

# Viewpoints



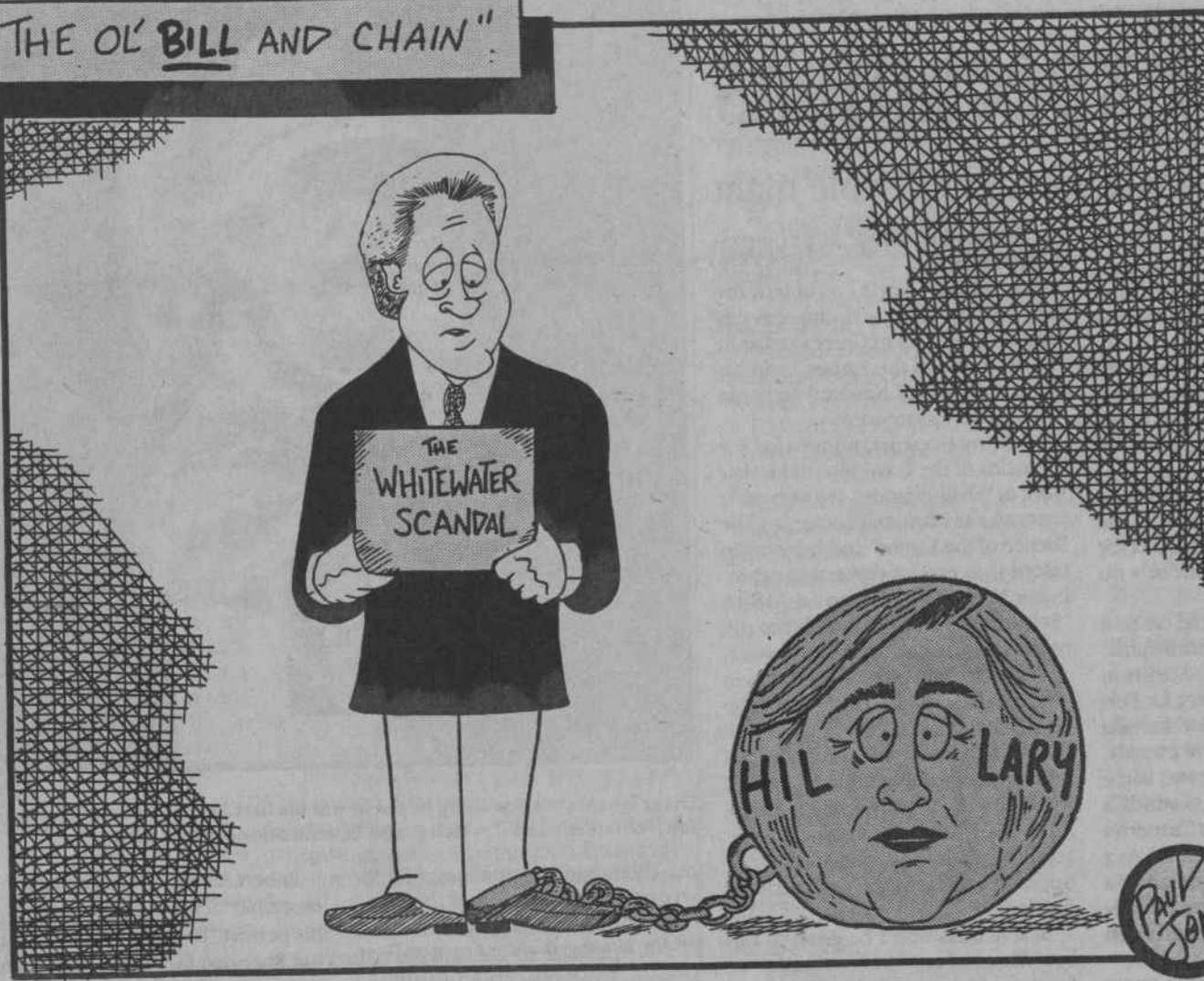
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## "THE OL' BILL AND CHAIN"



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GEE, IMAGINE HAVING TO DRAG THAT THING AROUND.

