

SWARTHMORE MOUNTAIN JUSTICE

Institutional Memory Document 2011-2012



Swarthmore College / August 2012

Purpose of this Document

This document was compiled by members of Swarthmore Mountain Justice (MJ) during the summer of 2012 to contribute to the group's institutional memory. This document aims to record the group's campaign activities, internal dynamics and organization, principles & analysis, research, and documents up to July 2012. This document can be used to create popular education material for organizing at Swarthmore and other campuses. Swarthmore MJ can be reached at SwarthmoreMJ@gmail.com.

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Who Are We?

Swarthmore Mountain Justice formed in mid-October of 2010. During Swarthmore's Spring and Fall breaks of 2010, students traveled to West Virginia to learn about mountaintop removal coal mining, an extreme form of coal extraction that destroys the landscape and poisons Appalachian communities. While there, we had formative conversations with activists and people living in frontline communities, and saw first-hand the effects of this type of mining. When we returned to campus, we wanted to continue to act in solidarity with the people we had met from front-line communities. But we also recognized that as students at Swarthmore, we were very far removed from where coal mining and MTR was actually taking place. We wondered what type of campaign was best suited to our unique position as students on Swarthmore's campus, and realized that, as students, we were participants in an institution with a large endowment partially invested in mountaintop removal as well as other destructive extractive industries. Through Swarthmore, we have access to large amounts of money and power, money that is currently fueling destructive extractive practices. Knowing this, we felt compelled to act. We decided on a divestment campaign as a way for us to use the power and position we have as students to move our institution's money to stop funding practices that harm people's health and communities. By working on a campaign that targets extractive industries, including those practicing MTR, we see ourselves as supporting the struggle of folks in Appalachia and in other frontline communities.

Swarthmore MJ members don't all share the same political beliefs and motivations; MJ as an organization doesn't adhere to one central philosophy or set of political principles. However, there are some values that members have shared:

- **Direct action strategy:** employing public forms of protest (such as street theater, rallies, and sit-ins) without a mediating body between ourselves and our target audience; willingness to go around and outside institutional forms of making change
- **Participatory organizing/shared leadership:** maintaining nonhierarchical group roles, rotating facilitation duties, making decisions using consensus; a desire to empower each member to grow as an organizer
- **Incorporating anti-oppression into organizational culture:** working to empower healthy and cooperative relationships between all members while healing the oppressive relationships brought on by sexism, homophobia, ableism, racism, classism, and all forms of hierarchy; allying ourselves with other campus groups doing this work
- **Commitment to 'frontline communities':** grounding climate activism in the ongoing struggles and priorities of extraction communities and those directly affected by the fossil fuel industry
- **Linking divestment with broader struggle for climate justice:** ending financial support for fossil fuels is necessary, but not sufficient at achieving climate justice; understanding our role in the broader climate justice and environmental justice movement, building diverse allies, and sharing analysis and strategy

I. CAMPAIGN

Why Divestment?

In asking for divestment, we are implicitly stating that investment is a choice. It is a political choice with global consequences. Choosing to invest in an industry means financially endorsing that industry's practices. In adopting the "Greening of Swarthmore" document, Swarthmore's administration explicitly acknowledges the environmental consequences of its investment decisions. It states, "The way we invest our endowment funds is inextricably linked to long term sustainability. Greening investments is more than a symbolic gesture, it is a concrete display of our commitment to fostering healthy communities and environments." However, in contradiction to its stated values and claims of leadership in campus sustainability, Swarthmore currently sponsors injustice by funding fossil fuel companies and climate change.

Adapted from [Divestment FAQs](#):

Shareholder resolutions are an institutional way to put pressure on companies Swarthmore is invested in; why doesn't Mountain Justice propose a shareholder resolution?

Shareholder resolutions are useful in cases where a company can reform its practices, principles, or procedures, but are virtually impossible when the reform undermines the economic purpose of the company in question. In other words, shareholder resolutions can pressure a fossil fuel company to "clean up its act," but they still allow the company to continue to extract and use fossil fuels. Companies can, and frequently do, throw out shareholder resolutions that are "[related to the company's ordinary business operations](#)."¹

Why is divestment the best solution?

As mentioned above, dirty energy is dirty energy, no matter how "cleanly" extracted, and is not sustainable. By withdrawing both ideological and financial support from these companies through divestment, we are sending a clear message that we will not be complicit in irresponsible extractive practices OR the continuation of a destructive dependency on fossil fuels.

In 1986, Swarthmore College ended its complicity in an unjust system by divesting from companies supporting South African apartheid. This nationwide campaign was hugely successful in working toward the end of the South African apartheid. We believe that it is now time for the College to respond to an analogous system of injustice.

Won't divestment negatively affect the endowment?

Many studies have dispelled the myth that securing a financial bottom line necessitates throwing social and environmental responsibilities out the window. According to Mercer, a vast majority of studies on socially responsible investments show environmental, social and corporate governance (ESG) factors can have [a positive impact on portfolio returns](#).²

¹ <http://www.sec.gov/divisions/corpfin/cf-noaction/14a-8/2012/greencentury012312-14a8-incoming.pdf>

² <http://www.mercer.com/press-releases/1364225>

We understand that this transformation will entail necessary public discussions about the College's financial transparency and investment strategy, and we want to affirm our own commitment to a healthy endowment and maintenance of Swarthmore's financial aid. We are ready and willing to do everything necessary to see this process to its completion.

Will this really make a difference?

It's true, a single campus divestment campaign is not enough. This is why we are working with a national coalition of students from universities around the country who are all pushing for fossil fuel divestment. A single voice is rarely enough to change stayed and corrupt practices, but a concert of voices from institutions of higher learning around the country can make a huge impact, as we have seen with the campaign to divest from South African apartheid. Swarthmore has an amazing opportunity to redefine the role of higher educational institutions and set a bold precedent in the fight for climate justice and the common good.

Why so urgent?

There are people fighting the dirty extraction practices poisoning their communities every day. We couldn't stay silent and allow Swarthmore to champion struggles for social justice while pouring money into the same companies that are destroying communities all over the country.

We have done a lot of thinking about how we, as Swarthmore students, can best support communities on these front lines of climate change and fossil fuel extraction. While we are not often on those front lines, we can stand in solidarity with those communities and use the power we have. We are members of an institution that controls huge amounts of money. When Swarthmore makes choices to invest in certain industries, it is actively allowing those industries to continue those practices – something that we, as students, can guide to a more just purpose.

What Are We Asking For?

We are asking Swarthmore College to divest our endowment from “The Sordid Sixteen,” 16 of the worst fossil fuel companies that have rampant human rights violations and are contributing to environmental degradation on a massive scale:

Alpha Natural Resources
Arch Coal
Cabot Oil & Gas
Chesapeake Energy
Chevron
ConocoPhillips

Dominion Resources
Duke Energy
Exelon
ExxonMobil
Halliburton
Hess

Occidental Petroleum
Patriot Coal
Peabody Energy
Range Resources

For the complete proposal with research and information on each of these companies please see *Appendix A: Fossil Fuel Divestment Proposal*.

From the *Fossil Fuel Divestment Proposal*:

“Divestment from fossil fuels would be a commitment to remove college money from those companies outlined above, and to refuse to invest in them in the future. Swarthmore is not currently invested in all of these companies. Divestment ensures that Swarthmore never will be invested in any of these sixteen companies, so long as they continue dirty energy extraction, which currently accounts for the vast majority of their profits.

A number of institutional investors currently use socially screened funds. Negative or avoidance screening—used as far back as the 1920s—works by avoiding investment in companies whose practices are inconsistent with the personal values of the investor.³ These include investments in tobacco, firearms, and gambling, military contractors and nuclear weapons manufacturers. Divestment from fossil fuels would work in essentially the same way: Swarthmore’s investment managers would screen out the sixteen domestically owned, publicly traded companies when making investment decisions. For more information on Socially Responsible Investment, please see “The New SRI: Socially Responsive Indexing,” a report by the Aperio Group, a well-respected investment management firm whose thoughts on SRI have provided considerable guidance for our own research.⁴

We know that Swarthmore is invested in a few of the sixteen companies. Divestment will involve removing Swarthmore’s money from these companies. Recognizing the complexities of modern finance, we are not requesting that every dollar of the endowment be removed; our ask only extends to domestic equity holdings. This category, which includes both the college’s direct holdings and those in commingled mutual funds, accounts for 20.4% of the college’s \$1.5 billion endowment.⁵”

Research, Information, Data

College Endowments 101

- Swarthmore has two pots of money:
 - *Operating Account:*
 - This is like the school’s checking account
 - Tuition is paid into this pot
 - Salaries, annual expenses, etc come out of this pot
 - Replenished annually (mostly from tuition, partially from endowment returns, since it costs more than the annual tuition to fund each student)
 - *Endowment:*
 - This is like the school’s savings account
 - Alumni gifts are paid into this pot
 - Constantly growing (in theory) because it is invested, which feeds back way more than it gives in
 - Recent spike in the endowment due to good returns on investments
 - Swarthmore invests in high risk high return equity, which gives a high return when the market does well
 - The endowment is supposed to grow indefinitely
 - No one is ever supposed to touch the endowment, JUST touch the returns on the investments—the sustaining life force of the school.
- Who controls the endowment? In order of control/decision making ability:
 - The Board of Managers (has an investment committee)
 - Investment Office
 - Hires investment consultants that provide advice
 - Committee on Investor Responsibility which ostensibly provides legitimate advice for

³ <http://www.socialfunds.com/media/index.cgi/screening.htm>

⁴ http://www.aperiogroup.com/sites/all/files/documents/%28Doc%2011%29%20Socially%20Responsive%20Indexing%20%28SRI%29%20Overview_0.pdf

⁵ http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/administration/finance_investment_office/FinancialReport_10-11.pdf

- the investment office but actually just does proxy votes
- Manages some money directly, has some money managed by external firms

The [BOARD OF MANAGERS](#) has final say in all investment decisions. A few individuals are appointed to the [INVESTMENT COMMITTEE](#), which determines an investment strategy and hires people to work in the [FINANCE AND INVESTMENT OFFICE](#). We're not sure what the exact role of everybody in this office is, but they collectively decide to which companies the college will lend its money.

