

University of Scranton

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SCRANTON--Donald Woods, a native South African who used journalism to fight apartheid, will speak at the University of Scranton on Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 8 p.m. in Eagen Auditorium.

The lecture, titled "Cry Freedom--Apartheid and the Tragedy of South Africa," is free and open to the public. After the talk, Woods will be available to sign copies of his books.

Woods' appearance is sponsored by the University's Student Government and is part of the school's observance of National Black History Month.

Woods is the author of three books on South Africa, including "Biko" and "Asking for Trouble," which were the basis for the 1987 movie "Cry Freedom."

A fifth-generation white South African, he studied law at the University of Capetown before entering journalism. He became editor-in-chief of the South African newspaper, the "Daily Dispatch," in 1965 at the age of 31.

His editorial attacks on the racial policy of apartheid drew increasing fire from the South African government and from many white readers of the newspaper. During 12 years of editorship, he was prosecuted in court seven times under South Africa's strict publication laws restricting criticism of government policy.

In 1977, he was arrested and punished without legal process for publishing details of the killing of his friend, the young black leader Steve Biko, by officers of the State Security Police. Three months after his arrest, he escaped with his wife and five children out of South Africa.

Since reaching London in 1978, he has been appointed director of the Lincoln Trust, a foundation that supplies information about apartheid to the international media, and in 1985, he was appointed special advisor to the 49-nation Commonwealth Secretariat in London.

In addition to his writing activities, Woods also travels extensively throughout the world briefing governments and addressing audiences on the subject of apartheid.

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