

Viewpoint

Education

Legislature must increase USC's funding to avoid continued loss of top professors

It seemed terrible for USC's morale and image when basketball coach Bobby Cremins backed out of his verbal contract to come here and rebuild our failing basketball program.

But another decision made this past weekend probably has even more long-term implications than the surprise loss of Cremins.

Government Professor Earl Black's announcement that he was taking a job at Rice University in Texas for the next academic year is symbolic of an extremely disturbing trend at USC.

During the past year, USC President John Palms has repeatedly said it will be harder to keep the university's top professors because of the state's budget problems and increased competition from other schools, especially private institutions.

Unfortunately, the loss of Black will not be an isolated case. For example, professors from the masters in international business school, which ranked No. 1 in the nation for the fourth consecutive year, are being vigorously pursued by other institutions.

And they are being offered up to \$30,000 more a year if they leave USC.

No MIBS professors have left yet, but that could only be a matter of time. And when other professors realize that South Carolina is not willing to pay them what they are worth, they'll look elsewhere.

The possible loss of the university's top professors is a frightening idea to swallow and would be a tremendous blow to USC academics, one that we may never fully recover from.

Palms' plans to make USC one of the nation's top state systems of higher education would be shattered if professors of Black's caliber continue to leave.

So, what's the answer? It's simple. We must force the state legislature and South Carolina residents to make higher education a top priority.

It is obviously not right now, since state funding makes up a lower percentage of the university's operating costs than in most other states, including Georgia and North Carolina.

If the state does not commit more money to the university, we will lose more of our high-profile professors, our already questionable academic reputation will further erode and our degrees upon graduating will lessen in value.

The state and university must make a commitment to higher education to keep the best educators in South Carolina. All of our futures are counting on it.



'Malcolm X' denial shows academy unrepresentative

Is it just us or did everybody notice that the members of the "academy" apparently didn't see too many movies this year?

Once again, Spike Lee has been screwed. We're sure it was a great surprise that "Malcolm X" was left out in the cold when they made this year's Oscar nominations.

It's a good thing we don't let the academy make political decisions, or Rush Limbaugh would be our next president. Since when did a small group of rich, white people dictate the views of a nation? Oh yeah, that's right, the Reagan years.

Sound stereotypical? Well, why else would a group of educated individuals ignore a brilliant film like "Malcolm X"?

Unlike his past films, this movie was Spike Lee's first big-budget flick. We could give the academy the benefit of the doubt and believe it was possible that "Do the Right Thing" and "Jungle Fever" were overlooked, but there's no way to overlook a film like "Malcolm X." This movie gets in your face at the beginning and stays there until the last frame.

But perhaps that's exactly what the academy didn't like about it. Perhaps the academy can't handle reality.

We wonder how many members of the academy are from east L.A. or downtown Detroit.



TIGÉ WATTS & SHELLEY MAGEE

How many of them are steel workers from Pittsburgh or secretaries from Topeka, Kan.?

What makes someone qualified to be a member of the academy? As it stands, one would think it has something to do with a credit check. There's a need for more balanced membership within the academy. It should be a cross-section of diverse individuals from varied socioeconomic backgrounds.

There's no question that "Malcolm X" was an extraordinary film. This film took someone larger than life and made him human. It taught us about our past. It addressed important social and political problems of our society, and it was honest.

This film did everything the "ideal Academy Award-winning movie" should do, but it didn't even get a best picture nomination.

There's two possible explanations for leaving "Malcolm X" off the list of nominees. One, they didn't see the film. And if they didn't see the film, then they have no business being in the academy. Two, they saw it and just "conveniently" overlooked it later when they filled out the ballots.

Folks, don't believe they "overlooked" anything. The academy ignored "Malcolm X." Not only are they ignoring the film, they're turning their back on everything it stands for — education, dignity, equality and tolerance.

The academy needs to learn that not every movie is written by and for an upper-class white audience. Spike Lee is a pioneer in black filmmaking, and he's being punished for it. It's a shame that Lee and other pioneers before him are rarely recognized during their lifetime.

Let's hope future African-American filmmakers won't have to struggle for the recognition they deserve.

Tigé Watts and Shelley Magee are columnists for The Gamecock

LETTERS POLICY

The Gamecock will try to print all letters received. Letters should be 200-250 words maximum. Full name and professional title or year and major, if a student, must be included along with an address and phone number. The Gamecock reserves the right to edit for style, possible libel or space limitations. The Gamecock will not withhold names under any circumstances.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Cremins media coverage irresponsible journalism

Is Bobby Cremins really worth all the attention?