The [COMMITTEE ON INVESTOR RESPONSIBILITY](#) (CIR) has been mostly inactive in recent years. The CIR includes board members, administrators, and student representatives. The CIR is limited to proposing, and voting on, "shareholder resolutions"—non-binding recommendations that shareholders make to the management of a company. Though shareholder resolutions are an important aspect of responsible investment, many other avenues for responsible investment exist. Here are a few:

- ❑ **Positive Screening:** Intentionally investing in companies that do well in a certain field (i.e., sustainability or human rights).
 - ❑ **Negative Screening** (aka divestment): Intentionally avoiding companies in a certain industry or that engage in an unfavorable practice.
 - ❑ **Community Investment:** Placing the college's cash assets in a local bank or credit union, that will invest in local business, rather than an enormous national bank.
 - ❑ **Fund Manager Engagement**
- Think of an endowment like a pie (organized from low risk low return to high risk high return)
 - Cash or cash like assets, 4.1% of endowment
 - Fixed income, 11.2%
 - Fixed income is largely bonds, is really safe, and will always be around
 - Real assets, 8%
 - Funds that invest in timber in New Zealand, for example
 - Basically, land in various places
 - Domestic equity, 20.4%
 - Equity means ownership/investments; basically, investments that are in the U.S.
 - International equity, 19.7%
 - Investments that are outside the U.S.
 - Private equity, 23.6% (domestic and international are both "public equity")
 - Investments in privately traded companies
 - This comes through being invested in middlemen
 - "Marketable alternatives," 13.1%
 - Super morally ambiguous
 - hedge funds, mortgage backed securities
 - hedge funds are funds made up of all the other pieces of the pie
 - More about public equity:
 - Swarthmore can either directly buy a stock, or they can pay an Investment Manager to buy stocks for them.
 - OR they can have indirect, or pooled, funds. In this case, a money manager has a pool of various stocks that they sell as one stock to Swarthmore. (This is a mutual fund—public, pooled (aka co-mingled), equity)
 - We don't really know what's in our pooled funds, but they might have a sector breakdown, or some other forms of information—in other words, Swarthmore's administration is not completely clueless about what's invested here.

In our research on the endowment and socially responsible investing we've learned that 'direct stock holdings' are the most accessible funds for which to advocate change, either in the form of shareholder engagement or divestment. These are the 'low hanging fruit' of our investments since they involve the least middle-men and there is more transparency with information on these investments. For example, we've been told the Sudan divestment campaign focused solely on direct holdings.

However, Swarthmore has a lot of money invested in mutual funds (pooled public equity). Student activism around college mutual funds is uncharted territory. While little to no precedent exists, in theory, mutual fund managers could get a list of companies they're invested in and Swarthmore could get the list if they asked.

Financial Transparency

Currently, students only have access to the list of domestic equities held by Swarthmore. This list includes the names of companies, but not the amount that Swarthmore invests in them. Furthermore, the list is not available online; curious students must ask a student member of the Committee on Investor Responsibility. We also know that Swarthmore keeps its cash assets in PNC Bank, but the the remainder of the endowment--upwards of \$650 million--is a mystery.

Additional info

The following reports have been helpful in understanding the financial operations of the college:

- ❑ [2010-2011 Financial Report](#)⁶
- ❑ [Ad Hoc Financial Planning Group Report](#)⁷

For future reference, the information in this section was compiled from notes from the following MJ Documents:

- ❑ "Budget Talking Points" Research from 2010-11 College Financial Report
- ❑ Notes from Martin's (REC) visit to Swarthmore
- ❑ MJ Finance Research Group

Campaign Timeline (Actions, Events, Benchmarks)

October 26, 2011

Action: MJ Gives "Free Money" to Students Bring Attention to Fossil Fuel Investment

In order to introduce ourselves and the issue of responsible investing to the campus, MJ took action in student mailboxes. MJ members stuffed student mailboxes with a letter from a satirical "Committee on Investment Profitability" (see Appendix B), which celebrated Swarthmore's lucrative investments in fossil fuels:

"...Exxon Mobil has made over forty billion dollars from its operations in Indonesia alone, thanks to its willingness to protect business interests with military force and torture. Exxon Mobil's entrepreneurship is excellent news for Swarthmore, since every barrel of oil and ton

⁶ http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/administration/finance_investment_office/FinancialReport_10-11.pdf

⁷ http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/administration/finance_investment_office/approved_budget_adjustment_Dec09.pdf

of coal produced represents further revenue for our community...”

The letter claimed that since the college was getting such good returns from its fossil fuel investments it had decided to give some ‘free money’ to the students:

“...Because we believe that Swarthmore is an institution that should give back, we are enclosing some money that represents a return on your investment as a student at Swarthmore College...”

Fake ‘dirty money’ was included with the letter. Immediately after the ‘mailbox action’ Swarthmore MJ published an Op-Ed in the Daily Gazette entitled, [“Mountain Justice: Mailbox Money Letters, An Explanation and a Call for Discussion.”](#)⁸ In the Op-Ed, we exposed ourselves as the group behind the action, calling for campus discussion about the ethics of fossil fuel investment.



November 15, 2011 -----

MJ calls for investment transparency

Before we could formulate a concrete ask of the administration, we needed to know more information about the college’s investments. We published an Op-Ed in the Daily Gazette, [“Open letter to the Finance and Investment Office and Board of Managers,”](#)⁹ where we made a moral argument for increased financial transparency, claiming that the college could not live up to its own ethical standards if it did not disclose its investments:

“Out of the college’s investments, students currently have access to a list of domestic equity holdings. We appreciate that this information has been made available to students, but it frankly raises many more questions than it answers. The list does not include the amount of money invested in any of these companies. Furthermore, domestic equities only represent 22% of Swarthmore’s endowment – meaning that over \$800 million is still unaccounted for. In order for students and community members to engage in the project of making Swarthmore the best possible institution, full transparency for the whole endowment must be achieved.

This issue is of practical importance for the student group drafting this letter, Swarthmore Mountain Justice. We recently began raising awareness around the college’s investment in several fossil fuel companies. Since we began these efforts, other students have been asking us exactly much money is invested in these companies. The Sustainability Committee has also asked us to provide the dollar amounts invested in fossil fuels and other financial metrics as a precondition for examining the relationship between investment and sustainability. As we do not have access to this information, we are prevented from

⁸ <http://daily.swarthmore.edu/2011/10/05/op-ed-mailbox-money-letters-an-explanation-and-a-call-for-discussion/>

⁹ <http://daily.swarthmore.edu/2011/11/15/mountain-justice-open-letter-to-the-finance-and-investment-office-and-board-of-managers/>

discussing these issues in a fully informed and responsible manner...”

We call on the Investment Committee and the Finance and Investment Office to make available:

1. All domestic equity investments, and the dollar amounts invested in each.
2. All international equity investments, and the dollar amounts invested in each.
3. All private equity investments, and the dollar amounts invested in each.
4. All real estate and natural resource investments, and the dollar amounts invested in each.
5. All bonds and bank accounts, and the dollar amounts invested in each.
6. The names of all mutual funds and hedge funds managing Swarthmore’s money, the amounts of money invested in each, and the investments of each respective fund.”

We did not expect the administration to say yes to our call for investment transparency, however the ask helped out campaign either way. If the administration had said yes we would have gained information that would have helped our campaign; if they said no, it would demonstrate to other students and potential allies that the administration was not willing to live up to its promises and would bolster our support.

On December 5, 2011, Suzanne Welsh, the Vice President for Finance and Treasurer, published an Op-Ed in response to ours, “[Response to Swarthmore Mountain Justice’s ‘Open Letter.’](#)”¹⁰ The Op-Ed dismissed our call for transparency, asserting that...

“The Board of Managers does not believe the endowment should be used in pursuing objectives other than to help the College meet its primary mission. Underlying this policy is consideration of the many thousands of donors to the endowment over the generations, whose generosity was intended to support the educational mission of the College.

The op-ed referred us to the existing Committee on Investor Responsibility, claiming that shareholder resolutions as enough to ensure the ethical integrity of the college:

“The Investment Committee believes the College should be a pro-active shareholder in the companies it owns shares in. The College has a responsibility to hold companies accountable. Annually, companies must hold a meeting for shareholders. At these meetings, and under applicable SEC regulations, shareholders may put issues on the ballot for a shareholder vote. Swarthmore’s Committee on Investor Responsibility—on which four students, two administrators, and two members of the Investment Committee serve—monitor shareholder resolutions and make recommendations about how Swarthmore should vote its shares...”

November 21, 2011 -----

Frontline Event: Larry Gibson

From [Press release on MJ Blog](#):

“On November 7, Mountain Justice hosted a talk by activist Larry Gibson, founder of Keeper of the Mountains Foundation. The talk was attended by a standing-room only crowd of approximately 60 people in Bond Hall! The weighty talk reminded us all why we struggle against mountaintop removal and all forms of fossil fuel extraction.

Larry is personally responsible for introducing many MJ members to the devastating effects of mountaintop

¹⁰ <http://daily.swarthmore.edu/2011/12/05/response-to-swarthmore-mountain-justices-open-letter/>

removal in his home state of West Virginia. Larry spoke movingly for about 45 minutes on his decades experiences as a frontline activist and the absolute necessity for all of us to get involved with the fight against mountaintop removal. He also drew many connections between MTR and Fracking, noting that both extraction methods pollute vast quantities of fresh water. He spoke to the importance of a comprehensive analysis as we struggle for a better world without exploitative extraction, saying, “If we oppose mountaintop

removal and ignore everything else, we’ll fight and fight and maybe we’ll even win, but then we’ll look around us and wonder what we were fighting for.”



Larry was joined by Swarthmore alumnus Ken Hechler, Class of 1935, who represented West Virginia in the U.S. House of Representatives for nearly 20 years, and has been campaigning against mountaintop removal full-time since 2004.

We hope this is only the first of several events in the “Frontline Series.” Keep your eyes peeled next Spring for more events with activists fighting extraction on the frontlines.”

December 3, 2011

Street Theater: Asking the Board of Managers for Fossil Fuel Divestment

In December, Swarthmore MJ first called on the school to divest from fossil fuels through a street theater action on campus. The theater action, a remixed version of ‘A Christmas Carol,’ drew parallels between South African Apartheid divestment and the proposed divestment from fossil fuels. Members of the Board of Managers were given stockings full of coal and a letter calling for fossil fuel divestment.

Video: [“Swarthmore Mountain Justice: Street Theater Action 12.03.11”](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCNIOWv_TGU)¹¹

From press release:

“On Saturday, December 3 at 11:00 AM, crowds gathered as members of Swarthmore Mountain Justice performed their own rendition of Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. As the College’s Board of Managers met in a building just a short walk away, the group asked for full divestment of the college’s endowment from fossil fuel industries via creative performance.

In the 5 minute play, E.B. Neezer-Scrooge—standing in for the Board—is shown the way to a healthy endowment by the Ghosts of Investments Past, Present and Future. By working in solidarity with those communities already most affected by the extractive industry, Swarthmore students and the Board of Managers work together, as they did with South African Apartheid, to end the College’s financial complicity in unjust practices. Fossil fuel divestment, as stated by the play’s fictional Board Member, would represent a concrete way for the College to “bring its practices in line with its stated values of social justice.”

Mountain Justice also prepared Christmas stockings for each member of the Board, including a piece of coal and a letter directly asking them to support divestment. When group members arrived at the

¹¹ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCNIOWv_TGU

Managers' scheduled meeting place, however, they found that the Managers had already disbanded for the weekend. MJ is now working on a public art installation and holiday greeting to make sure that the Managers receive the call to divest in time for the holidays."



February 19-March 2

Petition drive gains close to 700 signatures

[Statement on MJ Blog¹²:](#)

"Mountain Justice has been working on a fossil fuel divestment campaign for a year now. We've had numerous conversations with various students and student groups in an effort to assess the views of our peers regarding the issues we are confronting, and to get feedback on our methods. Last month, we decided it was time to gauge the opinions of the student body as a whole to get a better sense of the campus's attitudes towards this issue. In order to do this, our group wrote a petition that any student could sign asking President Chopp to support divestment.

