

Oregon Daily Emerald  
University of Oregon, Eugene

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Why Have Debates?

A SCORE of years ago: Hundreds of people crowded into the big Villard hall assembly room to hear Oregon debate Albany college. Debate was enthusiastically received on the campus and ranked with literary societies as a "worth while" activity for students.

Last Saturday night: Half a hundred, mostly faculty, saw McLaughlin defeat Medford for the scholastic championship of the state of Oregon.

Why this decrease of interest in forensics? Is its value to participant and student less? No. Then why should they draw mere handfuls of audience whereas formerly a debater competed with athletics and one year not so long ago at Oregon a pep rally was postponed for a debate?

Perhaps the answer may lie in the widened scope of human interest. Dances and theaters, providing entertainment of great appeal to students, eclipse forensics. People are lazy enough mentally to turn to some pastime which brings a maximum of satisfaction and thrill with the least amount of brain work. Going to a debate entails considerable close attention to argumentation and intense concentration if one is to get anything out of it. Does it follow, then, that the human atom is drifting away from the intellectual toward the sensual?

A correspondent in this issue cleverly analyzes and satirizes the small attendance at the state championship debate. This is not only true of interscholastic meets, but of collegiate also. No amount of publicity and ballyhoo will bring out a crowd to witness something it does not want to see or hear. After a week of lectures and addresses the student body evidently wants a change and a relaxation from unnecessary mental activity.

No matter how appealing the question for debate, how world-shattering the issue to be argued, the interest is not there, nor the attendance.

Then why not do away with debates? Because there are advantages to be gained by the participant. Speakers are in demand the world over. The orator who can sway the mob is the man who runs world affairs much more easily than the wizened man behind a big mahogany desk. Civilization has a definite niche for orators and debate is the workshop for developing them. Audiences are tools for orators to work with. When debates lack audiences they lack part of the equipment necessary to turn out the most efficient product.

Denying a Debt

IT IS a rather unusual act for a responsible man to borrow from Peter to pay Paul, only to deny his obligation to Peter. It is a rather peculiar reasoning which arrives at the conclusion that debt can be escaped by borrowing. Times are certainly out of joint when the A. S. U. O. can float a bond issue to avoid bankruptcy of a fund, yet declare it owes not any man.

Those students at the assembly last week who understood that the association is temporarily, at least, free from financial worry are right. But those students who mistakenly believed that the associated students are free from debt are \$150,000 wrong.

When that \$150,000 bond issue is paid, and all other debts are paid, then the students will be out of debt. How can they be so free until it is paid?

Nor because security for the issue is the building fund tax of \$60 to be assessed each student who registers for a full course—nor because that issue is the security, are the students out of the red ink. They are borrowing from those yet to come to the University; they are pledging that which they own not. They are giving for money a promise of that which they do not have.

There are still red marks on the books.

— R. T.

Among the Panthers, Huskies, Cougars, Crimson Tides, and Golden Bears in the sport world, it is pleasing to note that back in Indiana a high school team calls itself the Loganberries.

Athletic Triumphs

ATHLETICALLY speaking, Oregon stepped out into the limelight with a vengeance over the week-end. Starting in over in far-away England, Don Moe set the world to talking by breaking the course record in the Walker cup matches and aiding the United States to win the trophy. Down in Los Angeles, Vincent Dolp shot consistent golf to capture the championship of Pacific Coast conference schools. On home ground, Ralph Hill ran the man who had beaten him twice in close competition into the ground and broke the world's intercollegiate mile record with four minutes, 12 seconds and a fraction, just a shade under the record made by the world's greatest runner, Paavo Nurmi. Those three young men have won highest possible honors for the University and are deserving of all the credit Oregon can bestow upon them.

New Orleans has sidewalks the same color as grass. This should save a lot of money wasted yearly on "Do Not Walk on the Grass" signs.

Campus Forum

To the Editor:  
One of the four East-West Oregon championship debaters, when he entered the little auditorium in Johnson hall Saturday for the final all-state contest, was heard to remark, "This is an awfully small place in which to hold a state championship debate. Isn't there a larger auditorium we might adjourn to?" That was before the crowd had all arrived. Some time after his remark, and by the time the splendid musical numbers were played, the audience had doubled in size, making in all, four debaters, two coaches, three judges, one state chairman (also chairman of the evening), one University extension worker (sponsoring the whole series), two trophy presentors, three musicians, twenty-five others, approximately; total, approximately forty-one (a few more or less—at any rate, it became necessary to move "front and center" in order to overcome the insulative effect of many empty seats).

