

## Hate

University engulfed in new wave of intolerance, harsh criticism

Over the past few weeks, *The Gamecock* has run many, many letters on animal research and homosexual rights. Some of these letters are well written and constructive; some are not. It is no secret that the readership is getting annoyed.

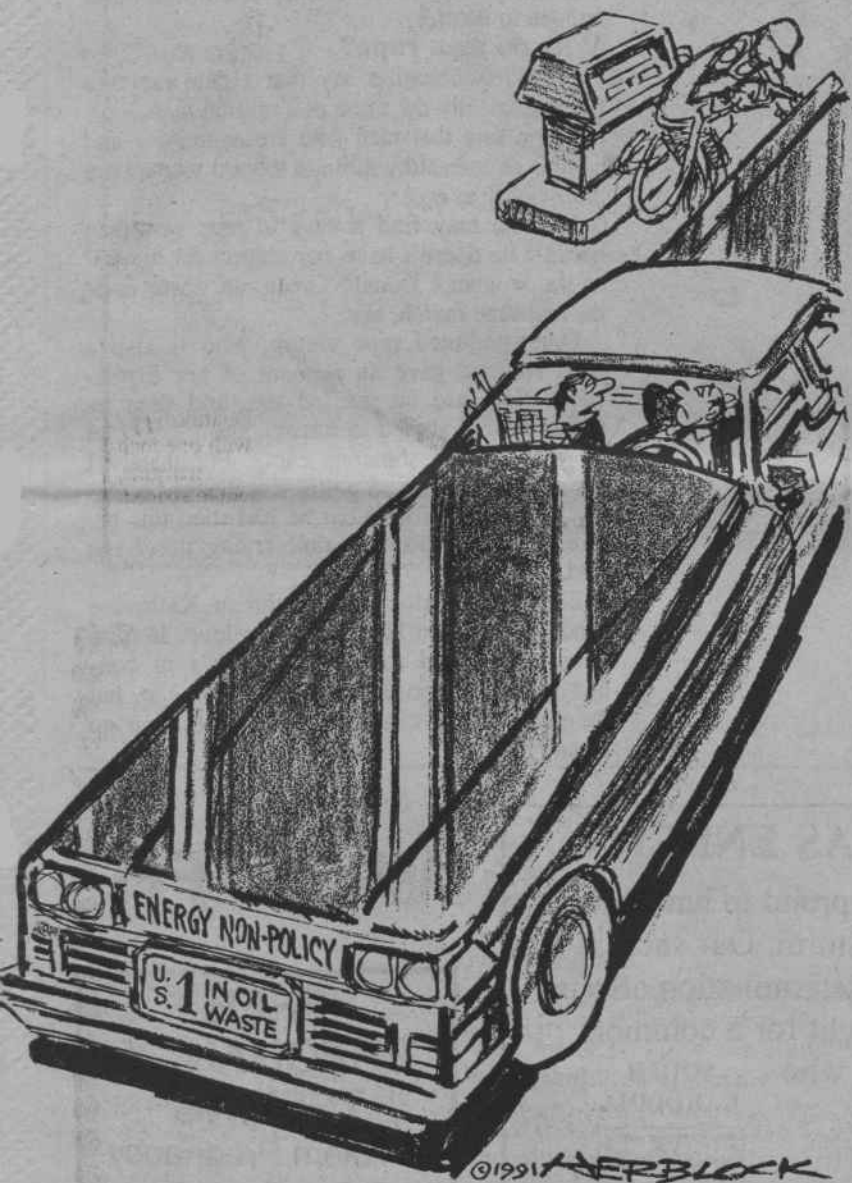
Everyone is entitled to their own opinion; that is what the Letters to the Editor are all about. Unfortunately, some people's letters do not illuminate, but only insult. It is easy to use words like "stupid" and "ignorant" to describe another's opinion. Calling someone a "bigot" or a "racist" is just as simple, but doesn't accomplish anything.

The United States, and especially an institute of higher learning like USC, should encourage intelligent, reasonable debate on all issues facing the country. It is pretty hard, however, to categorically argue that something as subjective as one's lifestyle is wrong. No one has a monopoly on truth, as much as we would like to think otherwise.

It is too bad that we don't have more balanced commentary, but as stated in a previous column, the Viewpoint Editor has little choice in what letters run. Some readers are sick of the seemingly endless debate on the merits of homosexuality; they are not alone. However, don't blame the messenger for the message. We just work here.