Going into the petition drive, we weren't sure how to feel or what to expect. Was the support we had gotten from individuals representative of the student body? Would people feel comfortable attaching their name to a statement written by a "green group"?

Collecting signatures on the first shift at the top of Sharples immediately removed our qualms. People were not just willing to sign; they expressed an excitement to support our cause in whatever way they could. Some people literally grabbed the pen from my hand; many people I'd never met before told me how great they think MJ's campaign is. Over the course of just one hour, I was reminded again and again of why we do the work that we are doing: students at this school believe that Swarthmore needs to be held to the standards it sets out for itself, and in this case, that means DIVESTMENT.

We collected hundreds of signatures in a matter of days. We don't have a final count yet, but we know that in less than two weeks, about half of the student body signed on. If we were uncertain of how widespread our support was at the beginning, there is no question now. The student body is concerned about Swarthmore's investment policies and the school's ongoing support for destructive, dangerous, and oppressive fossil fuel companies, and we want that policy to change. We don't have 700 people at our weekly meetings, but we have their support as we go forward in this struggle. Now more than ever, it is clear that we need to bring President Chopp to our side as well in the fight against the extractive industries and towards a clean investment future."

¹² <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/03/17/petition-success-demonstrates-widespread-support/>

February 21, 2012

Daily Gazette Article: "Mountain Justice Targets Environmentally Irresponsible Investments"

[Mountain Justice Targets Environmentally Irresponsible Investments](#)¹³

By BaLeigh Harper

"Mountain Justice (MJ) has hit Swarthmore's administration with a hardball, demanding that the college account for all of its investments. Many American universities are investing substantial funds in the fossil fuel industry and others with questionable environmental practices. But MJ is holding Swarthmore to a higher standard.

"We are drawing a connection between how expenses are paid and what companies the school is supporting using our student tuition and other funding," said Ryane Disken-Cahill '12, member of the group.

MJ is moving forward with a divestment campaign despite the administration's refusal to release investment information on the grounds that doing so would violate a contract with fund managers. Without this information, MJ is working to establish a list of companies that it does not want Swarthmore invested in to present to the Board of Managers. Though Mountain Justice's long-term goal is to have the school divest entirely from fossil fuels, the group is making concessions to work with the administration during this transition..."

March 7-10, 2012

6 students go to Virginia

[Mountain Justice Spring Break](#)¹⁴

By Rachel Giovanniello

"Over spring break this year, six members of Mountain Justice drove down to Appalachia, Virginia, to participate in Mountain Justice Spring Break 2012. We met with frontline activists, community organizers, and students on college campuses in Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Michigan, and elsewhere.

The time I spent in workshops, actions, and talking with other organizers was a powerful reminder of how environmental issues in Appalachia (like issues of environmental justice throughout the United States and the world) are inextricably tied to issues of race and class, of access to land and ownership over that land.

Although I've been heavily involved in MJ for about a year and a half now, I had never been down to Appalachia or seen an MTR site firsthand. I've seen a lot of pictures, but none of them conveyed the spectacular emptiness of the space where a mountain used to be, the way the landscape looks dead even after restoration has occurred and new grass has been sprayed on. It wasn't only the geography, though, that hit us so hard. Mountaintop removal is destroying mountains in Appalachia, but it's also destroying people's lives, communities and culture. We traveled to the MTR site with a local activist who explained to us how he became involved in organizing with the national Mountain Justice movement about 7 years ago. In 2004, 3 year-old Jeremy Davidson was crushed to death by a boulder that fell from an MTR site after the road was widened to make room for larger coal trucks. The town of Inman came together almost immediately afterward, marching in protest through town and beginning to organize against MTR and strip mining more generally..."

¹³ <http://daily.swarthmore.edu/2012/02/21/mountain-justice-targets-environmentally-irresponsible-investments/>

¹⁴ <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/03/20/mountain-justice-spring-break/>

March 20, 2012

Action: *MJ awards Swarthmore a “Black Gold” award from the “US Dirty Energy Council”*

Video: [“Swarthmore Receives a 'Black Gold' Award from the U.S. Dirty Energy Council”](#)¹⁵

Statement on MJ Blog following the action¹⁶:

“On Monday, March 19th, members of the Swarthmore community attended a mid-day celebration. At approximately 12:30 pm outside of the Science Center, representatives from the U.S. Dirty Energy Council honored the College’s Dedication to Short-Sighted Investments. A brief unveiling ceremony was held for a “Black Gold” plaque. Sparkling grape juice was served to venerate the occasion and celebrate the College’s value of corporate irresponsibility. “It’s hard being in the energy business,” a U.S. DEC representative said. “Fortunately we have institutions like Swarthmore who have relentlessly supported us through their investments.” The plaque is located next to and looks remarkably similar to the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED certification plaque. The proximity demonstrates that, despite Swarthmore’s efforts to curtail its own consumption of fossil fuels, it continues—through investments in companies such as Exxon Mobile and Chevron—to financially support extraction, “for which we can all be thankful.” The plaque is a true memorial to communal dissonance.”

Late March, 2012

MJ meets with Rebecca Chopp, asks for her support.

Members of MJ met with President Chopp to give her our divestment proposal (Appendix A), share the results of our divestment petition, and ask for her support. While she declined to respond immediately; she published an Op-ed in the Daily Gazette on April 19th.

Most of her response failed to address the issue of divestment, rather it focused on other work the college was doing toward sustainability on campus. In reference to divestment, President Chopp declined giving us support on the grounds that the Board of Managers policy is solely to guarantee the “best long-term financial results.”

April 19, 2012: President Chopp’s Response: [“Op-Ed: Chopp on Divestment”](#)¹⁷

“Students from Mountain Justice asked me to support their request of the Board of Managers that it divest from fossil fuel companies, and to do so in advance of the May meeting of its Committee on Social Responsibility, where the students will have the chance to present their proposal. As I indicated to the students in late March, I do not believe that the Board will act against its established policy, articulated within the endowment guidelines, stating that the Investment Committee should “manage the endowment to yield the best long-term financial results, rather than to pursue social objectives.” The Board is more likely to encourage Mountain Justice to join us in formulating different, more holistic approaches in pursuit of a cleaner, healthier environment.

¹⁵ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g4NrnuUfbiQ&feature=player_embedded

¹⁶ <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/03/20/swarthmore-receives-a-black-gold-award-from-the-u-s-dirty-energy-council/>

¹⁷ <http://daily.swarthmore.edu/2012/04/19/12697/>

The Investment Committee believes that we should be an active shareholder in the companies whose shares we own, thereby enabling us to hold them accountable. Indeed, we have some notable examples in our history where effecting positive social change has come from exerting influence on a company by virtue of our stockholder presence. Such was the case when, for example, Swarthmore was directly responsible for altering the practices of three Fortune 500 companies to broaden their equal opportunity policies to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. I believe that the Board's policy is a responsible one focused as it is on the primary mission of providing an exceptional liberal arts education and generous financial aid policies that support the value we place on access. A strong endowment ensures that we are able to deliver on our mission for both present and future students.

April 7, 2012

Delegation delivers invitation to Rebecca Chopp

After receiving a non-committal answer from President Chopp, we decided to send a delegation directly to her office. A delegation is an unscheduled meeting where a large number of group members and supporters visit an administrator to deliver a message or make a demand. When used at the appropriate time in a campaign, delegations demonstrate student support for a campaign and bring a sense of urgency by putting the administrator on the spot. For our April 7th action, our delegation took the form of an invitation; we invited President Chopp to take a stand on divestment and support us at the upcoming Board of Managers meeting. We delivered a printed invitation and the stack of signed petitions we collected earlier in the semester. President Chopp wasn't in her office at the time of the action, but the materials were left for her. A video and press release were posted after the action.

Video: "[Swarthmore Mountain Justice Invites President Chopp to Support Divestment // 4.6.12](#)"¹⁸



[Press Release on MJ Blog](#)¹⁹:

"April 6, 2012 – Today Swarthmore's Mountain Justice sent a student delegation with an elaborate formal invitation to President Chopp to join them in their fight to divest Swarthmore College's money from the "Sordid Sixteen," the 16 dirtiest domestic fossil fuel companies. About 20 people, including members of Mountain Justice and the wider campus community, visited her office at 12:30PM to deliver the invitation, which requests the president's support at an upcoming Board of Managers meeting at which Mountain Justice will be presenting their divestment proposal...

...Recently, on March 26, members of Mountain Justice met with President Chopp to present their research, to argue the moral arguments for divestment from the Sordid Sixteen, and to ask for her support. Having received a noncommittal answer, the group decided to present her with a formal invitation to publicly voice her support. The invitation requests that she RSVP by April 23—the campus eagerly await her response. As Sachie Hopkins-Hayakawa said, "Now Rebecca Chopp has a choice between supporting us and divestment, or aligning with dirty energy companies and the sordid sixteen."

¹⁸ http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mEj5S6vQD0&feature=player_embedded

¹⁹ <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/04/07/swarthmore-mountain-justice-invites-president-chopp-to-support-divestment/>

April 10, 2012

Panel discussion about divestment

VIDEO: "[Fossil Fuel Divestment Panel // April 13, 2012](#)"²⁰

[Information from MJ Blog](#)²¹:

"In the course of Swarthmore Mountain Justice's fossil fuel divestment campaign, we've gotten a lot of questions about the technical aspects of divestment. Things like...

- What is divestment?
- How will it work at Swarthmore?
- How does divestment bring about political and economic change?
- Will divestment put the college at risk economically?
- What are the similarities and differences between this and past divestment movements?

Come to a panel discussion THIS FRIDAY at 4:30pm to learn the answers to all these questions and more. The panelists are:

Ellen Dorsey — Executive Director, Wallace Global Fund. Dorsey has worked at the nexus of advocacy and academic research to advance the work of NGOs toward human rights and environmental justice. During her time as a student at the University of Pittsburgh, she campaigned for divestment from South African apartheid, and later studied in South Africa as a Fulbright Scholar...

Dan Apfel — Executive Director, Responsible Endowments Coalition. Apfel has been an advocate for social and environmental issues for nearly ten years, and was an advocate for responsible investment while in college. In his work with REC, Dan interfaces with students at hundreds of colleges and universities, as well as college investment officers and other investment professionals...

Hannah Jones '12 — Swarthmore Mountain Justice. Hannah is a Mountain Justice member and a soon-to-graduate senior. She is excited to help Swarthmore move toward true social and environmental responsibility.

The event will be discussion-based, so come with any and all questions about divestment and/or Mountain Justice's strategy!"

What is divestment?
How does it bring about change?
Why is it an effective strategy for confronting the injustices of fossil fuel extraction and climate change?

Come to a panel discussion featuring

Ellen Dorsey
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WALLACE GLOBAL FUND

Dan Apfel
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
RESPONSIBLE ENDOWMENTS COALITION

Hannah Jones '12
SWARTHMORE MOUNTAIN JUSTICE

Bring your questions about divestment's purpose, its economic feasibility, Mountain Justice's strategy, and anything else!

