

Carl Mills and John Stewart

## Senate reapportionment: two replies

Carl Mills is vice-president of the Graduate Student Council.

Re: John Koford's letter on reapportionment (Emerald, Oct. 20). Reapportionment is much more than "an issue used at campaign time to gain support of new voters." While Koford's summaries of the three basic plans for reapportionment are essentially correct, it is a pity that while he was on the ASUO governing committee he did not look more closely at the actual functioning of our present system. In nearly two years on the Graduate Student Council, I have had a considerable amount of contact with the executive and legislative branches of the ASUO. The present apportionment setup sounds good in Koford's letter; in practice it barely works at all, and it certainly doesn't work well.

Under the present system all the Senators from Off-campus represent all students living off-campus, and the At-large Senators represent all the students (all 15,000). Off-campus and At-large Senators are responsible to everybody in general and NOBODY in particular. And this is the major flaw in our present system. How can an Off-campus or At-large Senator even begin to contact all of her or his constituents? How can such a Senator be sure that the opinions she or he receives represent the views of all the people? How, under our present system, can such a Senator be responsible to everybody (or anybody)? How many Off-campus residents know the names of all their Senators (How many Off-campus and At-large Senators know the names of all their constituents)? The present apportionment system creates a gap between Senators and constituents. It's not the

Senators' faults, it is a flaw in the system—let's change it.

### Limit voting power

Koford is right: under a departmental apportionment plan it would "limit your voting power down to a handful of Senators." But this would not be a bad state of affairs. First, voters would have a better chance to know the candidates they were being asked to vote for. Candidates from a single department would be the people you know, people you take courses with, people you see, people who share your interests. Most important, this "handful of Senators" would be YOUR Senators. Clearer, more direct lines of senatorial accountability could be established. The present system tends to breed the University's equivalent of Repocrats and Demopubs who, in trying to please everyone, end up pleasing nobody.

Incidentally, Mr. Koford neglected to point out that last year the voters, under our current "populist system," voted to reapportion the Senate on a school-department basis. Much more needs to be done in order to create an effective ASUO, but re-apportionment is probably the most important single step we can take.

### John Stewart

John Stewart is an ASUO senator representing dorm position no. 2.

I wish to thank Mr. Koford for his letter of the 21st in which he called attention to my Senate Bill which would apportion the Senate by sex therefore giving women representation on the ASUO

governing body which they have been deprived of in the past.

Mr. Koford may feel action in the form of legislation is unnecessary to insure women of equitable representation in the ASUO Senate. While legislation may not be the most desirable form of action to remedy the problem of a male-dominated Senate it certainly should be considered as an alternative.

It may be a puzzle to Mr. Koford, as to why women have been excluded from the Senate, but it is no puzzle to me. Women are excluded from leadership roles because of the long-standing tradition of male-dominated leadership. This tradition must be ended and if the only way to end the tradition is through legislation I would be in favor of considering such legislation. Women must no longer be excluded from leadership positions.

Mr. Koford erred in his statement that three women are currently serving in the Senate. Out of the 34 Senators currently serving only one is a woman and ironically she is the only Senator who cannot vote. Less than three percent of the ASUO Senators are women when the figure should be at least 50 percent. This situation should outrage any member of the ASUO who believes in human equality.

I have currently withdrawn my bill to apportion the Senate by sex pending the release of a current study on governmental organization now being drawn up by HEW. Despite the fact that other members of the Governing committee consider my attempts to gain representation for women on the Senate "obviously a joke" (as quoted in the Emerald) I intend to pursue the matter after the release of the HEW report.

Before any women, encouraged by Mr. Koford's letter, align themselves with S.A.F.E. I would suggest they examine the record of the organization and its members.

S.A.F.E. has no platform as such, only generalized promises about a "re-organization of the senate through qualified candidates to improve the senate as an effective organization for student response." I would wager that what S.A.F.E., considered by Senate members to be the conservative faction within the Senate, has in mind as far as student response is not what the majority of students would desire but only to further the political ambitions of hungry S.A.F.E. Senators.