After this past Wednesday's announcement that Cremins was returning to his alma mater, the local media went into a state of frenzy. Live press conference coverage, special half-hour television programs, 150-point headlines and a front page dominated by basketball mania ballooned the heads of university officials and many Gamecock fans alike.

If you look back at some of this past week's editions of the local paper, you will realize how overblown the Cremins deal was. By the size of the stories, you would think we had gone to war with Iraq. In fact, I think President Clinton's inauguration didn't even get the coverage Cremins did.

So when Cremins rescinded his offer to coach the Gamecocks Saturday, the local press, with egg on their face, again had to overblow their coverage of the situation. More half-hour programs, more giant headlines and more hype.

Needless to say, this is not responsible journalism.

The local media, including The Gamecock, was lured into the Cremins deal with too much emotion and egocentrism. The big name, the national media and a winning basketball team took away our senses. Like other USC fans, we saw the championships, too.

It's funny. So much was said



PATRICK VILLEGAS

about USC's reputation, recruiting possibilities and tournament hopes despite the fact that Cremins hadn't even stepped foot into Frank McGuire Arena. Even more embarrassing, Cremins hadn't even signed the contract that would have kept him at USC for good.

Although the press deserves a lot of heat for hyping the situation, we must not forget that Bobby Cremins is the sole proprietor of blame. He teased and flirted with the university and then went back to his old girl at Georgia Tech.

I believe the local press will learn something from this "mega-event." Maybe we will learn not to jump on the bandwagon so easily, and maybe in the future, perhaps, the press will display the news in a more fair and objective manner.

Mayb

Patrick Villegas is editor in chief of The Gamecock



Letters to the Editor

Homosexual men misinform students

To the editor:

I must say that Craig Dean and Patrick Gill did an excellent job presenting their case (in favor of gay marriage) on March 18; however, I have a few points to make.

First, someone in the audience asked these two what is the percentage of heterosexual and homosexual AIDS victims? Mr. Dean replied that there are just as many AIDS victims who are heterosexual as are homosexual. Not to pour water on the flames, but that is false.

According to the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, there were 249,199 AIDS cases reported

through Dec. 31. Well, 57.2 percent were cases of men having sex with men. Only 6.5 percent of the reported AIDS cases involved heterosexuals. By the way, 23 percent were due to injecting drug use. Of course, in this entire program, you didn't hear anything about AIDS. I wonder why?

They also said 10 percent of the American population is gay. I've talked to several medical doctors, and do you know what they tell me? It's more like 2 to 3 percent. But let's say it's as much as 5 or 6 percent, just to make it fun. If 6 percent of the population has 57 percent of the AIDS cases, what does that tell us, boys and girls?

These two lovebirds are not concerned with getting a marriage license simply to be joined in holy

matrimony. It is just another attempt to get homosexuality normalized in our society.

Reginald Anderson
Journalism graduate student

USC police slow in response to calls

To the editor:

Recently, my roommate and I encountered a situation where the USC police were desperately needed. We called for assistance and were informed that help was on the way. After 45 minutes of waiting, a Columbia policewoman stopped to offer help. Within five minutes,

another Columbia policeman arrived, and the problem was taken care of immediately.

After the Columbia police left, my roommate and I waited to see when the USC police would arrive. Surprise, they didn't show. Maybe they were all taking a break at the Pantry.

It appalls me to see money being wasted on policeman that only answer to the emergency call boxes on campus and patrol the parking garages for skateboarders. Hopefully, I will never need any assistance from the USC police again, but if I do, I won't hold my breath.

Pam Hucks
Graphic design sophomore

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The Gamecock is the student newspaper of the University of South Carolina and is published three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays during the fall and spring semesters and weekly during both summer sessions, with the exception of university holidays and examination periods.

Opinions expressed in The Gamecock are those of the editors or author and not those of the University of South Carolina.

The Board of Student Publications and Communications is the publisher of The Gamecock. The Student Media Department is the parent organization of The Gamecock.

Change of address forms, subscriptions, requests and other correspondence should be sent to The Gamecock, P.O. Box 85131, The University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208.

Subscription rates are \$46 a year. First class postage paid at Columbia, SC. The Gamecock is a registered student organization of the University of South Carolina and is partially funded by student activity fees.