

# VIEWPOINTS



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## Snooping

*Packwood's actions speak loud enough without Senate invading diary entries*

Sen. Bob Packwood appealed Monday and Tuesday to the Senate to disallow a move by the Ethics Committee to subpoena his personal diary. The committee maintains the contents of the diary might help determine the ultimate truth of the sexual harassment allegations made against the Oregon Republican by more than two dozen women.

Unfortunately, Packwood's appeal failed to convince his colleagues that his right to privacy as a citizen of the United States was of greater constitutional significance than the possibility that incriminating evidence against him might be found in the diary.

The committee was staking its case, however, on no more than that, a possibility. The contents of Packwood's diary are surmised at this point but are not known. Even so, they can do nothing but work against him: If there's no mention at all within the diaries of the incidents in question, Packwood's culpability won't have changed in the least. The committee will continue to work with what evidence it has already in its possession, and Packwood will have suffered a humiliating trespass of heretofore inviolable rights for nothing.

The contents of Packwood's diary, however, ultimately have no bearing at all on either the constitutionality or the ethical rectitude of what the Senate did yesterday. The reason is found in a philosophy that permeates nearly every fiber of a democratic ideology: Ends don't justify means.

These means, in our view, are unjustifiable in any case. While publicly elected officials may be held to a higher standard of accountability for their actions than average citizens, it doesn't follow that, as a result of their service, they should be denied rights bestowed by the Constitution. That Packwood is an elected representative shouldn't mean he has fewer rights accorded him. Public records are one thing; mandating that private thoughts be surrendered to the state is another matter altogether. From there, it's only a short step to less intrusive means of monitoring what officials are thinking or doing at any given moment. If private thoughts aren't sacred, then private actions must certainly be less so.

Furthermore, a personal diary comes as close as any conceivable method to providing an unedited account of what occurs in an individual's mind. Hence, the committee's interest. But unedited thoughts aren't actions. And diaries throughout history have been famous for their liberal approach to fact, often blending it with fiction into an account that bears little resemblance to the original event. Far from being objective accounts of thoughts and events, diaries often provide an outlet for notions and sentiments that a person would never allow to evolve into action.

While most of us feel we are essentially good, law-abiding people, few of us would be willing to be judged on our thoughts rather than our actions. That, however, is what the Ethics Committee has proposed to do to Packwood.

The adage "Actions speak louder than words" might be trite, but it contains more than a grain of truth. Let us hope the Ethics Committee is aware of the differences between the two.

## MTV's delinquent duo mimics American society

With the recent success of "Beavis and Butt-head," the media and the majority of the population have once again managed to raise the phoenix out of the ashes. In other words, we have created something out of nothing.

It's amazing, is it not? Amazing that our society can continue to do this sort of activity over and over again like a broken record. Whenever a TV show, movie or type of music is transformed from what we know as the norm, we automatically label it satanic, immoral and something that should be subject to ludicrous and worthless psychological studies.

To translate, the hype about "Beavis and Butt-head" corrupting our society and causing people to commit such horrendous acts as setting buildings and homes ablaze is appalling to me in a humorous way.

Seriously, people, let's look at this in a somewhat intelligent manner, shall we? Let's talk about people taking responsibility for their own actions instead of blaming a couple of cartoon characters who are a reject version of "Wayne's World."

I enjoy Beavis and Butt-head and think they are quite amusing, but I don't watch an episode and then set fire to Preston or try to saw off part of an insect's anatomy with an oversized chainsaw. Anyone who engages in such activity obviously has problems that are unrelated to TV entertainment.

I certainly don't agree with some of the things these little morons say or the music they like. However, watching them is similar to watching professional wrestling: They're both fictional, entertaining and not to be taken seriously.



Jay Tilley

I agree that some groups of human beings, mainly small children, aren't ready to be exposed to this bizarre type of humor and that its symbolism is too complex for many young minds. But this doesn't mean that "Beavis and Butt-head" should be taken off the air. It has a good message to portray.

Beavis and Butt-head are sexist, rude, obnoxious, ignorant, malicious and lack discipline and guidance. There's no debating this. But isn't that the beauty of this whole kit n' kaboodle? Aren't Beavis and Butt-head MTV's way of saying the positive message of "Free Your Mind" with a reverse psychology technique? Aren't we as a society the real Beavis and Butt-heads? Aren't we as humans full of all the bad aspects of Beavis and Butt-head?

The answer to these questions is a resound yes, and sadly, it's yes to the ones about us. We're the society that will look at different races, religions, cultures, financial and social statuses and even different sexual preferences and say, "This sucks!" To me, that's much more frightening than all of the episodes of "Beavis and Butt-head" combined.

Jay Tilley is a columnist for The Gamecock.

## USC VOICES

### Would opening the Packwood diaries be an invasion of privacy?



"It isn't the public's business what is in a diary. But if he is accused of a crime, if possible, we should find out if there actually was a crime committed."

Terry Boes  
English freshman



"Everybody has a right to privacy. It wouldn't be fair."

Nelton Davis  
Chemistry senior



"It isn't an invasion of privacy. We can still find out if he did sexually harass those women."

Shannon Childs  
Criminal justice freshman



"They shouldn't open his personal diaries. That isn't right."

Tawney Kight  
Physical therapy freshman

## Master Minds—

# Haiti might slide into sea without intervention

Who should rule Haiti? Cedras, the military commander, says the army should. Aristide, the popularly elected president in exile, says he should. International observers say the people should decide.