Doesn't it seem a bit ironic that Mr. Koford urges "any interested women" to run with the S.A.F.E. ticket yet he also expresses the desire of S.A.F.E. to send "qualified candidates" to the Senate! Does Mr. Koford therefore mean S.A.F.E. would sponsor any woman who would run with them? This is clearly the implication of his letter. In my mind this exploitation is sexism at its worst.

Women interested in seeking Senate seats should be careful of male politicians who are interested only in further exploiting their sex to insure their own election to office on the assumption that they support women's rights.

The content of Mr. Koford's letter tends to lead me to believe that S.A.F.E. is not actually interested in insuring women's rights but only interested in further exploiting women to serve their own selfish political goals.

S.A.F.E. isn't.

By Judith Martin  
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If you're crusading for better television for children, the first thing you want to do is to get violence off the air—right?

No, not right says Norman S. Morris, author of "Television's Child" (Little, Brown). While Morris complains most about the "pathetic apathy" of parents who ignore their children's television experience, he is also exasperated by the efforts of "well-meaning citizens" who count the number of TV killings and equate them to adolescent violence.

"Television's Child" explores the effects of TV-watching on children and recommends to parents a strong combination of home censorship and the badgering of television executives for better programming.

Morris maintains that:

—Children know that cartoon violence and the cool, stylized actions of such programs as "I Spy" and "Mission: Impossible" aren't seriously meant.

—Studies which show that television violence is carried over into children's play have never shown that it carries over into real life.

—Disadvantaged children, among whom the delinquency rate is higher than among middle class television bugs, are watching less television and participating more in street culture than non-delinquent children.

It's not the fact of violence that does damage but the way it is presented on television, and the way children see their parents reacting to it.

Treat programs thoroughly

Rather than eliminate from television any show of violence—which is, after all, an important characteristic of the society,

and is most shown in the newscasts—he would have it treated more thoroughly for the benefit of children. That is, the programs which show violence would show its tragic consequences; and parents would use television as a starting point for discussions on what its implications are.

He recommends the same course for what he finds of materialism, condescension and general fatuousness in children's television—explaining to the child why the program is objectionable, and then "just turning the set off."

Pressuring networks and stations to replace the junk with worthwhile shows is an extremely effective procedure, says Morris, who is a producer at CBS news. Such groups as ACT (Action for Children's Television), which have lobbied with television executives and with members of Congress, with the support of the Federal Communications Commission, are having an effect, he thinks.

But he believes in what he considers a more practical approach to the children-TV issue than ACT's recommendation that commercials be eliminated from children's programs.

"That's not going to work if we maintain the same system. What we have to do is to look at the whole method of financing children's programs. The commercials could be cut down, maybe some of them put on the soap operas that the mothers watch, and they could be clustered at the beginnings and ends. We need to remove children's programming from the whole rating structure. They're never going to draw the crowds, because there are fewer kids.

Pool resources

"Networks could pool their resources, as they do for Apollo shots. Instead of competing, they could alternate who takes what. Private foundations could be used to

support commercial programs as they do public television."

His suggestions for the improvement of the shows include an extended use of drama to show problems children experience, such as those connected with school and pets; quizzes "without the greed motive," and expanded simple news shows.

"Everybody thinks everything is expensive," he said, "but it needn't be. They say they can't find hosts for these programs—but every community in this country has its Pied Piper. You just have to look, because they're not necessarily in show business."

Morris, got into this speciality through his children, rather than his job, which is concerned with radio news.

His connection at CBS has led to charges of industry bias, but he points to his attacking of networks, including his own, and says, "You know how big industry is—big insanity. Every vice president at CBS has read this book, but do you think they've ever asked me to consult about children's programs?"

But, as a parent of three sons, he was exposed to "Romper Room"—"My wife and I were appalled by the materialism. They keep talking about the Romper Room toys they play with, which are all sold at Woolworth's. The teacher's job is to teach those dumbbells how to buy.

"We started talking about the impact that must be happening inside the kids from television that we didn't understand."

And now, after parental regulating, discussions of why and some practice, their 8-year-old son "goes through the New York Times every Sunday, discusses the programs that he thinks he wants to watch, marks them, and then discusses them afterwards. It's simple. Any kid can be shown how to do it."

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Children's television

Violence is not the key to good behavior