PAUL JOHNSON

## Crime

### S.C. politicians, media should resist creating unnecessary hysteria over crime issue

Americans have always been concerned about crime, both property and violent. Protection of themselves and their private property has been of utmost importance here, much more than in other Western societies, including the European democracies.

The Framers of the Constitution drew out specific provisions protecting citizens' rights to own firearms, presumably to protect themselves from Native Americans, their fellow Americans and, some may argue, the government. The United States, by far, has the most liberal gun laws in the West, with practically no regulations on ownership of weapons.

The United States is also one of only two Western industrialized countries with the death penalty. We share that honor with South Africa.

But with all of these rights allowing us to protect ourselves and punishments for those who do wrong, crime still has become worse and worse during the past 30 years.

Even though there has been a relatively steady rise in crime, especially violent, Americans' interest in the issue goes in cycles.

In 1968, in the midst of violent anti-war protests and other street violence, Richard Nixon beat the Democratic vice president partly on the law and order issue. And in 1988, George Bush pounded the issue of crime home against Democrat Michael Dukakis, who had the image of being weak on crime. But in years such as 1972, 1976 and 1980, crime wasn't as integral in deciding the electoral result.

The cycle seems to have returned again in 1994 as everybody is talking about crime and how it's destroying families, communities and, if we're not careful, our society.

The media joined the crime bandwagon early, running cover stories galore on how the country is on the verge of paralysis because of violent crime. The first five minutes of every local newscast seems to be about murders, rapes, burglary or how these events have affected a community or family.

Voters are demanding action from their government on stopping crime, and the S.C. gubernatorial candidates have answered their pleas with dozens of ideas on how to get tough on crime.

But many of the ideas cost a lot of money that the state doesn't have. They include building prisons, which has been proven to be ineffective in curbing the problem.

But everybody seems to be missing the point. Crime statistics have actually steadied the past few years, and some have even gone down. Of course, crime shouldn't be ignored, but it's irresponsible to espouse ideas the state can't afford without raising taxes or slashing other needed programs.

It's also irresponsible to create hysteria over the subject when it hasn't become worse.

Yes, crime should be addressed in proactive programs so it doesn't get worse. But the politics of fear being used by politicians, and then reinforced by the media, is unnecessary. Our potential officials should focus on hope, not fear.

## X-rated business rule waste of city's energy

Columbia has an ordinance that says sexually oriented businesses, such as adult bookstores and strip bars, must be in a commercial zone and at least 1,000 feet from churches, schools, parks, residential areas and other sexually oriented businesses.

Fortunately, a Circuit Court judge ruled Wednesday that Columbia unconstitutionally used this ordinance in 1992 when it shut down Chasers' Mags-N-Mixers, an adult bookstore on Two Notch Road.

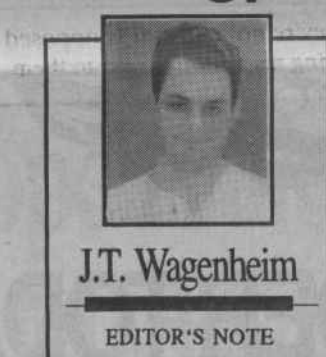
Apparently, Chasers' was within 1,000 feet of a neighborhood and church. The problem, the judge said, is that there is no place in Columbia that isn't within 1,000 feet of a church, school or other areas in the provisions of the ordinance. Chasers' was left with no alternative.

The ordinance is a sorry attempt by the city to close every sexually oriented business within its limits. Columbia has a pending case against Chippendolls on Rosewood that, if the city has its way, would shut down the establishment.

Columbia should focus its energy on getting rid of the crime and crack that pollute the downtown and Two Notch areas instead of shutting down honest, legal businesses.

When Chasers' presented extensive evidence to the Circuit Court that there was no place to move and therefore follow the ordinance, woful city officials found themselves at a loss. They couldn't find anywhere for the business to relocate to. The last thing Mayor Bob Coble wants is the responsibility of finding new locations for these types of businesses.

Some contend that prostitution and drugs come with the adult entertainment industry. These establishments are a place for people to go and privately buy adult literature or be entertained by strippers. It's just safe, honest fun. Two Notch would be just as trashy if every adult bookstore were shut down, or for



J.T. Wagenheim

EDITOR'S NOTE

that matter never even existed. Coble claims the Chasers' ruling is a major blow to the city's fight against undesirable businesses. He's afraid sexually oriented businesses will multiply like gremlins in water if there are no zoning ordinances to govern them.