Sponsored by Mountain Justice and Forum for Free Speech

²⁰ <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL3B24B1EEDD201F34&feature=plcp>

²¹ http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/04/10/divestmentpanel_invitation/

April 20, 2012

MJ treats Chopp to a movie night

MJ Blog: "[Swarthmore Mountain Justice treats President Chopp to a movie night!](http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/04/20/swarthmore-mountain-justice-treats-president-chopp-to-a-movie-night/)"²²



“On Friday, April 20, Swarthmore Mountain Justice delivered a gift basket to the office of President Rebecca Chopp. Since the President was unable to attend the fossil fuel divestment panel discussion the week before, the group treated her to a movies, inviting her to view the [video recording of the event](#). The basket included a DVD with a link to the panel along with a bag of popcorn, a necessary movie night accessory.

The basket also included a personal letter from Mountain Justice in response to the President’s [Op-ed](#) published the day before. Mountain Justice expressed disappointment in the President’s statement and urged her to consider the group’s research, which shows

how divestment from the ‘Sordid Sixteen,’ the worst-of-the-worst fossil fuel companies, will not compromise the College’s financial integrity. A similar letter was released publicly by Mountain Justice and can be read [here](#).”

[Swarthmore’s Divestment Potential: a Response to President Chopp](#)²³

Op-ed by Hannah Jones:

“As members of Swarthmore Mountain Justice, our ongoing research has convinced us that Swarthmore can, and should, effectively promote social and environmental justice through divestment and responsible reinvestment, while still ensuring the financial health of the college. However, we have encountered skepticism from various members of the campus community, the most recent instance of which was President Chopp’s Op-Ed “Swarthmore’s Enduring Commitment to Sustainability.”

We are disappointed to see that President Chopp, along with other members of the campus community, have not addressed the justification and research we have laid out on divestment and reinvestment in previous publications and personal meetings. It seems that the conversations stop at the word “divestment,” rather than critically engage with discussions about the effectiveness of divestment as a tactic, or of socially responsible alternatives.

Many of the hesitations we have heard about divestment have revolved around the idea that it is too extreme, too drastic, or even “divisive and adversarial,” according to President Chopp. Divesting from these companies will create too many waves. Shareholder resolutions

²² <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/04/20/swarthmore-mountain-justice-treats-president-chopp-to-a-movie-night/>

²³ <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/04/20/swarthmores-divestment-potential-a-response-to-president-chopp/>

and moral appeals are how we do business here. If that does not work, then we should go through legislative bodies because they have the power to change regulations. With this column, we aim to clarify our own understanding of divestment, and address some of these concerns.”

April 23, 2012

MJ meets with Sustainability Committee

Members of MJ met with the Sustainability Committee to discuss our research and our campaign, asking for support from the committee. After the meeting the Sustainability Committee issued a statement saying:

“The college’s investment decisions are part of the overall sustainability of the college. As the college values sustainability, responsible investment should be part of the college’s sustainability plan. Shareholder engagement, active investment, and screening are all legitimate forms of investment responsibility. Context determines which form is most sustainable and responsible in a particular circumstance.”

After meeting with the Sustainability Committee, [MJ published a piece](#)²⁴ to put their statement of support in context. The report expressed appreciation for The Committee’s willingness to have to a two-sided conversation and expressed hope that future meetings with administrators would be equally constructive. The report in part said:

“Without explicitly endorsing our campaign, SusCom, an official administrative body of the college, endorsed the values that guide our work in MJ. This statement is a strong endorsement of critical engagement with college investments in order to achieve true sustainability, exactly what we have been campaigning for over the course of the past year. The committee also agreed to form a subcommittee next fall specifically to research the socially responsible investing practices of peer institutions and to make more detailed recommendations regarding the principles stated above.

Time and again, the administration has told us that they “don’t do” divestment, because they believe shareholder resolutions to be the most effective form of investor responsibility. SusCom has just challenged that philosophy, and it’s time for other administrative bodies to take heed and start considering alternative forms of responsible investment as well.”

May 5, 2012

MJ meets with Board of Managers

The meeting was facilitated by Board of Managers David Gelber and Sue Levine. Four MJ members had prepared a presentation to make to the group, but Gelber started off by posing 3 questions: 1. Let’s say the school divests from the Sordid 16, and the endowment earns a lower return. What are you prepared to give up to make up that loss? 2. “Slippery slope” question. Let’s say the school divests - what’s to stop students from asking that the school divest from other companies? Or, why doesn’t Swarthmore not buy U.S. bonds because the U.S. government supports the military in creating drones? 3. What empirical evidence do you have for the claim that divesting from these 16 companies would make a change?

MJ members Kate, Hannah, Rachel, and Dinah presented, followed by comments from BoM. Some of these responses included:

²⁴ <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/04/27/sustainability-committee-issues-statement-supporting-sustainable-investment-policies/>

1. It's not your endowment or our endowment. The endowment belongs to the future, and to the future students who will attend Swarthmore. "We have qualms about using that power."
2. We believe that once you start not investing in a company, it's a slippery slope..
3. We use fossil fuels all day long anyway, so....
4. The importance of shareholder activism through shareholder resolutions, "being in the room," and the fact that when we divest from a company, we lose that power.
5. The primary role of the endowment is to generate dependable returns with minimum risk - 50% of the budget is made up by returns on the endowment.
6. Despite the depth of our research and consultation with investment professionals (such as New York State Comptroller Tom Sanzillo) on the inviability of investments in fossil fuels, the Board of Mangers repeatedly deferred to the authority of the investment professionals on the Board itself, who apparently think fossil fuels are a super secure investment.
7. This is an issue best dealt with by pushing for better policy.
8. President Chopp suggests that at the Board meeting in the fall (September 2012) we could talk about what mechanisms we do have in place to combat climate change / increase sustainability

July 15 - July 27, 2012

Frontlines Listening tour and Mountain Mobilization

Students from Swarthmore and Earlham College traveled to Appalachia as part of the Divest Coal Frontlines Listening Tour, part of a broader campaign calling on all colleges and universities to divest from the largest and most destructive U.S.-based fossil fuel companies. They arrived in West Virginia in time for the [Mountain Mobilization](#) – a regional gathering July 25 through August 1 that culminated in direct action on a proposed mine site – the tour facilitated collaboration by connecting the [divestment campaigns](#) with groups that have been organizing against mountaintop removal coal mining in Appalachia for the past several decades.

We spent two days with folks from [Coal River Mountain Watch](#), a grassroots group located in the Coal River valley in southern West Virginia. CRMW has a variety of projects to empower communities fighting mountaintop removal, improve material conditions, and advocate for community-centered economic transition. We also had the opportunity to shadow an organizer from the [Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition \(OVEC\)](#) and get a good sense of what environmental justice organizing looks like in a rural area. Other local groups we met with are Statewide Organizing for Community Empowerment, Radical Action for Mountain People's Survival (RAMPS) and Blair Community Center and Museum. The tour came to an end at the [Mountain Mobilization](#) on July 28, which was a large-scale RAMPS action that [shut down Hobet mine](#), the largest strip mine in West Virginia, for three hours.

In forming relationships with organizations on the frontlines of the struggle against MTR, we hoped to more effectively act in solidarity with these groups and weave divestment, both symbolically and materially, into an ecology of resistance against the fossil fuel industry. Although it may be just a small part of the ongoing movement for climate justice, college divestment campaigns add a new element of strategy to the work being done to combat climate change.

Additional Info:

[Divestment listening tour connects students and anti-coal activists](#)²⁵

[Working for a Sustainable Economy in Southern W.V.](#)²⁶

[From education to direct action on the Divest Coal Frontlines Listening Tour](#)²⁷

[Thoughts following the RAMPS action camp](#)²⁸

²⁵ <http://wagingnonviolence.org/2012/07/divestment-listening-tour-connects-students-and-anti-coal-activists/>

²⁶ <http://www.wearepowershift.org/blogs/working-sustainable-economy-southern-wv>

²⁷ <http://wagingnonviolence.org/2012/08/from-education-to-direct-action-on-the-divest-coal-frontlines-listening-tour/>

²⁸ <http://swatmountainjustice.wordpress.com/2012/08/22/thoughts-following-the-ramps-action-camp/>

II. PROCESS GOALS

Frontline Support, Advocacy and Ally Work

What is a frontline community?

A frontline community is a community directly affected by destructive extractive processes, such as MTR or hydro-fracking. Communities in Appalachia that have to deal with contaminated drinking water due to runoff from MTR sites, or where rates of cancer and liver failure are inordinately high, are examples of frontline communities. Since people in frontline communities are most affected by practices like MTR, they are often also the people who are most involved in fighting to end MTR, to reduce the power hold that fossil fuel companies (often the same coal companies that have been impeding people's ownership over their land for decades) hold over their communities.

Why is it important to work with and support frontline communities? What does this look like...?

As Swarthmore MJ, we recognize that none of us are from frontline communities, and none of us have to deal with the effects of MTR on a daily basis. We cannot know what would be best for frontline communities, and we do not want to attempt to speak on behalf of frontline communities. We do want to act in solidarity with frontline communities, to support their struggles for environmental justice and their opposition to the fossil fuel industry. We also recognize the value of making our own group's relationship with MTR and anti-MTR work more personal and less grounded on scientific data, by informing ourselves of people's stories and struggles. It is advantageous both to our own analysis of the issues at hand, and to how we conduct our campaign, that we be able to connect abstract figures with individual experiences. We believe that it's essential to communicate with a variety of frontline activist groups and community members, and that we continue to visit and speak with community members, so that we know what people in Appalachia are working on, so that we can check in about our campaign and get feedback, and so that we know how we can best support the work of frontline communities.

What types of outreach and ally-building did MJ do with frontline communities?

- trips to West Virginia and Virginia
- documentary projects - video
- frontline speaking series on campus
- summer trips - listening tour
- building ongoing relationships with direct action groups on frontline

Ally-Building on Campus

One of our central process goals is ally-building on campus with other student organizations. This means it's just as important to build supportive relationships between student groups than it is to win our campaign. We seek structural changes along with policy changes - changes that will increase student power on campus, empowering students and enabling campaigns in the future on diverse issues. When one student group wins a campaign, everyone wins. We strive to conduct our campaign in a way that builds connections, forms relationships, and empowers increasing numbers of students.

During the 2011-2012 year, Swarthmore Mountain Justice helped facilitate a 'student power dinner' with other student leaders. Members of diverse student groups were invited to share a meal, meet each other, and share their organizations' ongoing work.

Building a Divestment Movement

Swarthmore is by no means the only school with an active divestment campaign going on. We are part of a larger movement of students across the country to get their colleges to divest from some or all fossil fuels. The coal divestment movement is particularly strong. There are students at various colleges working on campaigns. We are in regular communication with each other, as part of the National Coal Divestment Coalition, which also has folks from the Sierra Student Coalition, the Responsible Endowments Coalition, and the Energy Action Coalition. (For other allying organizations see Appendix A).

