

VIEWPOINTS



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USC VOICES

How has the threat of AIDS changed your lifestyle?



"I'm more aware of what's going on around me. I'm conscious of what I'm doing and who with. It's important to protect yourself and others."

Matt Malarich
Broadcasting senior



"It really hasn't changed things that much for me."

Ralph Barker
Pre-med senior



"It makes me more aware of the dangers and consequences of what I do. It makes you think of the value of life."

Spring Bailey
Music education freshman



"It never related to me, but I started studying the Bible. Scriptural morality is what changed my life. It is important to reach out and help those with AIDS, not judge them."

Shannon Foppe
Biology freshman

Courage

Bill Edens lost his personal battle against AIDS but through support to other victims won war

AIDS is a difficult subject, a silent threat that randomly attacks friends and neighbors. This hard and cruel monster we hear so much about is complicated to discuss, mysterious to medical science. But there are two absolutes about AIDS that should be enough to change the way we live: The long-term suffering involved is heart-wrenching, and death is the outcome.

Bill Edens, who was executive director of Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services (PALSS), died Saturday after an eight-year battle with AIDS. He said, "When you have a choice, always do that which is hardest for you to do. Chances are you are doing the right thing."

Most of us would rather not envision catching the disease. It is easier, and human, to remain in denial of the threat of AIDS. It cannot happen to me, you say. However, college students are prime candidates for STDs, pregnancy, AIDS.

Recently, The Gamecock did a two-part series on reproductive health. The reason? To raise not only sexual awareness but consciousness of USC students. There is a difference; being conscious of a problem impacts life, calls one to action. Most of us know that safe sex is possible, that contraceptives are available. We set our own guidelines about our sexual behavior. However, we must be alert to the threat of AIDS, and we must act accordingly, no matter the short term sacrifices of pleasure. This is doing things the hard way, the way Edens meant.

We must think ahead, plan ahead. Too many lives have been lost. One paramount way we can carry more than the memory of Edens is to follow his philosophy of doing that which is difficult, which can translate into either individual or societal changes. If you are sexually active, practice safe sex or decide firmly to refrain altogether. If you cannot do that, then commit to a monogamous relationship. If you would rather give of your time and talents to educate and support other citizens, volunteer at PALSS.

The fact that Edens died with AIDS does not show the good purpose in his mission to help those with AIDS. In all honesty, it is the true leap of courage and strength in the face of death itself. We all can certainly learn and follow this fine man's example of caring for others.

Master Minds—

Knowledge of racial history can illuminate USC's future

This is the second part of O'Neal Smalls' Sept. 17 inaugural address to the Black Faculty and Professional Staff Association on race relations.

We have a relatively new president and a new provost. I am encouraged by our new president. He has a good vision regarding the need to nurture race relations. There are also some deans who do fine work in this area. Our new provost has been with us a very short time. He has had his hands full with getting the university financial house in order with the Future Committee. We look forward to working with him as we seek to advance good relations on campus.

I see a need to help faculty members and administrators develop a fuller appreciation for the value of conferences, workshops and lectures as media for disseminating knowledge. These forms of communication are vital in the African-American community. We look forward to determining the weight that should be given these activities when evaluating faculty and staff members.

The task we face is determining how to integrate the university. How do we integrate the history, culture and contributions of African Americans into the academic program? Given the long history of segregation and its attendant



O'Neal Smalls

values, there is a need to help both black and white students appreciate more fully the new racial order. So many students come from high schools and homes where race relations received little or no attention.

The allegiance to many to the Confederate flag indicates to me that our people do not understand why the South withdrew from the Union and hoisted its own flag; or, they do not accept the values of the "new nation," to quote Lincoln, that was conceived and born as a result of the victory at Appomattox Court House.

We need to do a better job in helping students understand the implications of the war. The war started in Charleston. Let us resolve to end it here on this campus in Columbia and thereby reaffirm and accept the surrender at Appomattox.

Why so much on this matter of race? I will answer: because no other issue has been so divisive for so long. No other issue has ignited a war in our country. No other matter has made necessary as many amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

No other concern has had as great an influence in defining the character of our nation. And most importantly, no other concern has cast as dark a cloud over the future of our state and is so embedded in the root causes of excessive incarceration, the failure of the school system, poverty and other ills. No other matter is as great an obstacle to advancing the emancipation process. Today, racial animus stands at attention, ready to march, ready to charge upon the command of any demagogue, Willie Horton manipulator or inflammatory occurrence.

Whether you like it or not, our futures are interlocked! What whites do will determine in part what happens to us; and what we do will chart directions for them. USC is a beacon of hope that can illuminate the state's path into the 21st century.

O'Neal Smalls is a professor in the School of Law and president of the Black Faculty and Professional Staff Association.

Graduation chance to say farewell, face uncertainties

Time to summon a last bit of eloquence to say farewell to my faithful readers. Both of you.

The sweet release of graduation approaches for me, and I must say I am looking forward to the end of my stay here at USC. It seems that after many years of study I will finally get a degree in journalism. Now, I can become a park ranger.

Farewells are always difficult because we must give up something we have known in exchange for the uncertainty of the future. It is a natural process that tastes of butterscotch, a hint of sweet candy mixed with a compelling bitterness.

We have all been told these are to be the best years of our lives, and for some of us they are. But for many others of our generation, it is a time of anxiety and uncertainty. What waits for us on the other side of the graduation platform? Will we get a job? Will we have to move home? The prevailing attitude seems to be that you pay your money and you take your chances. And of course, you get out what you put in to the college experience.