The musicians also had other engagements and (we surmise) politely excused themselves. The chairman in his introductory remarks implied that many of the campus talents had other engagements, for he said these three excused musicians "saved the day," whatever that means.

Now just why did all these forty-one persons crowd into this nice little auditorium? (It seats 196 persons, not including the piano stool, and the chairs are well designed for comfort.) For fifteen of them the answer is indicated above. They were, as a result of their own choosing, "it" for one of the six reasons indicated.

The balance of twenty-five persons were distributed about as follows:

No college debaters. (Not one, as far as I could determine. Speak up, if I am in error.)

Four college students. (One or two may have been overlooked, but hardly in such an audience.)

A group of three—a former teacher of one of the contestants, his wife and their 7-year-old son (or was the boy 8?).

Twelve college instructors, and so forth. Six college instructors' wives.

Total—twenty-five other persons present. The fact that so many college students (and no more) were present is interesting. We are wondering if one of them from each of the houses that was entertaining these guests of high honor did not accompany him or her (there was one woman on the Milton-Freewater team, and she won the debate, too. Why not, don't they always?) out of sheer courtesy, or mayhap prompted by future pledging designs. You see a few real intellectual lights help considerably, particularly if the house is about to "go national."

Presence of the third group (a family group) is self-explanatory.

Of the last two it might be argued that at least six of these came rather than stay home alone. This is indeed a poor argument, for faculty homes also have children to dispell gloom and over-quietude. Nor was there any evidence on the part of any for the need of a nice quiet rest or nap. Indeed, since one becomes more or less injured to it, he would snooze better at home in an armchair with the whole family talking, singing and (or) quarrelling, for this debate was a fast and furious battle of words. We admit to missing the table-pounding emphasis a bit, but the gunlike finger-pointing was as effective as usual, and the vocal expression was more than ample to preclude the possibility of a snooze. True enough, one tired faculty wife did drowse a little, but the debate was pretty well won by then. No, it wasn't for any of these reasons.

Could it be that these people were there to speak a word of encouragement to the debaters in the hope that they will eventually enroll as students at Oregon rather than at Pacific, Albany, or Corvallis? Possibly so, but it would be unfair to entertain this idea exclusively as a motive when we recall how ardently they congratulated the contestants after the forensic battle.

About all that is left is interest in one or all of the three forms: (1) friendship for the contestants and enthusiasm for Oregon; (2) interest in a question full of live political and economic issues for Oregon; and (3) sheer love for the smell of forensic powder. For us, personally, it was all of them. These all seem like legitimate reasons for our attendance at such a contest, even on a busy Saturday night. (We are in such a minority that we become timorous and must try to justify our offish conduct.) But being legitimate for us, why weren't you there?

Condone yourself, for the advertising was lame, perhaps—second page—you know. (You see, subsidizing debaters in high schools and colleges hasn't become big business yet.) Besides, this was the busiest week-end so far this year, and there were so many, many others—people, and things, and doings—in addition to good movies and pigging. That this was an oversight on your part can readily be pardoned.

Certainly, certainly! Just another manifestation of thorough lack of proper perspective, kinda like the gnat and camel idea, only backwards, that's all.

J. DeWITT DAVIS.



A SLIP OF THE TONGUE

A bunch of boys were whooping it up  
At the Kappa afternoon tea;  
And the boy who pounded on the music box  
Wore the pin of an S. A. E.

Behind the sofa shooting craps  
Sat a dangerous Sigma Nu,  
And watching his luck was his light o' love,  
The Theta known as Lou.

When out of the night that was 50 below  
And into the din and glare  
Suddenly there stumbled a Phi Delt frosh  
With Crisco in his hair.

A mighty hush fell o'er the crowd  
But he looked them in the eye,  
Then he was seen to sway and fall  
Into the arms of a Gamma Phi.

He looked like a man with a foot in the grave  
As tho' he'd been to a Chi-O tea,  
But he arose and stumbled to his feet,  
Supported by a staggering Spee.

"C'mon, Kid, have a coke or two,"  
Said a Pi Phi known as Madge,  
And the boy that vended the bubbling brew  
Sported a Chi Psi badge.