Being part of a movement increases our power for various reasons. On the most basic level, we are able to share resources and strategy tips. The presence of campaigns at other schools increases pressure on administrations and fossil fuel companies. The more schools we have involved, the bigger and more visible our campaign is. While no one school has a huge amount of money invested in the fossil fuel industry, together, schools have a lot of money invested. (College endowments nationwide total \$400 billion.) This means that, if schools move their money en masse, it will have a significant impact. Furthermore, a movement with many schools involved is bound to get more media attention than a campaign at a single school. Serious publicity to the movement can hurt the fossil fuel industry even before any school actually divests, because it increases national momentum away from the extractive industries and towards sustainable energy.

Anti-Oppression Principles and Practices

In SMJ, we see ourselves as part of a larger movement. While our organizing effort goes primarily to fighting the oppressions of the fossil fuel industry, our commitment is not simply to ending one industry. We are committed to a larger fight for social justice, which requires confronting oppression wherever we see it. We do not simply envision a world without fossil fuels. We imagine a world without any form of oppression, and we work hard to incorporate the fight against other oppressions into our organizing.

Issues of fossil fuel extraction/consumption and environmental degradation are inherently social justice issues. Environmental Justice challenges the ways in which the distribution of resources and the ramifications of environmental degradation disproportionately harm some individuals, social groups, and communities in ways that perpetuate the oppression of already marginalized communities in the interests of the owning class. Environmental hazards are disproportionately concentrated in communities of color and low-income communities.

Oppression is the way in which one group dominates another to perpetuate its own power and social control. Oppression includes the control by the dominant group over ideas, cultures, beliefs, and institutions. It frequently involves the control of resources and labor in the hands of a small minority of the population in ways that create and exacerbate inequality. Oppression operates simultaneously on personal, interpersonal, institutional, systemic, and cultural levels in ways that interlock and reinforce one another.

Oppression operates on multiple axes, and different modes of oppression tend to interlock. Intersectionality is the idea that the ways in which people's different identity markers interlock affects the way that they are treated in society. People are not merely the victims of racism, classism, sexism, etc., but face oppression based on their unique combination of identities. For instance, people living in regions where there is a lot of fracking or mountaintop removal may be disadvantaged for living somewhere with polluted air and water. However, this disadvantage is worse for people with less class privilege, and therefore with less access to medical care, alternative water sources, or the potential to move to a home with less nearby pollution. Therefore, region and class intersect and exacerbate each other.

The fossil fuel industry reinforces oppression on multiple axes, especially race and class. Destructive extractive practices, such as fracking and MTR, disproportionately affect low-income communities. Furthermore, the burning of fossil fuels distributes health problems disproportionately to people of color

and the economically and socially disadvantaged.

Climate change further amplifies these inequalities on a global scale. Climate disasters - droughts, rising tides, loss of homeland, and forced migrations - are already on the rise and are affecting those communities least responsible for climate change (as they have not been the ones with large fossil fuel industries contributing to the increase of CO₂ in the atmosphere), and least positioned to adapt. The global south, much less responsible for the growth of capitalism and globalization that has perpetuated inequality and contributed to the growth of fossil fuel industries and to climate change, is nonetheless already far more affected by climate change-related disasters than the global north.

As Swarthmore Mountain Justice, we include an analysis of oppression in our work because we recognize that fossil fuel corporations actively contribute to the further oppression of already oppressed peoples by destroying people's homes, health, and water supplies, while amplifying pre-existing inequality. We consider ourselves to be an ally organization. For the most part, we are not the people most affected by the extraction and burning of fossil fuels. When we fight the industry, we are doing so in solidarity with the people who are most affected, and whose health and lives are at risk.

Structural and cultural oppression are a part of the air we breathe. All of our actions are shaped in some way by the ways in which we were brought up, the messages that are everywhere around us, and the impact of structures that help some people and hold others back. In part, our activism means fighting oppression as much as we can in the outside world. But it also means recognizing the role of oppression within our organizing space. For example, in many organizations, white men end up in leadership roles, or in positions where they speak a lot, because of the way that they and others have been socialized. Conversations about financial knowledge (which certainly come up in a divestment campaign) often feel more comfortable to people with class privilege, and also often to men. While it is no individual's fault that certain positions of power feel more comfortable to them, it is nevertheless something that we need to be aware of, because if we simply do what feels natural, then we will continue to perpetuate unjust, oppressive dynamics, and we will not be empowering group members with more marginalized identities who are just as capable of filling these leadership roles. To truly fight oppression, we must fight it in our own behaviors and our own organizations as well.

One of our most important group norms is "move up, move back." Within our meetings, we want to make sure that everyone feels empowered to speak, and that no one voice (or category of voices, such as older students, or men) speaks more than any other. We also want to make sure that we divide tasks, particularly ones that have a lot of public acknowledgement, fairly. While we understand that some people simply do not want to do public speaking, or don't have time to write an op-ed, we want to make sure that those who do want to, can, and that those jobs don't repeatedly go to the same person or group of people. If we notice that a working group or a group that is meeting with an administrator is composed entirely of people with a certain identity, we try to point it out and change the composition of the group. When there's an article that is going to be written, or a situation where someone is going to speak publicly, we reach out to people who may not have done those tasks before, to see if they want to, and provide them the tools necessary if they do. (does this sound too patronizing?)

At the beginning of each semester, we have a long retreat. We spend some of this time talking about our strategy, and some of it talking about group dynamics and how we are doing with our values of anti-oppression. At these retreats, we talk about what our group dynamics actually are, by having conversations about what characteristics are in the mainstream, and which are marginalized within our group; we hope that by being aware of these things, we can work to make various identities less marginalized. We also talk about what we can do to make our space more anti-oppressive. For instance, we might talk about how to make sure that more women feel empowered to do financial research, or how to train group members in public speaking. These conversations are not limited to our retreats. Throughout the semester, we have conversations about AO as needed, particularly in situations where there may be a public speaking event, or when we may be meeting with an administrator, situations where oppressions often manifest themselves and become more visible.

III. HOW DO WE ORGANIZE

Facilitation

We have two facilitators for each meeting who can alternate which parts of the meeting they facilitate and serve as time-keepers for each other. At the beginning of the semester, when we have a lot of new members, we try to partner new members with older members for each facilitation team so that we can pass down knowledge and facilitation skills organically and incorporate new members into our leadership structure. As new members acquire this knowledge, we pick facilitation teams based simply on who is available on any given week, making sure that facilitation rotates and that no one is facilitating a disproportionate amount.

We rotate facilitation each meeting, and set the agenda for the next meeting at the end of each meeting. This way, facilitation is easier and less intimidating for newer facilitators. Advance agenda setting is also helpful because collective brainstorming makes it far less likely that we will forget to discuss anything at the next meeting. Lastly, this helps because it ensures that even members who aren't facilitating have some control over what is discussed at each meeting. If anyone thinks of something that should be added to the agenda between meetings, they can ask the facilitator(s) for the next meeting to add it.

As a general rule, facilitators step back from group discussion; rather than voicing their opinion, they facilitate a space where everyone feels able to voice their opinion and come to consensus. However, facilitators may take off their facilitator hat if they feel that they have a point that they very much want to share. We try not to take off our facilitator hats often, but understand that as we are all working together, there are times when we feel compelled to contribute to the discussion. Facilitators can also contribute in the final consensus starfish (see consensus section) if they so choose, but are not obliged to do so.

Consensus

Swarthmore Mountain Justice reaches consensus on all group decisions. We use what we call "starfish": when we think we are ready to make a decision, everyone in the group holds up one hand with anywhere from 0 to 5 fingers up. The more fingers they are holding up signifies how much they agree with the decision. We then hear from those people with fewer fingers up to hear their objections, and continue conversation if we feel it necessary. If we have all 4s and 5s, we go ahead with the decision.

Affirmation

There are a lot of obstacles in the work we do, and we often have to deal with defeats and harsh words from outsiders. This can come in the form of formal "No"s from administrators, harsh words in the comment sections in our online newspapers, or just a feeling that we're working hard and not getting very far. As a result, we have found that it is very important in our own work to constantly affirm our great ideas and hard work. Sometimes, this comes in the form of "sparkling" (waving our fingers in the air) when we agree with what someone is saying. Very often, it comes in the form of loudly and cheerily saying "Affirmation!" whenever someone does something that we want to affirm. Lastly, it means taking the time to appreciate the work that all of us are doing. This is especially true for jobs like research, and behind-the-scenes tasks that don't get as much public acknowledgement, but it is true for everything we do. We are all working hard on the campaign, and it is important to take the time to acknowledge it.

Working Groups

We have smaller groups working on different projects, such as online media, research, institutional

memory, coalition building, connections with frontline communities, etc. (For detailed descriptions of various working groups, see Appendix C). By decentralizing projects, different members can be leaders of different aspects of the campaign, and no individual is overwhelmed by trying to do everything. This structure also helps us get more done, because everyone is working on their various projects outside meeting spaces. Working groups meet as regularly as they need to and operate somewhat independently, reporting back to the larger group in an online spreadsheet and at the beginning of meetings.

We also have point-people for different administrators with whom we have regular communications and meetings. For instance, we have a College President point person, a Sustainability Coordinator point person, and point people for a couple of BoM people. Having point people means that we are certain that there is a person keeping track of our communication with each administrator, and means that we have someone accumulating tips for meeting with each administrator. It's worth noting that we have really positive relationships with some of the people that we meet with regularly, and that there are people who are receptive to our campaign. Having point-people is useful because it enables building these strong relationships with our allies in the administration.

IV. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Fossil Fuel Divestment Proposal

Fossil Fuel Divestment Proposal

Presented to and discussed with President Rebecca Chopp, March 26, 2012

I. Introduction

Through this campaign we have thought a great deal about what we think Swarthmore's values are. As students, we are representatives of this institution. We are active members of the community, who contribute to and help to make Swarthmore what it is today. For these reasons, Mountain Justice feels justified in outlining the most important values of this institution. Swarthmore has long been upheld for its commitment to social justice. Not only is its student body considered to be among the most socially active, but the institution itself has worked diligently to address issues of inequality by integrating said initiatives into the foundation of the administration. In the most recent published Strategic Directions, a document produced by the collaboration of faculty, students, alumni and administrators, it is stated that concern for the community extends beyond the edges of campus and that "For generations, committed individuals have come together on this campus to create and sustain an institution that is fundamentally aimed at educating the best to make a better world. Throughout our history, we have consistently engaged in self-study, planning, and imagining—and then taking action to make our vision a reality."²⁹ We believe that in this campaign we are perpetuating this ideology, and continuing this legacy.

Swarthmore holds non-discrimination and anti-oppression as high values. We believe that no one should be forced to live with poor treatment and injustice because of their race, gender, class, sexuality or religion. That is why we believe that Swarthmore needs to take our monetary and ideological support away from companies that negatively impact predominantly poor communities and communities of color. We cannot stay silent and allow Swarthmore to champion struggles for social justice while pouring money into the same companies that are destroying communities all over the country.

II. Proposal

Swarthmore Mountain Justice (MJ) calls on Swarthmore College to divest from and screen future investment in the following fossil fuel companies: Alpha Natural Resources, Arch Coal, Cabot Oil & Gas, Chesapeake Energy, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Dominion Resources, Duke Energy, Exelon, ExxonMobil, Halliburton, Hess, Occidental Petroleum, Patriot Coal, Peabody Energy, and Range Resources.

