

Viewpoints



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Satisfactory

After a year, Clinton receives mixed reviews on domestic, foreign performance

President Clinton's first year in office has been one of triumph and tragedy, endless praise and sharp criticism, impressive professionalism and childish naivete.

And his popularity ratings reflect these contrasts. When he took office, 65 percent of Americans had a favorable impression of him with only 27 percent unfavorable. His popularity then dipped to 51 percent in July but has bounced back to the current 60 percent rating.

Clinton receives high marks for his handling of race and women's issues, the environment and foreign affairs, in addition to the Brady bill, family leave and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

However, the majority of the public hasn't been satisfied with Clinton's handling of the federal budget deficit, taxes and crime.

Clinton had a relatively impressive year in Congress with the passage of the Brady bill, a family leave bill, a scaled-down national service plan, NAFTA and the budget plan. The only major piece of legislation that wasn't passed was Clinton's economic stimulus package.

However, much of the year was one public relations disaster after another. Fiddling with the military's gay ban wasn't a smart political move in the first month of his presidency. And in addition to not pleasing anybody, the resulting "don't ask, don't tell" policy left myriad gray areas for the courts to decipher later.

Clinton's indecisiveness in the international hotspots of Somalia and Bosnia raised many questions in 1993 about his qualifications in handling foreign policy. He has only recently gained respect in this area because of his highly successful trip to Europe and his standing up to North Korea over its nuclear facilities. But there are still many holes in his policies toward the rest of the globe.

The firing and rehiring of the White House travel staff, Vince Foster's suicide and now the White House's handling of the Whitewater scandal has sometimes given the administration a less than professional image.

But possibly worse than anything else is the administration's handling of personnel matters. There are many federal positions yet to be filled, such as civil rights posts and judgeships. The Zoe Baird debacle and the mysterious withdrawal of Bobby Ray Inman for defense secretary haven't helped the White House's image problem either.

We hope the next year will be more successful for Clinton. In addition to having some sort of health care package passed, welfare and crime also need to be addressed. But for any of this to happen, Clinton must get the Whitewater affair behind him. And he needs to handle personnel matters better.

His first year was just satisfactory. It could have been better, but it could have been much worse. Let's hope 1993 was the lowmark of Clinton's presidency.

Campbell misses mark on contraceptive issue

Gov. Carroll Campbell's statement in Wednesday's State of the State address that "Every woman on welfare should be on some type of birth control" is a fear-some one.

Why, you may ask. With the impoverished parents bearing children that no one can afford to feed, clothe or educate, children who become criminals, children who endanger our society physically, morally and economically, why shouldn't government force the women of these communities to exercise birth control?

It's an idea which seems acceptable, yet it lacks the sensibility to the whole scheme of women, men and reproduction. Thank goodness it is only an idea.

Birth control, especially one mandated by the government, does not at all stand for liberation, choice or freedom in a woman's life. A woman will truly be free when our society views pregnancy and birth as advantageous, beautiful and natural, and not as a crippling disease of which she must be rid.

Campbell's statement also leaves out one very important factor in pregnancy: it takes two to tango.

OK, college women. Think about this. You may be taking the same type of birth control pills as a woman on welfare who lives just a few short blocks away. And your boyfriend, like her boyfriend, doesn't even bother to use condoms since the pill is so reliable.

Both boyfriends have the security that their girlfriends are diligently taking the pill everyday. They don't have to pay for them (at off-campus drugstores, they cost between \$15 and \$20 per pack). Not only do you pay for them, but you make sure your pill supply is

well-stocked. Not to mention the cost of the physical examination required yearly in order to renew a pill prescription.

Is it any wonder that some men hit the road when their girlfriends become pregnant? And if they don't, the suggestion of abortion is quite a popular one.

A woman's fertility should be governed by the woman alone. Or if she and her husband or boyfriend care enough about each other to share in the responsibility, more power to them. But taking away the woman's right to choose her birth control as Campbell suggested is a blatant symptom of the kind of ignorance men and women follow without realizing it.

China deals with the problem of overpopulation by forcing women to have abortions after they have had more children than the government deems is appropriate. Is this next for America?