For me, the time has been grueling but rewarding. I have discovered what I want to do with my life by process of elimination. Walking through the woods keeping an eye on campers sounds wonderful compared to the often thankless trade of wordsmithing. The benefits look good, too.

But it will not be a sudden awakening one morning and finding myself "out there" in the real world. I have felt the process beginning since the summer. I have drifted away



Jay King

from friends and found myself rather single-mindedly bearing down on graduation.

My mind has tried to push away the memories of this place that come unbidden as some late-night attack of nostalgia. I have convinced myself that there will be time to reminisce after I am gone, but the urge to hold on a little longer remains.

The truth is I have become a bit of an anachronism, displaced by those younger than me. Again, this is natural, but sometimes, it makes me want to reach for the Geritol.

I have made many friends here and will lament the parting of our paths, but the good times and the bad times will stand out in my memory as a testament to time, in general and for the most part, well spent. The strength of this university is its wealth of people from different places and cultures and with different ideas.

I consider myself the richer for having spent my time here. I hope those who follow will find their time here equally rewarding.

Jay King is city editor of The Gamecock. His column appears every other Wednesday.

Aiken brings USC national attention

To the editor:

Some absurd comments were made about Kimberly Aiken's "misrepresentation" of USC.

First, she should not be placed in the position of having to defend herself. Obviously, she did not attend classes because she was too busy preparing to win Miss America. However, her original intention was to attend USC in summer school, thereby making her a USC student. Lezlie Chappell thinks she "should have said she was a student a UNC" if she "wasn't thinking of coming here."

If she was enrolled at USC, she was, at the very least, thinking of coming here. What a brilliant statement, considering she had not applied and was not enrolled at UNC. I interpreted Aiken to mean that now that she has the funds she will attend Chapel Hill. Frankly, if I had the funds, I would be there, too. It is not fair to blame her for seizing an opportunity.

I also do not understand the bad press she received for using USC in her video! Oh, all that national exposure on television is just awful! We should be thrilled that the country was able to see what a fine school we have regardless of who promoted us. Most schools would appreciate good free press, but not our students.

Let us remember that the

pageant officials asked her to include her intended school in the video. Also, Brad Holt should have checked his own SGA records before saying he thinks SGA gave her \$100. I do feel disappointed she will not be going to USC, but I am not going to crucify her for changing her mind.

Penny Brady
Sociology graduate

Academics reason students are at USC

To the editor:

This is in response to the Nov. 22 article about Kimberly Aiken. As a citizen of South Carolina, I can remember the distinct pride I felt when the new Miss America was announced. As a student of USC, I am disappointed at the way in which Aiken has handled herself. She should not have presented herself as a student of USC if she did not have intentions of going here.

My protest is to the article and especially to the comments of Scott Williams. He said, "I am angered, hurt and disappointed to discover that one of the few milestones in USC history really isn't ours to claim." I am appalled to see that Williams, a student senator, is so grossly out of touch with the accomplishments of this fine university. How can a S.C. citizen who is named Miss America possibly be a milestone in USC history?

LETTERS

The purpose of this school is advancement of education, not grooming of pageant contestants. Is not the MIBS program ranked first in the world, and has it not been so for the past three years? Are not the marine science and marine biology programs among the best in the world? Has not the original S.C. College expanded to a university of 26,000 students? How about the multitude of excellent professors teaching at this school?

For well over a 100 years, this institution has been dedicated to the pursuit of higher education. This, Williams, is a milestone in which to take pride.

Joshua Elliott
Accounting sophomore

Med school dog labs cruel, unnecessary

To the editor:

I was walking in front of the Russell House the other day when I noticed a table displaying a grotesque picture of a helpless dog being tortured. Most students are not aware that the USC medical school has a dog lab. So, what exactly is a dog lab?

The dog lab at USC is a demonstration, not a research, course for medical students in which pound dogs are strapped down to a table, operated on and often given minimal amounts of anesthetic. What is worse is that this course is required for all medical students.

Many people mistakenly believe that the dog lab is a necessary part in researching health issues. I would have no problem with this if it were true. However, the dog lab is not performed as research. It is simply a method of demonstration for medical students.

This is illogical. A dog's body is obviously different from a human's body. Even human symptoms such as headaches cannot be observed or studied from animals in a dog lab. Furthermore, alternatives such as *in vitro* testing are far more accurate and cost effective than procedures with animals. This makes USC's dog lab completely unjustified.

Dog labs have been outlawed in at least 11 other states, and many respected physicians have targeted USC's dog lab as unnecessary and inhumane.

These dogs, obtained from the pound, may be your long lost pet. Six dollars is the special rate at which USC receives these dogs. This is far too little a price to pay for a life, human or not.

Medical students should at least have the option of whether to participate in the dog labs. Perhaps, then, the whole thing will self-destruct, and the 164 dogs that were killed last year alone will not have to welcome any more sacrifices to the grave.

Angie Campbell
Journalism freshman



LETTERS POLICY

The Gamecock will try to print all letters received. Letters should be 200-250 words and must include full name, professional title or year and major if a student. Letters must be personally delivered by the author to The Gamecock newsroom in Russell House room 321.

The Gamecock reserves the right to edit all letters for style, possible libel or space limitations. Names will not be withheld under any circumstances.