The listed companies practice a variety of extractive methods, including mountaintop removal coal mining, hydraulic fracturing and off-shore drilling, among others. All of these 16 companies are engaged in the socially and environmentally untenable business of fossil fuel extraction. This is by no means a complete list of destructive companies; it is one which balances financial feasibility with symbolic and material impact. Divestment from these companies calls into question not just their actions, but the actions of all companies that derive profit from fossil fuels. See Appendix A for specific research on each company.

²⁹ Strategic Directions. Pg. 7-8

III. Divestment is Financially Realistic for Swarthmore

Divestment from fossil fuels would be a commitment to remove college money from those companies outlined above, and to refuse to invest in them in the future. Swarthmore is not currently invested in all of these companies. Divestment ensures that Swarthmore never will be invested in any of these sixteen companies, so long as they continue dirty energy extraction, which currently accounts for the vast majority of their profits.

A number of institutional investors currently use socially screened funds. Negative or avoidance screening--used as far back as the 1920s--works by avoiding investment in companies whose practices are inconsistent with the personal values of the investor.³⁰ These include investments in tobacco, firearms, and gambling, military contractors and nuclear weapons manufacturers. Divestment from fossil fuels would work in essentially the same way: Swarthmore's investment managers would screen out the sixteen domestically owned, publicly traded companies when making investment decisions. For more information on Socially Responsible Investment, please see "The New SRI: Socially Responsive Indexing," a report by the Aperio Group, a well-respected investment management firm whose thoughts on SRI have provided considerable guidance for our own research.³¹

We know that Swarthmore is invested in a few of the sixteen companies. Divestment will involve removing Swarthmore's money from these companies. Recognizing the complexities of modern finance, we are not requesting that every dollar of the endowment be removed; our ask only extends to domestic equity holdings. This category, which includes both the college's direct holdings and those in commingled mutual funds, accounts for 20.4% of the college's \$1.5 billion endowment.³²

To demonstrate the financial feasibility of divestment, it is instructive to consider a worst-case scenario. The energy sector is 4-8% of the U.S. economy. If we divest 8% of domestic equity holdings, this represents just 1.6% of the endowment, or \$24 million. In a *worst* case scenario, these \$24 million--once reinvested--would make 0% returns. If the alternative is a business-as-usual 15% growth, the college's relative losses would be \$3.6 million, 0.24% of the endowment. To reiterate, this is the worst case scenario. It is also entirely a thought experiment and is in no way intended as financial fact; the volatile nature of financial markets makes any prediction of this sort difficult.

IV. Divestment is an Effective Strategy for Social Change

Divestment is a sophisticated strategy that has been successful in transforming entrenched crises. In the 1980s, a divestment movement on over 150 college campuses drew significant attention to South African apartheid, led the United States government to impose sanctions on the apartheid regime, and caused over \$1 billion in capital flight from South Africa.³³ All of these factors contributed to the ultimate end of apartheid in South Africa. In the early 2000s, college and university divestment helped draw worldwide attention to the genocide in Darfur.

Divestment, however, is also a decision that does not exist in a vacuum. It allows colleges and universities to act in concert with organizations, institutions and individuals worldwide who are already speaking and acting out against injustice. As in the case of apartheid divestment, fossil fuel divestment works with existing campaigns to end global dependence on dirty energy. As mentioned above, dirty energy is dirty energy, no matter how "cleanly" extracted, and is not sustainable. By withdrawing both ideological and financial support from these companies through divestment, we are sending a clear message that we will not be complicit in irresponsible extractive practices OR the continuation of a destructive dependency on fossil fuels.

Recent data from the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) indicate that college and university endowments total over \$400 billion in the United States alone.³⁴ These institutions' sizeable capital pools provide incentive for socially irresponsible companies to change their practices, either to maintain current large-scale investors or attract new ones.

³⁰ <http://www.socialfunds.com/media/index.cgi/screening.htm>

³¹ http://www.aperiogroup.com/sites/all/files/documents/%28Doc%2011%29%20Socially%20Responsive%20Indexing%20%28SRI%29%20Overview_0.pdf

³² http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/administration/finance_investment_office/FinancialReport_10-11.pdf

³³ <http://www.investopedia.com/articles/economics/08/protest-divestment-south-africa.asp#axzz1pyIJfR1Z>

³⁴ http://www.nacubo.org/Documents/research/2011_NCSE_Press_Release_Final_Embargo_1_31_12.pdf

Divestment movements also have significant impacts on political discourse and priorities. Colleges and universities hold a position of moral authority in our society; divestment sends the unequivocal message that an unjust practice will no longer be tolerated. In the past, this has translated into concrete legislative action on local and national levels.

Divestment is most effective when multiple institutions do it. This is why we are undertaking this campaign in coalition with nearly a dozen other colleges. Additionally, we are continuing to work with and be supported by a number of partner organizations, who have committed to helping make divestment a reality, as well as potential expansion of support to other organizations such as 350.org. For more information on this coalition and supporting organizations, see Appendix B.

V. Swarthmore Mountain Justice's Campaign at Present (Spring 2012)

Our organization continues to raise awareness and activism around the fossil fuel industries and its institutional connections. We have brought multiple speakers from communities most impacted by extraction, including mountaintop removal activist Larry Gibson and Colombian activist Rudy Amanda Hurtado Garcés. We look forward to award-winning journalist and activist Bill McKibben's visit later this spring. We are also planning a panel discussion to discuss the feasibility of divestment and its historical precedents. Along with these events, we have received upwards of a dozen press hits in the Phoenix and Daily Gazette, including op-eds and news articles. This outreach and publicity work has paid off with widespread visibility and support among the student body; we have collected 700 student petition signatures (and counting) in favor of divestment.

In addition to this on-campus outreach, we have also extended ourselves to communities impacted by fossil fuel extraction. Through trips to Appalachia and northeastern Pennsylvania, we have met community groups and activists fighting mountaintop removal and hydraulic fracturing. We continue to strengthen our organizational connections to these communities, so we can publicize their struggles and make clear the human cost of fossil fuels.

While we do all this work, we are also keeping in mind our own organizational longevity. Our group is majority sophomores and first-years, and we take leadership development very seriously--for its own sake and for the sake of our campaign.

VI. Divestment and Swarthmore's Reputation

In the near future, fossil fuels will cease to make returns because these already finite resources will have been exhausted. Collapse of the fossil fuel industry is inevitable, but by the time these extractive industries' malefactions undermine their reputation and bottom line, it will be too late. It is in our best interest to take on the small risk of divestment now in order to avoid potentially disastrous costs in the future.

By being the first college to divest from fossil fuels, Swarthmore can serve as a guidepost for both peer institutions and large institutional investors more generally to begin making truly sustainable investment decisions. As stated above, the college's position of moral authority as a premier educational institution will bring national media attention to the fossil fuel industry, and shed new and much-needed light on these 16 companies' egregious practices. Additionally, divesting from fossil fuels will bring positive national media attention to Swarthmore, which will help the college recruit the best students from across the world and continue to secure generous alumni donations.

Mountain Justice has already begun the outreach process to high net worth individual donors who are alumni of the college. There is a large community of alumni who do not donate to the college due to its lack of a socially responsible investment program. We are mobilizing these alumni in support of our campaign; divestment from fossil fuels will bring these individuals back into the fold of donors to the college. We look forward to demonstrating the will of our alumni community's support for this campaign through strategies such as a symbolic pledge fund held in escrow, to be released once the college divests.

Swarthmore can either act as a leader in higher education, or as a follower. By lagging behind other institutions' decisions to divest from fossil fuels, a delayed decision on the matter represents a direct contradiction with the college's claims to a reputation of social justice and support for progressive causes. It is not beyond reason to assume that such a move, or lack thereof, will be noticed by prospective students in light of the inevitably increased publicity of the College's investments.

In the course of our campaign we have had the opportunity to study and draw inspiration from a wide variety of campaigns. We are well aware of the history of divestment campaigns that have come before us, including the successful campaign for

Swarthmore College's divestment from South African apartheid. We have learned much from their successes and mistakes. We look forward to the day when, like our predecessors, we will be successful in having Swarthmore College join the ranks of moral leaders who reject activities and practices that do not live up to our values.

VI. Conclusion

We, the members of Mountain Justice and the signatories of our petition, ask you, President Chopp, to support us in encouraging Swarthmore College to divest from fossil fuels. We would like you to be our advocate in spaces where our voices, as students, do not command as much attention as yours does. We ask you to join us in our meeting with the Social Responsibility Committee of the Board of Managers in May and encourage the Board of Managers to divest from fossil fuels. Additionally, we ask you to publicly pledge your support to our divestment campaign.

Appendix A: The Sordid Sixteen

Alpha Natural Resources

ANR is the third-largest coal producer in the U.S., producing approximately 126 million tons of coal from approximately 150 active mines in Virginia, West Virginia, Kentucky, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming. ANR is currently the single largest company using mountaintop removal,³⁵ a particularly invasive method of coal mining that directly correlates with high rates of cancer, birth defects, and poverty.³⁶ In 2010, ANR received 1,453 notices of violations -- over 4 a day -- from the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) for breaches of health or safety standards that could cause a serious injury.³⁷ ANR is also responsible for the 2010 Upper Big Branch explosion, which resulted in the deaths of 29 miners.

Arch Coal

Arch is the second-largest coal producer in the U.S.³⁸ Arch is currently in a court battle to build the Spruce No. 1 mine, which would be the largest mountaintop removal mine in the U.S.³⁹ In 2009, the company spent over \$2.32 million on lobbying efforts, and has also developed the Arch Coal Political Action Committee, which is a substantial donor to West Virginia politicians.⁴⁰

Cabot Oil & Gas

Cabot Oil & Gas Corporation is a natural gas exploration and production company based in Houston. The company has been cited for numerous spills of toxic hydrofracking fluids in northeastern PA. Cabot had 412 violations on 213 wells drilled in the Marcellus Shale region from 2008-2011, which is roughly 2 violations per well.⁴¹ EPA tests of well water in the area show dangerous levels of arsenic, glycols, barium, and other carcinogens.⁴² These wells are also the site of the famous images of families lighting their tap water on fire.

Chesapeake Energy

Chesapeake is, in its own words, "the second-largest producer of natural gas, a Top 15 producer of oil and natural gas liquids and the most active driller of new wells in the U.S."⁴³ While natural gas is often touted as a cleaner alternative to

³⁵ Rainforest Action Network and the Sierra Club, "Policy and Practice: 2011 Report Card on Banks and Mountaintop Removal: Executive Summary," April 2011, http://www.ran.org/sites/default/files/ran_mtr_reportcard_2011_exec_summary.pdf.

³⁶ <http://ilovemountains.org/the-human-cost>

³⁷ Alpha Natural Resources, "2010 Form 10-K," p 254-257, <http://alnr.client.shareholder.com/secfiling.cfm?filingID=1140361-11-12105&CIK=1301063>.