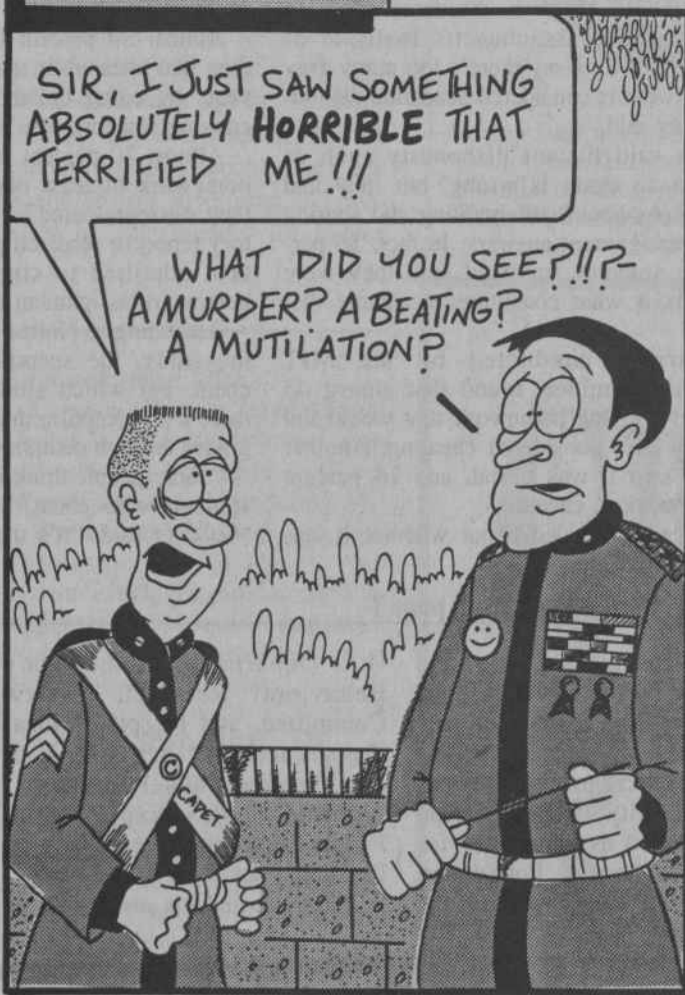
It's pretty scary to think our governor cannot see the truth: that pregnancy and children are not the products of a faulty machine, and that women are not machines with on and off baby-making buttons. If we allow our government to force women to exercise birth control, we will bow down to this view and set the progress made by women back 100 years.



Shayla Stuttz

COLUMNIST

AT THE CITADEL...



Quote, Unquote

"This is a key administrative appointment, and I am pleased to announce that one of our own faculty members emerged as the strongest candidate."

USC President John Palms

On the naming of Lester Lefton as humanities dean

Bobbitts, Faulkner make lively courtroom fodder

Now that I'm in my fourth semester at USC law, I can honestly say that nothing else is quite as exciting. Look at the events of the past seven days. Both of the news events that have South Carolina buzzing happened in a courtroom. Let's review:

■ Bobbitt vs. Bobbitt. I have discussed this case with several of my male friends, and we have come to a unanimous conclusion. Given a choice, we would rather be shot between the eyes repeatedly with an automatic weapon. Please.

On Friday, Lorena Bobbitt was found "not guilty by reason of temporary insanity." Let me get this straight. After months of being inundated with stories about the tumultuous Bobbitt marriage, we have run this little soap opera through the American judicial system and concluded that NOBODY DID ANYTHING WRONG!

John Bobbitt has become enough of a celebrity to be featured on 30 or 40 tabloid shows and the Howard Stern pay-per-view. Lorena has made nonstop tabloid appearances and is being hailed by some in the media as striking a blow for abused women everywhere.

Do I believe that both Bobbitts are blameless? Sure I do. I also believe those nice L.A. police officers were just trying to quiet Rodney King down so they could read him his Miranda rights.



Patrick McNeill

COLUMNIST

And I believe Damian Williams was using his brick to try and kill a mosquito on Reginald Denny's forehead.

However, the Bobbitt family hasn't gone unpunished. John has already suffered his share of public shame and humiliation. Lorena must, as part of her sentencing, go through 45 days of intensive psychiatric examination. Even if you doubt Lorena's innocence, one can't help but feel pity for her now.

■ Shannon Faulkner. Yes, the darling of USC-Spartanburg finally got the go-ahead from the Supreme Court to attend day classes at The Citadel. Unfortunately, she will not be permitted to join the corps of cadets until the entire issue is resolved.

As a good Southern Conservative, my heart goes out to Ms. Faulkner. I can appreciate her goals. She just wants to go to The Citadel, learn how to fire a rifle and do other neat military stuff. Then she can become an officer in the Army and one day defend Fort Sumter against

the invading Yankee horde.

I'm sure she will win on appeal and be allowed into the corps next semester. I can picture Cadet Faulkner's first day in the barracks. She gets her shiny new uniform and a nice, close crewcut. She meets her roommate and new best friend, Nathan Bedford Forrest Hampton, and unpacks her bags.