The only way the content of the Letters section will change for the better is if the students decide to change it. Not to sound preachy, but that is the way it works. If this editorial makes people mad, that is all for the better. Write us and tell us how bad we are. We value reader comments, believe it or not.

"TERRIBLE ABOUT ALL THAT FUEL BEING BURNED IN KUWAIT"



## Christians shouldn't rely on dubious book

A couple of days ago, when I was swallowed by a whale, I started thinking about the Bible.

I started thinking about all of the miracles, redundancies and vague quotes. And then I started to think about how people manipulate the "good book" to back up their arguments.

Unless you've been living on Pluto or parting the Red Sea for the past two weeks, everyone has seen the great homophobic wave engulf USC.

Since Gay Awareness Week, letters condemning the gay society have flooded *The Gamecock*. I was not really sure what the big dispute was over so I asked my favorite religious buddy, Hip O. Crite, a few of questions.

"Let's get to the point, Hip. Why don't religious people accept gay people for who they are?" I asked.

"Because God doesn't want people to be that way. He preaches against homosexuality in the Bible," Crite said.

"Well, what about the Bible. Wasn't it 47 or so scholars that rewrote the Bible for King James?" I asked.

"Yes, he (King James) wanted to consult with the good book," Crite replied.

"Didn't James issue the production of the Bible because he was required to have a copy if he was to be the head of the Church," I asked.

"Yes." "Well then, wouldn't James also have control of who put what in the book and what they

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put," I asked.

"I guess so."

"So, therefore, couldn't it be King James preaching against homosexuality," I asked.

"No, not at all."

"Why?"

"Just because that's the way God wanted it," Crite said.

That's the way God wanted it. Remember that reason, please.

Does God really want people to assume the responsibility of judging people based on their sexual preference? What happened to the scripture that says only God can judge people and cast their fate?

What's happened is that we have a pack of people on this campus playing God. We have people casting opinions about people and then jamming their beliefs down everyone else's throat even though their sole source of belief preaches against casting judgments.

We have a pack of hypocrites going to school here.

Just like the sign that says, "We don't like you," I'm saying I don't like your hypocritical

belief.

If you live your life by the Bible, that's your business. But when you start insisting that other people live by your beliefs, that's hypocrisy.

The Bible has become nothing more than a list of hypocrisy and contradiction. Uh, oh, I sense people rustling around getting their pens to write me hate mail.

Let me justify the last statement. Christianity claims God as a kind and gentle being who cleanses us of our sins. Now, remember the 40 days and 40 nights of rain?

If he's so kind and gentle, then why in the hell did he flood the earth and kill everyone except for Noah because they did not respect his power.

I guess because that's the way God wanted it. Gee, that's so kind of him.

People, the Bible is not authoritative rule. God did not write the Bible. Forty-seven people under the fire of an angry king wrote the English version. He had complete control over what went in it.

Therefore, if you insist people live by the Bible, then you're insisting people live the path defined by a 17th century king.

Believe it or not, times change. People no longer part the Red Sea nor live after being swallowed by a whale.

If people want to be gay, let them. But for King James' sake, don't crucify them when you don't have the authority to do so.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Man must put humans first

To the editor:

I have a question for every animal-rights activist out there. It's strictly hypothetical. If your house was about to explode, and you were running out of time to escape the explosion, so that you had to make a choice between saving your dog or saving your baby, which would you choose?

I certainly hope this would not be a hard choice. I guess I'm just trying to find out where your priorities are. It seems to me that many of you seem to insist human lives are no more valuable than a dog's. For that matter, it seems to me that you believe all animal life carries the equal value of human lives.

I would also like to bring up another point. You people might not realize this, but if it were physically possible and it was important to their survival, any one of these animals you are defending would eat you. That's just nature's way. All the various life forms on this planet live off one another. Even photosynthetic and chemosynthetic organisms in some way rely on heterotrophic organisms. Maybe I'm just trying to tell you animals use each other, and we are only animals.

Why don't you people stand up for plant rights? Are these not living things as well? Have you ever eaten a carrot? It was a growing, living thing, digging its roots into the soil and spreading its leaves toward the sky. Then someone came along, yanked it out of the earth, chopped off its leaves and subjected it to any means of dismemberment and disfigurement, including its being chopped into pieces and boiled, possibly even while its cells yet lived. Who will stop this senseless plant slaughter?