³⁸ Arch Coal, "Start Here Arch Coal, Inc. 2010 Annual Report," p 40-42, 12 December 2010, <http://phx.corporate-ir.net/External.File?item=UGFyZW50SUQ9ODYxOTN8Q2hpbGRJRDR0tMXxUeXBIPtM=&t=1>.

³⁹ <http://blogs.wvgazette.com/coaltattoo/2012/03/23/breaking-judge-overturms-epa-veto-of-spruce-mine-permit/>

⁴⁰ "Annual Lobbying by Arch Coal," OpenSecrets.org, accessed 1 August 2011, <http://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/clientsum.php?id=D000019258&year=2011>.

⁴¹ Staaf, Erika. "Risky Business: An analysis of Marcellus Shale gas drilling violations in Pennsylvania, 2008-2011." http://pennenvironmentcenter.org/sites/environment/files/reports/Risky%20Business%20Violations%20Report_0.pdf

⁴² <https://www.propublica.org/article/years-after-evidence-of-fracking-contamination-epa-to-supply-drinking-water>

⁴³ <http://www.chk.com/Pages/default.aspx>

coal, recent studies show that high levels of methane released through hydrofracking result in greater overall greenhouse gas emissions for natural gas than for coal.⁴⁴ In 2011, Chesapeake was implicated in 141 health and safety violations in Pennsylvania alone. Chesapeake was fined \$565,000 in February 2012 for previous violations that resulted in contamination of local waterways. In May of 2011, Chesapeake was fined \$1.09 million.⁴⁵

Chevron

Chevron is a U.S. based multinational energy company that is active in over 180 countries. It is considered one of the 6 “supermajor” oil companies in the world and is one of the largest 5 corporations in the U.S.⁴⁶ It has a long history of ethical violations, excerpted here. In 1950, it was one of three companies responsible for buying streetcar systems nationwide and replacing them with bus systems to increase petroleum sales. The three companies were charged and convicted for conspiracy.⁴⁷ Chevron is responsible for sickening local residents and damaging forests and rivers in Ecuador by dumping 18 billion gallons of toxic formation water into the rainforest with no remediation.⁴⁸ Its Richmond, CA refinery has bypassed wastewater treatment and released 11 million pounds of toxic materials into the environment.⁴⁹ Chevron may have paid for Nigerian military forces to commit human rights abuses, such as shooting protesters from helicopters.⁵⁰ Chevron is also responsible for a large oil spill off the coast of Brazil in 2011.⁵¹

ConocoPhillips

ConocoPhillips is a U.S. multinational energy company and one of the six “supermajor” oil companies. It is operating in over 40 countries worldwide. Within the U.S., it is the second-largest refiner of oil, and the 13th worst corporate air polluter.⁵² ConocoPhillips’ Trainer Oil Refinery is the second-largest industrial polluter in Delaware County. A 2006 Swarthmore study found that this facility released over 138 tons of nitrate compounds into the Delaware River each year, putting area infants at greater risk of “Blue Baby Disease.” The study also found that ConocoPhillips emits substantial amounts of naphthalene, an airborne toxicant, from this same facility.⁵³

Dominion Resources

Dominion Resources is a power and energy company headquartered in Richmond, Virginia. In 2010, pollution from Dominion’s coal-fired power plants contribute to 332 deaths, 519 heart attacks, 5,528 asthma attacks, and 205 cases of chronic bronchitis per year.⁵⁴ Dominion also recently received approval from the U.S. Department of Energy to export natural gas from its Cove Point Liquefied Natural Gas terminal.⁵⁵ This move to export natural gas belies industry and governmental assurances that increased natural gas exploration will result in U.S. energy independence.

Duke Energy

Duke is a utility based in Charlotte, North Carolina. Duke will soon be the largest utility in the U.S., pending approval of a merger with Progress Energy.⁵⁶ In 2010, pollution from Duke and Progress’ coal plants caused 1,248 deaths, 1,887 heart attacks, 20,511 asthma attacks, and 758 cases of chronic bronchitis per year.⁵⁷ The company has also been implicated in

⁴⁴ <http://www.sustainablefuture.cornell.edu/news/attachments/Howarth-EtAl-2011.pdf>

⁴⁵ <http://www.polluterwatch.com/chesapeake-energy>

⁴⁶ Fortune 500, 2010 "America's Largest Corporations" *CNNmoney.com*.

⁴⁷ Chomsky, Noam (1999). *Year 501: the Conquest Continues*. South End Press.

⁴⁸ "60 Minutes: Amazon Crude". 3 May 2009. *Cbsnews.com*. http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/05/01/60minutes/main4983549_page2.shtml

⁴⁹ "Standing Up To Big Oil." Making Contact: produced by National Radio Project. 14 December 2010.

⁵⁰ Egelko, Bob (August 15, 2007). "Chevron can be sued for attacks on Nigerians, U.S. judge rules". *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

⁵¹ "Chevron Takes Responsibility for Brazil Oil Spill, May Face \$51M Fine." Fox News. 11 Nov 2011.

⁵² "Toxic 100 Air Polluters Detailed Company Reports." Political Economy Research Institute.

⁵³ *Mapping Environmental Justice in Delaware County, PA*. Swarthmore College Environmental Studies Capstone, 2006.

⁵⁴ C. Sneider and J. Banks, "The Toll from Coal: An Updated Assessment of Death and Disease from America’s Dirtiest Energy Source," Clean Air Task Force, September 2010, http://www.catf.us/resources/publications/files/The_Toll_from_Coal.pdf.

⁵⁵ <http://www.dom.com/business/gas-transmission/cove-point/lng-exports.jsp>

⁵⁶ Duke Energy, "Duke Energy and Progress Energy to Merge," accessed 1 August 2011, <http://www.duke-energy.com/progress-energy-merger/>.

⁵⁷ C. Sneider and J. Banks, "The Toll from Coal: An Updated Assessment of Death and Disease from America’s Dirtiest Energy Source," Clean Air Task Force, September 2010, http://www.catf.us/resources/publications/files/The_Toll_from_Coal.pdf.

numerous ethics scandals and is a major contributor to political candidates.⁵⁸

Exelon

Exelon is a utility based in Chicago but with a significant presence in greater Philadelphia. Exelon owns the Eddystone Station coal-fired power plant in Crum Lynne, PA. A 2006 Swarthmore study found that Eddystone Station releases nearly one ton of arsenic, one ton of lead, and 200 tons of sulfuric and hydrochloric acids into the atmosphere each year.⁵⁹ Eddystone Station also releases 162 pounds of mercury per year, more than all but two other power plants in the U.S. All of these contaminants have significant health effects for residents of Delaware County, with the impacts concentrated on the low-income and majority black residents of Chester.⁶⁰

ExxonMobil

ExxonMobil, formerly Rockefeller's Standard Oil, is a U.S. multinational oil and gas corporation, and is the second-largest company in the world. Exxon has refineries in 21 countries, producing 6.3 million barrels a day, making in the largest refiner in the world. It is the largest "supermajor" oil company. The Exxon Valdez Spill in 1989, the second-largest spill in U.S. history, spilled 11 million gallons of crude oil. The company continues to suffer environmental mishaps; in July 2011, oil spilled from an ExxonMobil pipeline running from Silver Tip to Billings, Montana. The spill leaked 750 to 1,000 barrels of oil into the Yellowstone River in the 30 minutes before it was shut down.⁶¹ Exxon allegedly assisted human rights violations in Indonesia by giving aid to the Indonesian military to torture and murder opposition.⁶² 90% of scientists who deny climate change are connected with Exxon, and are often the direct recipients of Exxon funding.⁶³

Halliburton

Halliburton is one of the world's largest natural gas companies, with operations in over 70 countries. Halliburton invented hydraulic fracturing, and is indirectly responsible for its recent expansion; the "Halliburton Loophole," passed in 2005 at the behest of former CEO Dick Cheney, removed the EPA's authority to regulate the practice.⁶⁴ In addition to numerous environmental disasters caused by fracking, Halliburton also shares culpability for the 2010 Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill. The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling found that Halliburton used an unstable sealant on the well, helping cause the worst oil spill in U.S. history.⁶⁵

Hess

Hess is a New York-based oil company that explores, produces, transports, and refines crude oil and natural gas in the U.S. and around the world. Hess is responsible for spilling 163,000 gallons of kerosene into the Hudson River in 1990 and for spilling 2.5 million gallons of crude oil into the Gowanus Canal in 1976, the largest spill on record at that time.⁶⁶ Hess currently has to pay \$1.1 million in fines for having over 100 violations at various gas stations and their major storage facility in Brooklyn.⁶⁷ In 2008, Hess also had to pay \$422 million in a settlement over water contamination; public water providers from 17 states filed a suit over drinking water contamination.⁶⁸

Occidental Petroleum

Occidental is an oil and gas exploration and production corporation operating in the United States, the Middle East, North Africa, and South America. It is the fourth largest U.S. oil and gas company. Hooker Chemicals, later purchased by Occidental, was responsible for disposing chemical waste in the Love Canal beginning in the 1940s. The waste site was later the site of a school and residential community that experienced high instances of health problems; Occidental was

⁵⁸ "Duke Energy Contributions to Federal Candidates," OpenSecrets.org, accessed 10 November 2011, <http://www.opensecrets.org/pacs/pacgot.php?cmt=C00083535&cycle=2008>.

⁵⁹ *Mapping Environmental Justice in Delaware County, PA*. Swarthmore College Environmental Studies Capstone, 2006.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ "Spill sends 40km oil slick into river." Herald Sun. 3 July 2011.

⁶² Cary O'Reilly. "Exxon Mobil Must Face Lawsuit by Indonesian Villagers". Bloomberg. 27 August 2008.

⁶³ Mihai Andrei. "9 out of 10 top climate change deniers linked with Exxon Mobil."

<http://www.zmescience.com/ecology/climate-change-papers-exxon-mobil/>

⁶⁴ "The Halliburton Loophole." Editorial. New York Times, 2 Nov 2009. https://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/03/opinion/03tue3.html?_r=1

⁶⁵ <http://www.oilspillcommission.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FinalReportIntro.pdf>

⁶⁶ Burns, John F. "Oil-Tank Fire on Brooklyn Waterfront Brought Under Control." *The New York Times* 7 Jan. 1976: 36.

⁶⁷ NYSDEC - New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (2008-03-04). "Hess fined \$1.1m for Hudson River estuary pollution". Environmental-Expert.

