

# Editorial

## Students' activism a force for change

Campus activism nationwide is again showing that students make a difference in affecting political change. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the growing anti-apartheid movement and the intensifying divestiture campaign.

This activity has enabled other social issues to gain strength among students.

Campuses across the nation, including the University, are witnessing growing student involvement in efforts to maintain financial aid availability, halt proliferation of nuclear weapons and ensure that minorities continue to be represented in college programs.

While the majority of campus protest has centered on "liberal," or "left-wing" concerns, a small but growing conservative student movement has also arisen. In part a reaction to the dominance of the student left, as well as representing genuine right-wing political sentiment, this activism takes many forms.

At the University, it is best expressed by the outspoken views of the Oregon Commentator. Nationally, similar publications have arisen on many campuses, as have Republican and conservative organizations.

While issues addressed and political preferences remain diverse, a common thread is woven through all students' activism: the desire to see a more just world. Events concerning South Africa offer a striking example, and underscore the effectiveness of this political force.

To date, about \$400 million of South African-linked stock has been divested from 84 colleges or universities. Since massive campus rallies erupted last spring, more than 50 schools have divested all or part of their investment.

Students have been instrumental in forcing the sale of \$5 billion in South African related stock in state and city pension funds. The private business sector has not been immune from this pressure.

Last week AT&T announced it would end most business dealings with South Africa, including purchases of platinum, which represents the largest single U.S. import from South Africa. AT&T agreed to these and other actions under pressure from employees and shareholders.

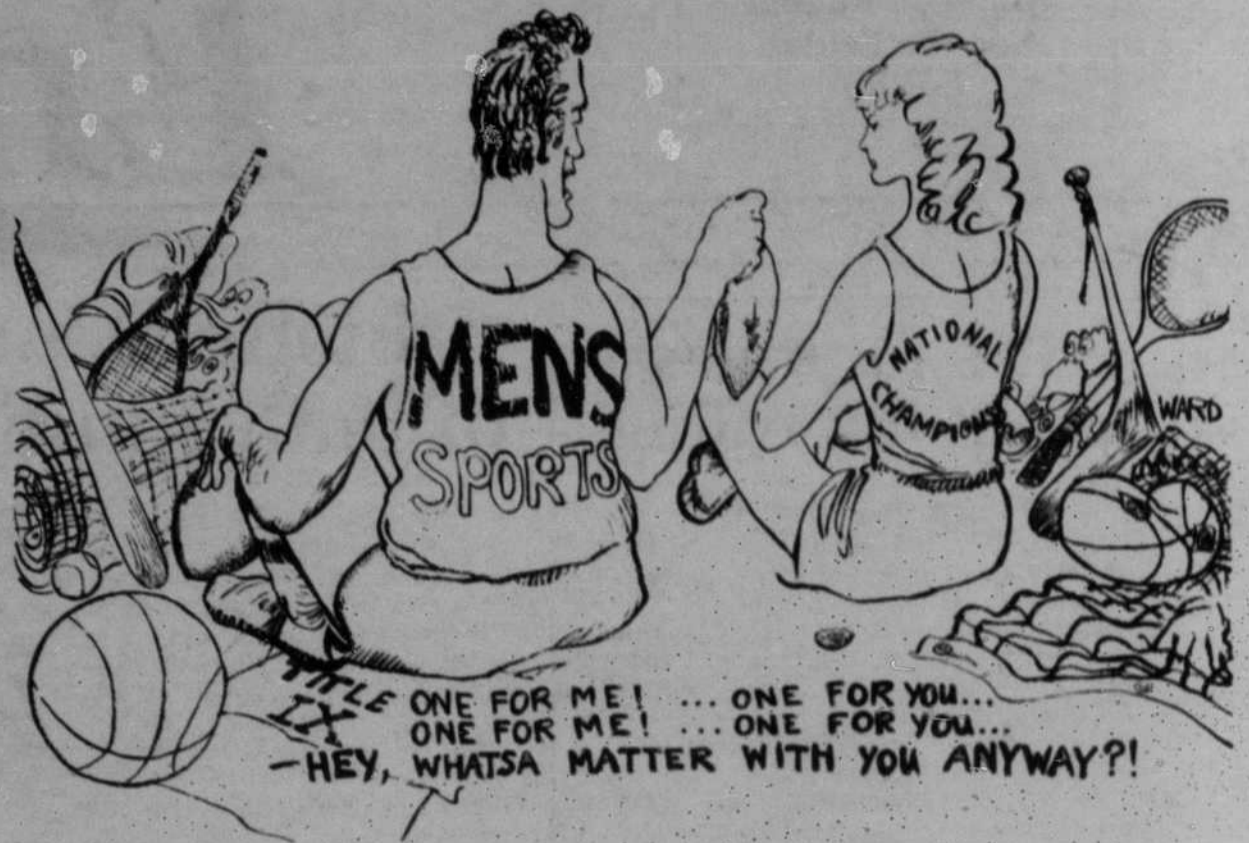
Several days later, South African President P.W. Botha announced that pass laws, which control the movement of blacks and determine where they can live and work, will no longer be enforced by the government. Botha's announcement is welcome, but it left many issues unresolved.

