

Prop 42 penalizes blacks, low-income

Just before the opening tip of the Georgetown/Boston College game on the 14th, Hoya coach John Thompson removed his signature white towel from his shoulder, placed it over that of his assistant Mike Riley, and then walked off the floor to a standing ovation of 15,379.

Thompson was staging the most publicized protest against Proposition 42, the controversial NCAA ruling that, in effect, eliminates the partial-qualifier that allowed student athletes to enroll in a university and receive full financial aid in order to prove themselves as academicians first, athletes later.

Before, under Proposition 48, students could enroll in a university and receive full financial aid, but they could not play or practice with the team as freshmen. These partial qualifiers then had three years of varsity eligibility provided they could make the grades in their first year.

Currently, the passage of Proposition 42 allows schools to tender athletic scholarships only to freshmen who have achieved a 2.0 grade point average in college-preparatory courses in high school and attained either a score of 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test or 15 on the American College Testing Program.

And now, accusations of anti-poor and anti-black are being heard. And with good reason.

The first cries of outrage were long ago pointed at the weight given to the standardized (SAT and ACT) tests, which have been widely and persuasively attacked as culturally biased in favor of white, middle-class youngsters.

Also, under Proposition 42, numerous athletes — many of them black — will have to pay their own way to school (which many of the low-income and black students won't be able to afford), or go to a junior college and be left with as few as two years of eligibility at a four year school.

So while the intentions of passing Proposition 42 weren't anti-poor or anti-black, the results are. The low-income and the blacks won't be able to attend college either because of poor scores on the culturally-biased standardized tests, or because they simply can't afford it.

This is unfair. It's also time the NCAA stepped out of the academic realm.

As pointed out by John Chaney, basketball coach for Temple University, the NCAA should not be exercising an influence over college admissions. If schools want to maintain high standards (after all, schools are enhanced or diminished by the standards they set for themselves), they should do so without interfering in extended service to communities by athletic programs.

Moreover, the NCAA should not interfere in academic matters affecting enrolled students. Opponents to this say universities cheat by admitting athletes who are not academically qualified — but academic integrity rests with the colleges, not the NCAA. It's the job of a college's president to be responsible for the school's academic integrity and policing.

Finally, if the NCAA must impose itself on the academic realm, it should do so by working with high schools to ensure that athletes are receiving proper guidance in their studies — thereby giving students the opportunity to pass standardized tests and achieve the requirements of college admissions offices and the NCAA.

Those students who will suffer most under Proposition 42 are poor, and usually black. In many cases, they are the victims of their background, coming from high schools in economically deprived communities, lacking guidance, textbooks and the proper equipment to steer the athletes into the courses that will help them meet the NCAA's requirements.

After all, when a college freshman can't read or write, it isn't because he or she suddenly became unable.

Proposition 42 can be regarded as a well-intentioned effort to strike a balance between academic integrity and the need to provide an opportunity for the disadvantaged athlete who wants a degree and is willing to work hard to get it.

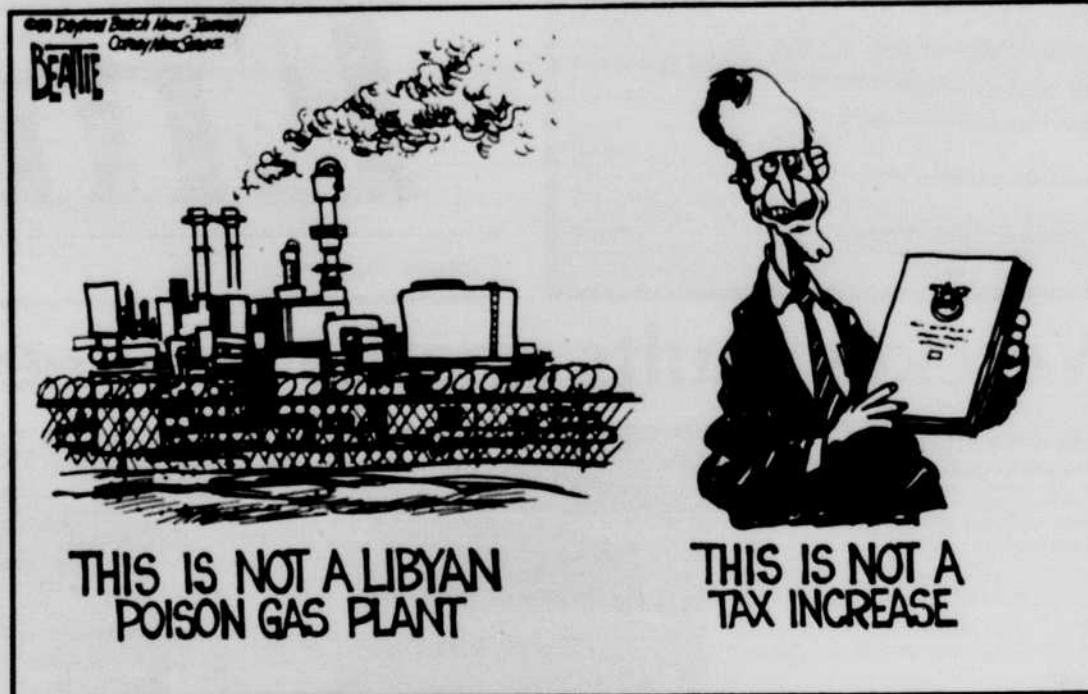
But on the other side of the coin, Proposition 42 can be seen as a form of punishment to blacks and the underprivileged.