⁶⁸ "Dallas law firm Baron & Budd wins \$422 million water contamination lawsuit". Pegasus News. 11 May 2008.

eventually forced to pay \$129 million in restitution for the damage done.⁶⁹ In 2007, indigenous Peruvians filed a lawsuit against Occidental demanding that they clean up and pay reparations for environmental damage caused over the course of three decades of dumping chemical byproducts (totaling 9 billion barrels) into local watersheds that were sources of drinking water and fish.⁷⁰

Patriot Coal

Patriot is a St. Louis-based coal extraction company. It is the second-largest practitioner of mountaintop removal in the U.S.⁷¹ In 2010, Patriot was found in contempt of court for selenium pollution at two mountaintop removal sites in West Virginia.⁷² From 2000 to 2010, Patriot Coal had nearly 3,000 “significant” violations from the Mine Safety and Health Administration, one death on the job, and close to \$10 million in fines.⁷³ Patriot Coal is a member of and contributor to the National Mining Association, which since 1997 has spent over \$40 million lobbying against issues such as clean air, clean energy and green jobs, and for carbon capture and storage.⁷⁴

Peabody Energy

Peabody is the largest private-sector coal company in the world. In the U.S., it owns 20 coal mining operations in Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Illinois, and Indiana. In 2010, it averaged nine daily safety violations from the Mine Safety and Health Administration.⁷⁵ In addition to its U.S. operations, Peabody is rapidly expanding into China, where it has plans to develop several enormous surface mines.⁷⁶ Peabody spent almost \$6.6 million on lobbying in 2010⁷⁷ and in the first 5 months of 2011 the company spent \$3.7 million, including on a bill aimed at preventing the EPA from taking action relating to greenhouse gas emissions to address climate change.⁷⁸ In 2007, the Kentucky state legislature passed a law that will provide approximately \$300 million in incentives to Peabody to build a coal gasification plant in that state.⁷⁹

Range Resources

Range is a natural gas company based in Fort Worth, Texas, but with major operations in southwestern Pennsylvania. Range’s operations in PA have led to skyrocketing levels of water-borne and aerial carcinogens.⁸⁰ As of May 2010, Range had made over \$200,000 in fines to the state for regulatory violations.⁸¹ Range has also engaged in campaigns of intimidation against communities who threaten to pass unfavorable zoning regulations. A company spokesman stated on

⁶⁹ "Occidental to pay \$129 Million in Love Canal Settlement". U.S. Department of Justice. 21 December 1995. http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/Pre_96/December95/638.txt.html.

⁷⁰ "Indigenous Achuar Face Off Against Occidental Petroleum in Amazon Pollution Case." EarthRights International. 8 Mar 2010.

⁷¹ Rainforest Action Network and the Sierra Club, "Policy and Practice: 2011 Report Card on Banks and Mountaintop Removal," April 2011, http://ran.org/sites/default/files/mtr_reportcard_2011.pdf.

⁷² J. Tomich, "Patriot Coal found in contempt for selenium discharges," *stltoday.com*, 1 September 2010, http://www.stltoday.com/business/energy/article_ce6f3db2-b5db-11df-bd91-00127992bc8b.html.

⁷³ J. Fenton and G. Russonello, "Coal mine deaths, fines and significant violations for the 10 largest coal mine controllers, 2000-2009" Investigative Reporting Workshop, 22 November 2010, <http://investigativereportingworkshop.org/investigations/coal-truth/htmlmulti/coal-mine-deaths-fatalities-finesand-violations/>. Patriot Coal Corporation, "Mine Safety Disclosure, Addendum to 2010 Patriot 10K report," accessed July 2011, <http://www.sec.gov/Archives/edgar/data/1376812/000119312511047464/dex992.htm>.

⁷⁴ "Mining Lobbying," *Influence Explorer*, July 2011, <http://tinyurl.com/3cb54lt>

⁷⁵ Peabody Energy, "2011 Form 10-K," p 63, <http://tinyurl.com/3u9mam5>.

⁷⁶ Peabody Energy, "Peabody Energy and Yankuang Group Co. Ltd. to Pursue Development of Wucaiwan Energy Center in Xinjiang, China," 20 January 2011, <http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=129849&p=irolnewsArticle&ID=1518074&highlight=>.

⁷⁷ "Coal Mining: Top Contributors, 2009-2010," *OpenSecrets.org*, accessed July 2011, <http://www.opensecrets.org/industries/indusphp?ind=E1210&goButt2.x=12&goButt2.y=8&goButt2=Submit>.

⁷⁸ "Peabody Energy: Bills lobbied," *OpenSecrets.org*, accessed August 2011, <http://www.opensecrets.org/lobby/clientbills.php?id=D000020856&year=2011>.

⁷⁹ Alford, Roger; Malcolm Knox (2007-08-30). "[Ky. Governor Signs Coal Tech Bill](#)". *Forbes*.

⁸⁰ Griswold, Eliza (17 November 2011). "[The Fracturing of Pennsylvania](#)". *The New York Times Magazine*

⁸¹ "[Pennsylvania collects \\$1M in fines since spike in Marcellus Shale drilling](#)", Anya Litvak, *Pittsburgh Business Times*, May 31, 2010.

record that the company employs Army-trained counterinsurgency experts to deal with angry local populations.⁸²

Appendix B: Colleges and Universities Pursuing Fossil Fuel Divestment

Coalition Schools

Colby College
College of the Atlantic
Cornell University
Earlham College
Swarthmore College
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill
Whitman College

Supporting Organizations

As You Sow -- A corporate responsibility advocate, shareholder advocacy leader, and author of the Financial Risks of Coal white paper.

Coal Swarm -- An online, crowd-sourced citizens' resource on all things coal-related. Includes information on struggles against coal mining and combustion from across the country.

Energy Action Coalition -- A coalition of fifty youth-led environmental and social justice groups.

Green Corps -- The environmental organizing field school.

Responsible Endowments Coalition -- The primary organization working on creating more socially and environmentally responsible investment in higher education. Co-founded by Swarthmore alumna Morgan Simon.

Sierra Student Coalition -- The student wing of the oldest and largest environmental organization in the country.

Sustainable Endowments Institute -- The creators of the Green Report Card and the Billion Dollar Green Challenge

Wallace Global Fund -- A grant-making foundation dedicated to sustainability and fighting injustice

⁸² Javers, Eamon (8 Nov 2011). "Oil Executive: Military-Style 'Psy Ops' Experience Applied". <http://www.cnbc.com/id/45208498>

Appendix B: A letter from a satirical “Committee on Investment Profitability”



October 3, 2011

Dear Student,

We are writing to inform you of some news that we believe to be very beneficial for the Swarthmore community and the world at large. As you probably know, Swarthmore has a large endowment that is growing every day. This economic security is what allows us to be one of the nation’s finest institutions of higher learning and an advocate of the common good. We believe that students have the right to know the corporate policies funding our institution.

Swarthmore College is currently invested in Exxon Mobil, Northern Oil and Gas Corp., and numerous other energy companies. These investments are currently making an excellent return, since, fortunately, fossil fuels are one of the few products whose prices and sales have not been hurt by the recession. The energy production industry is operating at full force presently, constantly unearthing more and more oil to meet the current demand. Swarthmore College has also strategically placed money in industries involved in hydraulic fracturing, a practice that is currently experiencing explosive revenue.

Exxon Mobil has made over forty billion dollars from its operations in Indonesia alone, thanks to its willingness to protect business interests with military force and torture. Exxon Mobil’s entrepreneurship is excellent news for Swarthmore, since every barrel of oil and ton of coal produced represents further revenue for our community. Exxon Mobil is the world’s largest refiner and manufacturer of petroleum products, meaning that they have reliably high profits from which we all benefit. For all of the above reasons, Swarthmore’s endowment is currently doing very well, and is expected to continue to grow at a rapid pace.

Because we believe that Swarthmore is an institution that should give back, we are enclosing some money that represents a return on your investment as a student at Swarthmore College. We feel that as valuable members of our community, all students deserve to gain from Swarthmore’s strategically placed investments.

Sincerely,
Cole O. Ciddit
Committee on Investment Profitability, Chair
P.S. For more information, check out our website:

Appendix C: Working Group Descriptions

Working Group	Description	Who (Bottom Liner)
Coalition-building (Swat)	We define a coalition on the Swarthmore campus as being focussed on student power. We intend to connect with other student groups with the explicit acknowledgement that, although our campaigns differ, we share a common goal of trying to hold the administration and the institution accountable to the values that we, as students and activists, hold. We understand that a coalition based purely on individual relationships will not last, given the temporary state of being a student; in building coalitions, we want to emphasize building structures that empower students across causes, rather than merely connecting to individual students. However, we understand that to create these structures, strong interpersonal relationships are necessary. Towards that end, we plan on starting a tradition of inter-group meetings, and having larger activists events, such as skill shares. We may aim to reinstitute a GA for activist groups on campus. We may also aim for more social events, such as dinners and gatherings, for activists to get a chance to talk together and socialize without an explicit agenda.	Pat, Ali, Rachel, Zein
Coalition--building (Tri-Co/Philly)	Reaching out to on and off campus groups in the greater Philadelphia area working on campaigns that are either targeting funds (schools investments), and/or to those taking on the extractive industry. Reach out through email, to be followed up with meeting attendance and event/rally/NVDA support where appropriate and requested. Implement structures for the sharing of information and strategies, especially with schools targeting the financial practices of their colleges, and especially those pursuing other divestment campaigns (HEI, Israel). Working group members will serve as point people for contacting individuals in groups via the MJ gmail.	Kate, maybe Ali, Rachel, Sara
Working w/ nat'l campaign/other colleges	We will (1) keep in communication with other campuses and the coalition support organizations through bi-weekly organizing updates and monthly blog posts, (2) work to move these campuses toward frontline messaging through the way we frame our campaign, and (3) coordinate weeks of action and other cross-campus tactics.	Will, Hannah, Kate, Sara
Frontline Outreach	We will work to 1) Keep lines of communication open with frontline activists, 2) coordinate MJ trips to affected communities, and 3) gain input from activists themselves about how we can support their campaigns with our messaging and resources.	Jonah, Sachie, Hannah, Dinah
Student Power Timeline		Ryane, Hannah, Kate, Ali
Faculty/Alum	Gain support from faculty and alumni on the divestment campaign. Still clarifying what support means, but definitely means a signature on a petition and saying they will not donate until divestment. Also researching other avenues of support, like giving us names of other alums/faculty interested, or suggestions. Researching what worked in the South Africa campaign.	(Pat), Dinah, Ryane
Events	Through events, spread information about MTR and other extractive practices to the larger student body. Emphasize human side. Explain divestment as a solution. We will plan a slate of events and get approval from other working groups. If other working groups have suggestions for people to bring, we will organize this if we have capacity, otherwise they are welcome to plan them themselves.	Will, Jonah, Morgan, Erin
Media		Zein, Sachie,

		Jonah
Direct Action Quick Hits	To further MJ's goals and statements in the broader Swarthmore community through literally quick and tactically savvy direct action. The group will also work to organize actions for MJ members who feel their ideas do not warrant full group discussion or meeting time, lending creative and material support. We will also lend support to events working group where needed and appropriate (i.e, Paces takeover, public partays)	Kate, Ben, Jonah
Student Organizing	Spread information and open up communication with students who are not part of groups that we would otherwise build coalitions with. Engage all students as individuals, rather than as members of groups. Create substantial ways for newly interested students to get involved, acknowledging that not all students have the ability to devote substantial time and energy to Mountain Justice. Additionally, build visible evidence of the support we gain through this organizing.	Ben, Rachel, Will

Appendix D: Online Documents; Miscellaneous Resources

"Mountain Justice Media Contacts" – Google Document

"MJ Retreat Notes from Jan 2012" – Google Document

"MOUNTAIN RESEARCH" – Google Document