She goes to classes and is marched around the parade grounds until her legs are about to give out under her. Upperclassmen scream in her face, force her to clean out the toilets and order her to "drop and give me 50" as a means of making her feel like one of the guys. Then, after a shower with 30 or 40 other "Nobs," the upperclassmen lock her and her roommate in a closet for a few hours and then...

What's that? You don't see this scenario as likely? You think Shannon will be able to live in her own barracks with her own shower? You think hundreds of lawyers will descend on Charleston the first time an upperclassman raises his voice at Shannon? How cynical of you.

Shannon Faulkner has stated she wants a Citadel education, and by God, as a daughter of S.C. taxpayers, she's entitled to one. To treat her differently would give her a separate education experience from the rest of the corps. And as John Bobbitt could tell you, "Separate is, by its very nature, never equal."

Letters

Column oversimplifies battered women's issues

To the editor:

Once again, I am insulted and, unfortunately, not too surprised by the ignorance of uninformed individuals who have little or no concern or compassion regarding battered women.

I am referring to the column by Mr. Wagenheim entitled "Bobbitt inappropriate role for feminists." In the process of assessing your perspective of the trial, you insulted the feminist movement, but more importantly, you made light of the plight of battered women. Your comments regarding Ms. Bobbitt were degrading and unnecessary; your evaluation of the situation was baseless and without appropriate research. First, Mr. Wagenheim, if you had researched domestic violence, you would have discovered something called the Battered Women Syndrome, two of its main characteristics being extreme passivity and helplessness.

It's quite common for battered women to feel as though they have no one to turn to or, that if they do

escape, no one will believe them or that they will be held responsible for the battering.

Second, how dare you compare her behaviors to those "promoted" by the feminist movement! Battered women aren't concerned with maintaining the appropriate behaviors but merely trying to survive.

You also make the enlightening statements that "Women don't have to be victims of domestic violence" and "The abuse can stop much sooner." In other words, battered women provoke or instigate the abuse. They probably forgot to starch their husbands' underwear along with the shirts. Do these statements also apply to victims of rape?

Wise up, Mr. Editor in Chief. No human being wants to be beaten, raped or tortured. Yet, many battered women don't have the strength or courage to leave.

You may have entertained a few readers, Mr. Wagenheim, but you also insulted and misinformed many others.

Kimberly Cooper
Criminal justice graduate student

Passion for cause can cloud judgment

To the editor:

I don't so much disagree with Melissa Tennen's Jan. 21 column as I find it worthy of comment.

"Nature has a reason for everything." Really? Consider the implications of this statement.

The belief implicit in Ms. Tennen's statement is that all reasons that nature may have are good reasons. We arrive at the conclusion that there are good reasons in nature for all human behavior. This would cover a great deal of behavior that both Ms. Tennen and I would find unacceptable.

A better statement is "there is a cause for that which we observe in nature." This cause may be good, it may be silly, or it may be beyond human comprehension.

It isn't surprising nature has had some remarkable successes. However, give me a solar system and five billion years, and I, or Ms. Tennen, would do better.

The human mind and the human spirit are the true wonders of the universe. Indeed, the very mind

and spirit that drive some to seek to create hope, order and purpose in a harsh and unpleasant world during a brief and confusing existence, such as Ms. Tennen is trying to do. The struggle is to find our own good reasons, and so I salute Ms. Tennen and her mother.

However, I believe that perhaps Ms. Tennen's reasoning in this case is clouded by another human quality. That quality is passion for a cause. Perhaps Ms. Tennen wouldn't be so quick to support the studies of Dr. Profet if they did not neatly dovetail with her own ideology.

Ideas are worthy of study not because of their significance to some political agenda, but because they have reasonable evidence backing them.

Ms. Tennen should reserve judgement unless she can effectively assess the evidence. No insult is implied or intended by this remark. Science, any area of science, is a discipline that requires more than intelligence and diligence to master. It takes time.

G. Neel Taylor
Mathematics first year graduate

Voices

How has Clinton performed in his first year in office?



"He's gotten a lot of bad press, but so far so good. I didn't vote for him, but he should have a chance. I don't agree with everything he's done, but who would?"

Patrick Gearman
Mechanical engineering junior



"He's trying to do what he can for a country that won't give people a break."

Tasha Anderson
Sociology Ph.D. candidate



"I don't think I expected more than what I've seen as yet. He's not as established as he expected to be. In comparison to others, though, I'm generally satisfied."

Jonathan Evans
Political science sophomore



"I don't like his performance. I think he and Hillary are to blame for most of the country's problems."

Kelly Herring
International studies sophomore



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