right-wing memes, numerous posts defending famous men against sexual assault allegations and pro-Israel content.

Video footage shows Bibiyan among those at the front line of people rushing the encampment in an attempt to remove protective metal barriers, as campus security guards watched the violence unfold.



Tom Bibiyan is seen throwing a water bottle at a protester. William Gude





Tom Bibiyan is seen rushing the pro-Palestinian encampment at UCLA. William Gude

“The moment we rushed the terrorist encampment last night at ucla to take it apart,” he captioned a video he posted to Instagram. “F**k them kids,” he said in a separate post, which has since been deleted.

A CNN journalist reached Bibiyan outside his home, wearing the same jacket he had worn at UCLA, but he refused to say why he had taken part in the violence. “You’re being a little rude, and I’m going to call the police if you don’t leave,” he said.

Other older men spotted among the mob looked familiar to local public school mom Angie Givant as she followed what happened that Tuesday night on social media: a group of right-wing provocateurs who she’d seen protesting LGBTQ rights in public schools at school board and city council meetings around Los Angeles.

“As soon as there were rumors that, you know, things were going to go down at UCLA, there was a mobilization of very familiar reactionary extremists,” she told CNN.

One of the older men, Narek Palyan, joined the group of counterprotesters despite having posted anti-Jewish tropes on his social media accounts. Palyan, who didn’t appear to engage in the violence, claimed to CNN he has a child at UCLA, though a student was not seen accompanying him that night. “I was definitely keeping the peace, at least trying to,” he said.

Student journalists attacked

UCLA junior and student journalist Catherine Hamilton said that when a firework landed a few feet away from where she was standing and she saw the men approaching in masks, it was clear to her that they were about to do something they didn’t want to be recognized for.

“In that moment when that firework went off and started ringing in my ears, I was like, something very bad is going to happen on this campus,” she said.

.....

and along a well-lit street in the center of campus, just before 3:30 am, she says they were encircled by a small group of counterprotesters mainly dressed in black. She told CNN the man leading the group was someone whom she immediately recognized. He was a counterprotester who had previously verbally harassed her and taken a photo of her press badge, she said.

Within seconds, they sprayed the student journalists with a type of mace or pepper spray and flashed lights in their faces. As she tried to get away, Hamilton said, she was repeatedly struck in the chest and abdomen.

One of the journalists confronted the attackers and shoved one before he was pummeled to the ground and beaten, according to video footage of the incident.

‘I was expecting us to start working on an obituary’

The day after the attack, UCLA’s chancellor called the events “a dark chapter” in the school’s history that “has shaken our campus to its core.”

A parent who was at the encampment with their child, a UCLA student, also described the night as feeling like “a civil war movie” with embers raining down and the wounded being treated all around. The parent said they were frantic to find help, calling UCLA campus police six times in a row.

One fourth-year UCLA student – who requested anonymity due to safety concerns – told CNN he was hit in the corner of his forehead with a traffic cone. Minutes later, video captured a counterprotester smashing a wooden plank into the back of his head.

With two deep cuts on his head, he said he rushed to the hospital and ultimately received 14 staples and three stitches for the injuries.

The violence directed at the protesters and his access to medical treatment reminded him of why they had set up the encampment in the first place, trying to raise awareness about the mass deaths and destruction from Israel’s war in Gaza, and calling for the university to divest from any financial ties with Israel. “I had the privilege of going to a hospital,” he said. “In Gaza, there are zero fully functioning hospitals.”

Thistle Boosinger, a 23-year-old member of the encampment who is not a UCLA student, had her hand smashed the night of the violence. She described how her assailant took a piece of wood above his head before slamming it down on her hand. “At first, I just screamed,” she



Thistle Boosinger, a 23-year-old member of the encampment, had her hand smashed the night of the violence. Boosinger requested CNN obscure a portion of this image over privacy concerns following recent developments. Courtesy Thistle Boosinger

In a video call, Boosinger held up her hand wrapped in gauze and described her injury. “My bone is broken totally in half below my knuckle ... [which is] shattered into a bunch of pieces and jumbled up.”

attempt to defend the encampment and keep people safe. We were in a way trying to keep the barricade wall up because that was literally protecting our lives,” Kupsh said. It wasn’t long before he was pepper sprayed, forcing him to seek medical treatment as the attacks continued.

Kupsh and others still wonder what would have happened had the encampment been breached that night.

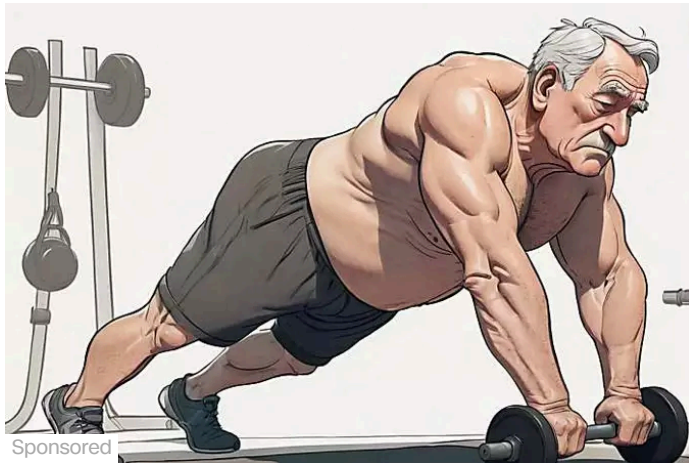
“I hate to say it,” said Catherine Hamilton, the student journalist, “but I was expecting us to start working on an obituary the next day because I thought something that serious would happen to the students in the encampment.”

Do you have information to share about the attack at UCLA? Email us at watchdog@cnn.com.

CNN’s Audrey Ash, Isabelle Chapman, Scott Glover and Curt Devine contributed to this story.

Recommended for you

Recommended content |



Sponsored

Dr Tracy Gapin: Building Muscle After 50 Comes Down To One Thing

AHF

Sponsored

With a lifting capacity of up to 150 kg the range of applications is virtually...

takatc



...
commencement spec...

CNN

...
known as 'the human...

CNN

...
abduction footage to pi...

CNN



Sponsored

Who Has The Cheapest Car Insurance In District Of Columbia (Check Zip...

Get matched with the best policy using advanced data techniques to secure the bes...
ottoinsurance.com



Sponsored

2024 Hyundai's Are Turning Heads

SearchTopics | Search Ads

Search CNN... 



Sign in

Live TV

Listen

Watch

US

World

Politics

Business

[Opinion](#)

[Health](#)

[Entertainment](#)

[Tech](#)

[Style](#)

[Travel](#)

[Sports](#)

[Watch](#)

[Listen](#)

[CNN Underscored](#)

[Coupons](#) 

[Weather](#)

[Ukraine-Russia War](#)

[Israel-Hamas War](#)

[About CNN](#)



FOLLOW CNN



[Terms of Use](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Cookie Settings](#)

[Ad Choices](#)

[Accessibility & CC](#)

[About](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Transcripts](#)

© 2024 Cable News Network. A Warner Bros. Discovery Company. All Rights Reserved.

CNN Sans™ & © 2016 Cable News Network.