He looked like a man of the open air,  
Who'd lived under sun and moon;  
His eye fell on the piano where  
An Alpha Phi warbled a tune.

He pushed the singer out the way  
And tottering with leaden feet  
He stumbled o'er a Beta who lay  
Snoring and fast asleep.

He flopped on the stool like a dog at bay  
And there was a tear in his eye,  
At the pathetic way that boy could play  
"The Sweetheart of Sigma Chi."

Have you ever been in the great alone,  
Out by the Tri-Delt dump?  
In the open air, miles out there,  
Somewhere over the hump?

With only the cry of a Fiji frosh  
As he wails his woes to the sky  
Or the musical smacks of resounding hanks  
From the mansion of Theta Chi.

And then the music changed  
So soft you scarce could hear;  
From the bloodshot eye of an Alpha Chi  
There dropped a glycerin tear.

The music ceased and hardened hearts  
Gave way like a broken dam,  
But most of all did bright tears fall  
From a red-nosed Delta Gam.

An unhappy maid leaned on a chair  
And with a voice of pathos and woe  
Sang the story of the noble Delt  
Who loved an Alpha O.

"Let's make whoopee," a D. Z. cried  
(She did it in a six-foot plot  
For a Phi Sig leaped upon the bar  
And throttled her on the spot.)

The stranger turned and his eyes they burned  
In a most peculiar way,  
His tattered cords were glazed with dirt,  
He sat, and I saw him sway.

"Boys," said he, "You don't know me,"  
"Though I'm filthy as a pig,  
I'm telling you right, I'm here to fight  
Whoever calls me a Kappa Sig.

"But, first of all, I want to thank  
That unknown Sigma Nu,  
Who stole away my fiancée,  
The Theta known as Lou."

As I ducked I heard the cream puffs fly  
And light with a sickening wham,  
I bumped into an A. D. Pi  
And sat on an Alpha Gam.

A Zeta Tau screamed and an Alpha Xi Delt  
Her a stinging blow in the eye,  
And the Kappa cook wore a startled look  
An the pin of a Phi Kappa Psi.

They turned on the light and a hellish sight,  
Greeted our horrified view;  
Sprawled on a beam and pumped full of cream  
Lay the dangerous Sigma Nu.

While afar down the track the echoes came back,  
A note of anguish, despairing and blue;  
The stranger abased, was being mercilessly chased  
By the Theta known as Lou.  
—Cornelius.



CAMPUS Bulletin

Asklepiads—will meet tonight at 7:30 in room 105, Deady.

Oregon Knights—meet at 7:30 tonight in room 4, Johnson. Very important.

Alpha Tau—will meet in the women's lounge of Gerlinger hall tonight at 7:30.

Sigma Delta Chi—meeting tomorrow at Anchorage, noon. S. S. Smith, speaker.

Drama group of Philomelete—will meet at the Y. W. bungalow at 7 o'clock this evening.

German club—meeting will be held at the Y. W. bungalow tonight. Program and refreshments.

Regular W. A. A. council meeting—at 7:15 tonight in the clubroom of Gerlinger building. Very important.

Philomelete groups—prepare their stunts for Saturday afternoon. Meeting of presidents to be announced later.

Music group of Philomelete—will hold a meeting today at 3 in Westminster house. Girls please bring instruments and music.

Pot and Quill—will not meet this evening on account of the Matrix Table. Meeting postponed to next Tuesday.

Play Day directorate—heads of all committees appointed by Edna Dunbar meet in Miss Duncan's office at 5 on Wednesday, May 21. Very important.

International relations group—of Philomelete meets tonight at 5 o'clock in the Y. W. bungalow for supper and election of officers. Please bring 15 cents in addition to the regular dues.

Ye Tabard Inn Neophytes—Kaufman, Kelly, Guild, Hillis, and Puustinen, report to Mr. Thacher's office in Journalism building between 10 and 12 a. m. today.

Chapter meeting tonight at 7:30, at Mr. Thacher's residence, 1922 University street.

Women out for intramural archery—may practice after 4 o'clock class, on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, as well as the regular 4 o'clock hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Charles M. Ziegler, St. Louis insurance man and former University of Maine football star, has been bequeathed a fine old brick villa in southern France, where he was billeted during the war.

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