Eight years with Ronald Reagan in the White House truly has polarized the rich and the poor to those who have the opportunity to succeed, and those who don't.

The athletes don't need this form of punishment. They need inspiration and understanding and education.

Moreover, Thompson ended his protest last weekend after reaching an understanding with the NCAA that Proposition 42 will be re-examined.

It's time to get rid of Proposition 42, because it is anti-black and anti-poor. And it's time for the NCAA to take its business out of the academic arena — and leave academics to the universities, where it belongs.



(THIS IS NOT A POLITICAL CARTOON)

Letters

Gandhi

Addressing Jaymes E. Terry's letter titled an "Eye for an eye" (ODE, Jan. 19), I would like to ask a question in response. How would you feel if the unsuspecting Anglo student had just come from an anti-apartheid rally and you were the very scared, itchy-fingered person who shot him?

When you fight racism with racism (as you clearly show with the statement, "...most Oregonians hold the same ideologies as these white supremacist groups..."), the result is the intensification of these hatreds until neither group really cares about the issues, just the destruction of the other group. You would be much more effective in the long run to continue peaceful efforts to show these racists how wrong they are.

If we are going to stop racism we must stop it from spreading to future generations. How can we expect to do that if young children of one race see their older brothers and friends attacked by people of another race? Regardless of the reasons or as you may claim "justification" for such retaliation, the children could only conclude that the race attacking theirs would be a bad race. Thus begins another generation of useless violence.

This trend you wrote about of arming yourselves will undoubtedly defeat its own purpose and result in the further decline of racial-unification.

As Gandhi once said, "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind."

Jeffrey A. Hawkins
Student

Poison

The attitude expressed in Timothy Barnes' "Frankenstein" letter (ODE, Jan. 18) is precisely what has led to the present dismal state of the environment. Man cannot expect to hold humans above and apart from all other life on earth without inevitably doing away with all the planet's beauty and resources. It is the belief that human interests come before all other considerations that has resulted in the depletion of huge percentages of our forests,

the poisoning of our oceans, the rendering of our lands almost entirely unproductive, and the destruction of our air and atmosphere.

I must first remind Mr. Barnes that human beings are animals and are inarguably very closely related to some other species of animals, upon which horrifying amounts of unnecessary research have been conducted. Keeping this basic fact in mind, does it not make sense to argue that striking a balance among all the animal species on the planet would lead to humans having a healthier relationship with the environment? Justifying the destruction of millions of non-human animals for the benefit of humans is a contradiction. In the long run, the failure to recognize the planet as an all-encompassing system will lead to the demise of the human race. The disregard for marine life has allowed man to fill the planet's waterways with toxics to the point that humans can no longer trust their drinking water, and disregard for wildlife has allowed man to log and burn forests to the point that the air is no longer safe to breathe, and the ozone layer no longer offers suitable protection. Though the short-term benefits of some medical research on animals (and I stress some, because contrary to Barnes' belief, there is a great deal of unnecessary research done) may seem important, there is no longer the time for short-term vision. Humans must consider the long-term consequences of their actions in relation to the rest of the environment. By researching further alternatives to using animals in medical research, man is making a profound step towards preserving the planet.

Jill Freidberg
Anthropology

Horseback

Over the last few months, I have seen several articles in the Emerald focusing on the ill-treatment of lab animals here on campus. I have no comment on that issue one way or the other. What I do have a comment on, is the treatment of other animals off-campus that

is also supported by this institution. I am talking about the horseback riding classes offered through the University.

I grew up around horses and thought I had seen a lot, until my first day of horseback riding class. Upon arrival at the arena, I was faced with a dark, sour-smelling barn containing stalls which had mushrooms growing in the corners. These stalls, "luckily," were for the special horses only. The regular schooling horses stayed out in a large, but overgrazed pasture. I almost cried when I saw the horse I was to have my lesson on. He was a rather sad looking animal that resembled a milk cow more than a horse because his hip bones were sticking out quite obviously from his sides. There was a saddle gall (raw spot) on his side which I was told not to worry about, and he had orange diarrhea, which I have never before seen with horses. I almost dropped the class right there, but I stayed hoping to see things would get better. It never happened, things just got worse. Winter has set in; the horses aren't getting much nutrition from the grass and the poor hay they are fed. At the end of last term, you could count the ribs on many of the horses. How can this University, with all of its "open-mindedness" and dedication to the rights of the defenseless, support such a gross injustice to animals?

Heather Wilcox
Psychology

Landfills

On behalf of Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG), I would like to commend Sigma Nu fraternity in their environmentally conscious efforts to recycle. This is an excellent example of what everyone can do, in order to eliminate the over-use of landfills.

As world environmental concerns escalate, increased knowledge and participation in efforts such as these can only serve to better our earth.

Kyle R. Anderson
Psychology