Black access to adequate housing remains dubious. Removal of pass law restrictions will not apply to one-third of the black population forced to live in the so-called homelands. Clearly, such reforms won't end apartheid.

But the decision is another sign of what can be achieved through direct pressure on South Africa. Concessions in the last several years, however small, have come only as a result of sustained public — and student — outrage at the continued atrocities of apartheid.

Most of the decisions by college trustees to divest holdings linked to South Africa are the direct result of campus protest. High visibility tactics, however "disruptive," remain an effective tool in the struggle for full divestment. Thus the rise of teach-ins, pickets and civil disobedience.

We applaud the decision to rescind pass laws as well as other reforms. However, only the full inclusion of blacks in to South African social, political and economic life should cause an end to student activism on this issue.



## Letters

### Most appalling

One of the most appalling ideas concerning education ever to arise is upon us now: degree sharing. This is the idea that a working spouse who supports a studying spouse is due half of the degree, including half of the expected lifetime income earned by the degree holder should the couple split up.

Somehow by the mere fact of marrying, for example, an aspiring doctor or business executive, the supporting spouse is said to have the same financial value on the open marketplace as the holder of the degree. Earning a degree requires intellectual effort, something which cannot be shared. Nor can knowledge gained from studies undertaken be shared; it must be learned.

As soon as a supporting spouse gains through osmosis, or whatever, the knowledge the degree holder has by simply being involved with the spouse, then degree sharing will be viable — not until then.

The only valid way of dividing up the income in such cases is to figure the real earning power of the supporting spouse and pay accordingly. The danger to our society of

paying doctor's wages to provide for maid services and minor accountant duties cannot be exaggerated. What about emotional support rendered etc., one may ask. How much is love for sale worth?

Anne Summers  
Student

### False image

It was nice of William Homans to write an article on the Songwriter's Showcase for the April 18 Friday Edition. However, a couple of errors made the article less valid than it should have been. With journalistic accuracy and the image of the showcase in mind, I will correct them.

In the second paragraph I am quoted as saying "Like Mick Jagger said, 'it's the singer, not the song.'" What I actually said was the Jagger statement was usually correct, but in the showcase we reversed it for a night and made the songs the focus of both artist and audience.

Following that misquote, Homans reviewed the showcase as a musician concert rather than a songwriter's evening, thereby missing the point and giving a false image of the showcase to Emerald readers.

In our group the songs are the meat and the performance is the gravy. It's the only time amateur musicians who write songs can show their art on their own terms. We need to perpetuate this condition by booking more programs and assuring the flow of correct information about our endeavors. Obviously, professional musicians make the showcase all the more attractive.

Percy Hilo  
Coordinator  
Songwriter's Showcase

### Balancing act

On April 18, petitioners working on the Economic Con-

version Initiative were criticized in a letter by Todd Saunders. In his letter, he inferred that since petitioners frequently give out literature in response to questions rather than lengthy verbal replies, these campaigners are apparently just looking for "sheep who believe whatever they're told."

As the campus campaign coordinator of the petition drive, I am sorry that he developed such a bad impression.

Questions are certainly welcome. But if a question requires a long answer contained in literature, distributing brochures is advantageous. To ensure that 62,521 valid signatures are gathered by July, petitioners must closely supervise all individuals (frequently 3 or 4 at a time) as they sign. Staffing a table clearly requires efficient education which does not distract from supervising signers.

Thus, when Mr. Saunders asked about the initiative's effect on attracting business to Oregon, he was given a brochure which explained: "The question of other companies locating here is difficult to gauge, but most economists say that decisions to locate are based upon more tangible factors, such as: level and method of taxation, availability of suitable land and services, quality of schools, cost and quality of labor, and livability of the community."

Also, it emphasized the initiative would only affect businesses producing components unique to nuclear weapons, not basic high-tech products.

Far from looking for "sheep," we are simply balancing educational efforts with the urgent need to put the measure on the ballot.

Steve Kasner  
History

Friday, April 25, 1986

## Oregon Daily Emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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