As far as animal rights go, I think people shouldn't kick their

pets around. In other words, if you're going to own an animal, you should treat it well. Research animals, however, are not pets. They are a means for furthering human knowledge. Many of them would not even exist if it were not for mankind (or womankind or humankind or whatever you prefer).

Like the carrot, they were farmed for human use. When a wild animal is used for research, we must be sure the wild population, and the overall ecology, is not threatened by its removal from the environment. We certainly do not have the right to wipe another species off the planet, and in destroying the environment we would of course be destroying ourselves.

I suppose I've tiraded enough, though I could go on. I just hope one person out there understood what I was trying to say. If you bothered with reading this, I thank you.

Sam Johnson  
Biology sophomore

### Writer abuses his freedoms

To the editor:

As a senior citizen and part-time student on campus, I read with disdain the profane "editorial" by Aaron Sheinin in *The Gamecock* (3-6-91) referring to his feelings about James Holderman.

The childish antics proposed, the disgusting choice of words, shows the immaturity of the writer. I would suggest that as an editorial writer by now he would have learned what the words "Freedom of the Press" mean.

This so-called "freedom" demands responsibility, lawfulness, dignity, the right to inspire to higher aims — not throwing nasty words, crude adjectives (where is your vocabulary as a writer?) and foul feelings. One does not have to sink in the mud-holes in order to stir up and bring truth out.

How much more mature he would have appeared if he had been able to express the despair of the situation in a rational way rather than becoming so sordid in his choice of words.

My taxes help pay for this paper indirectly, and I, for one, am offended that the newspaper staff and faculty cannot appreciate and use wisely this newspaper to uplift. What was gained by all the tirade of objectionable statements? Has journalism changed that much through (sic) the years?

I want to read good newspaper articles and editorials which inspire one to correct mistakes — not just destroy.

Frances Larsen  
USC student

### Biblical quotes are subjective

To the editor:

Like many passages of the Bible, Jon Noetzel's letter contradicts itself. I believe the Bible contradicts itself to show there are many ways to view a single issue, and each of them can be right. It is then up to our judgment to choose how we will decide among our options after we have seen all we are able to see of the issue.

For instance, the story in which Jesus prevents the stoning of an adulterous woman by saying, "Let he who is without sin cast the first stone," clearly contradicts the Lord's commandment "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Just as Jon Noetzel claims to be in judgment of the act, not the individual, so did those men claim to be in judgment of adultery, not the adulterer.

But Christ would not permit them this trespass upon the right of judgment, which God alone possesses. It simply did not matter what aspect of the situation the men felt that they could justifiably condemn or condone — they could

not, for they were each guilty of some type of sin. In the eyes of God, a sin is a sin, and the idea of a "degree" of sin is not valid.

Therefore, the liar is as much a sinner as the murderer. So, unless Jon Noetzel is completely free of sin, he is violating Christ's example when he judges the homosexual individual or even the act of homosexuality (or any other act he personally considers sinful). It is worth mentioning that the term "homosexual" came into existence long after the Bible was transcribed.

Therefore, since my Bible does not contain that word, I see only two explanations for how Jon Noetzel managed to find quotes with this word in them: a) his Bible differs from mine — proving the Bible may be interpreted differently and voiding his sarcastic plea with Shane Miller to spare him Shane's commonly held opinion on that, or b) he knowingly misquoted the Bible — i.e., he said the Bible stated something which it did not, which constitutes an outright lie, making him a sinner and unjustified in judging anyone or their "sin."

Which is not to say that if Jon considers homosexuality sinful, he should flee from it. For, if he feels it sinful, it is his right for him to turn away from engaging in that behavior. But, if he must turn away from it, he should do so peacefully, passing no judgment (and it is judgment to call the acceptance of homosexuality a "looseness of morality").

I will leave you with a quote from Noetzel, "Let's be reasonable about this. Most homosexuals are happy where they are and wouldn't change." Maybe it sounds harsh to you, Mr. Noetzel, but being a true Christian is certainly no easy calling.

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Letters Policy: *The Gamecock* will try to print all letters received. Letters should be, at maximum, 250 to 300 words long. The writer must include full name, professional title if a USC employee or South Carolina resident, or year and major if a student. An address and phone number are required with all letters sent. *The Gamecock* reserves the right to edit letters for style, possible libel or in case of space limitations. The newspaper will not withhold names under any circumstance.