Foreign policy advisers say the people already did when they elected Aristide with 67 percent of the vote in 1990. The educated, elite Haitian business people say the vote doesn't count because illiterate people can't make decisions. The United Nations says the Governor's Island Agreement championed by the Clinton administration settles everything. The Haitian military says nothing is settled without amnesty for everyone, including military and civilian backers.

The debate of military versus civilian rule in Haiti isn't a new one. But it's one that needs to be solved before more lives are lost. The army in Haiti controls the country through fear. The army has 7,000 people, each with five attaches, people that can be called on in a heartbeat to carry out army orders.

Guns have poured into Haiti since the embargo was lifted. The military commander, Cedras, was trained by the U.S. military. He has friends



Leara Rhodes

in the U.S. government. The military is suspected as being involved with drugs. With all the guns, the drugs and the military leaders, it reminds me of Panama.

As I see it, Haitians have three alternatives: fight and die in the streets, run and die in the ocean or accept the military rule and die of suppression. However, two additional alternatives have been offered with international help: invade Haiti with U.N. troops and force the military to back down or blockade Haiti and force the military's hand.

Either alternative must have as its goal dismantling the army. It wouldn't be the first time troops have been in Haiti. The U.S. military occupied Haiti for more than 26 years, leaving in 1934. The St. Nicholas de Mole, one of the

deepest ports in the Caribbean, located in northern Haiti, has always been eyed by the United States as a military base should the Cuban base be closed. Plus, the continued problem of what to do with Haitian refugees plagues the Clinton administration.

I've heard some people say that Haiti should be left to fight its own battles because of its violent history, the illiteracy of its people and the isolation and insignificance of the country in the world arena. We could use the same argument for America's homeless, the street children in Brazil, the hungry in Somalia, the Cuban refugees and gangs in our inner cities.

All people, red, yellow, black and white, deserve peace. If people can't rise above the oppression put on them by society, then society needs to adjust and help out. This is called social responsibility. Our individual roles vary. We can support, we can send money, we can pray, we can send troops. What we can't do is do nothing.

Leara Rhodes is an assistant professor in the College of Journalism and Mass Communications.

## LETTERS

### Flag shouldn't outlive blacks' honor, identity

To the editor:

In fine Southern tradition, our state government leaders seem to be the first to make ill decisions and the last to try to correct them. Thus, the issue of the Confederate flag. When I see bumper stickers that bear the word "SECEDE" flanked by the Confederate battle flag, larger-than-life Confederate battle flags plastered on residence hall windows and hear old Southern gentlemen talking about the good ol' days, I wonder.

I wonder why those people who have ties to the Confederacy are fighting a war that should have ended 130 years ago. In their attempts to substantiate, immortalize and glorify the flying of their flag over our Capitol, they have forgotten a few details.

This is no longer the Confederate States of America. Columbia wasn't the capital, and the Confederate flags have outlived their usefulness.

The Legislature ordered the flying of the flag atop our Capitol in 1962 partly to commemorate the anniversary of the start of the Civil War but mainly to use it as a symbol of defiance of integration of our public school systems.

There are some blacks that fought for the Confederacy, but they either assumed their usual subservient roles or were forced to fight and certainly weren't in any leadership position.

Although the war stemmed from the issue of states' rights, one of those underlying rights was the use of slavery as a source of economic and financial stability for slave states.

A minuscule fraction of the 90 percent of Southern men who fought in the war were abolitionists who were sympathetic to the exploitation and dehumanization of my African ancestors. Those who weren't part of the solution were part of the problem, though. Standing idly by didn't clear anyone of the responsibility or blame. Some S.C. citizens still have a flag flying over their head to remind them that they are less than human beings: slaves!

"Heritage, not hatred!" they say. "Honor my Confederate ancestors. Fly it!" I say, "Honor my Native American and African ancestors whose lands, cultural identity, livelihood, humanity and freedom were stripped from them! Honor my ancestors who nurtured this land 10,000 years before the Confederacy existed and who built the foundation of this country with their blood, sweat and tears!"

People say, "Oh forget about it, all of that happened in the past." Those who forget their past are doomed to repeat it, but those who can't let go of their past will never see a brighter tomorrow. Some of the things the Confederacy fought for were wrong.

The war my people fought to take down the flag was won long ago when those stars they were never supposed to reach were reached and those bars they were never supposed to break free from were torn down. Bring the flag down.

Scott Williams  
Pre-med sophomore

### Panther's new home not McGee's fault

To the editor:

The decision for the Carolina Panthers to play its inaugural season in Clemson rather than in Columbia is the result of the interests of Richardson Sports, not the perceived ignorance of Mike McGee.

The primary element in this case is entirely economic. Jerry Richardson has a personal ambition to enhance economic development in Spartanburg. Recently, he moved the headquarters of Spartan Food Systems Inc. from a peripheral

county location to downtown, where it's housed in a newly-built 18-story office complex. He employs thousands of individuals throughout the Southeast from this Spartanburg location.

Richardson played for the 1981 national champion Clemson Tigers. It's likely that Clemson was the hands-down favorite all along. The 15,000 additional seats available at Clemson are an extra incentive. Additionally, the economic benefits would be going to Greenville and Spartanburg, which is his desire.

Geographically, Columbia is the best location for the majority of the Carolinas' population. Football fans in Charleston and Charlotte would have a direct route to Columbia. Also, Columbia is afforded with sufficient and convenient hotel accommodations and Sunday alcohol sales, both of which will be denied in Clemson.

Mike McGee shouldn't be blamed for Richardson's location decision. Richardson's intention is to keep the action along the economically prosperous I-85 corridor and satisfy personal interests. Besides, why would Richardson Sports want to enter the political quagmire of Columbia when there is an alternative?

Gary Farmer  
Economic geography graduate