Municipalities shouldn't be allowed to create ordinances to hinder the growth of any legal, honest business. Let's say Chippendolls did meet the provisions of the ordinance, and a church suddenly opened 700 feet from the bar on Rosewood.

Even though Chippendolls is the older of the two establishments, it would have to close because of the ordinance. The law should read the contrary: Churches, schools and residential neighborhoods shouldn't be allowed to develop within 1,000 feet from sexually oriented businesses.

What's fair is fair. All legal businesses should enjoy the same protection under the law and not be punished for their mission or purpose. If people don't like these establishments, fine, don't patronize them. No one is forcing you to.

Let's focus our energy on passing laws that mandate tough penalties for truly criminal offenses. Make the drug dealers unemployed. Shut down the crack houses. Don't censor honest businesses.

J.T. Wagenheim's column appears every other Monday.

## Quote, Unquote

"I consider it certainly an honor and a privilege. It will give me an opportunity to interact with the leaders of the future and in some way contribute to their long-term leadership development process."

**Charles Austin**  
Columbia police chief  
on being an honorary ODK inductee

## Questions over Whitewater scandal continue to appear

The hottest topic on the political scene this month has been the ongoing government investigation into the Clintons' dealings with the Whitewater Development Co. Since many Americans appear to be confused by the Whitewater scandal, I have decided to use this space to answer all of the inquiries an average USC student would have on the subject.

Q: What the hell is Whitewater?

A: It's an Arkansas real estate venture in which the Clintons were partners with James and Sarah McDougal during the 1980s. There is speculation that McDougal diverted money from his savings and loan into the Whitewater account and into Bill Clinton's gubernatorial campaign. When the institution went under, it cost taxpayers in excess of \$50 million.

Q: But didn't the Clintons lose money on Whitewater?

A: That depends on who you believe. If you believe Bill Clinton, by the time he sold his interest in Whitewater, he had lost \$69,000. If you believe the Clintons' tax returns, he didn't lose anything. Since McDougal kicked in most of Clinton's investment for him, I'll believe the tax returns. You can't lose money you didn't invest.

Q: What's all this about document shredding?

A: There were two sets of shreddings. The first took place during the campaign after the press mentioned the Whitewater deal. Mrs. Clinton had two couriers from her office (the infamous Rose law firm) shred a box of documents. According to



Patrick McNeill

COLUMNIST

the couriers, all of the documents belonged to deceased White House lawyer Vincent Foster. We tried to contact Foster for this story, but the Ouija board was down.

The second shredding took place last month. According to the Washington Times, the Rose law firm decided to help the investigation by shredding all of its remaining Whitewater-related documents. The firm decided Vince Foster would have no use for them because... he's still dead.

Q: Is that why this is being referred to as "Hillary's scandal?"

A: Yes. But there's more. While serving as First Lady, Hillary was involved in an investment group called Value Partners. It turns out that while Mrs. Clinton was on the hustings, telling America how terrible the pharmaceutical industry is, Value Partners was betting the price of pharmaceutical stock would plummet. When this happened, Hillary (and Bill) made a bundle.

For those of you who aren't into high finance, this is known as "insider trading." Just ask Ivan Boesky...

Q: Why is the investigation of Vince Foster's

death being reopened?

A: Because of the highly suspicious conduct of White House aides following Foster's demise. Former White House counsel Bernard Nussbaum claims to have found Foster's torn suicide note inside his briefcase. The FBI agents who searched Foster's office claim the briefcase was empty. Hmm. Where did this note come from? And don't most people tend to SIGN their suicide notes?

Meanwhile, the U.S. Park Police have come under fire for botching the investigation into Foster's death. But they have let it be known that they did perform an autopsy and tests on the corpse. The Justice Department, which is holding all the copies on the police report, has no comment.

Q: Will there be congressional hearings?

A: Don't know yet. The Democrats don't seem terribly anxious to have them. (Surprise!) The Republicans want to start now. (Surprise!) Last week, the Senate voted unanimously to hold hearings, but special prosecutor Robert Fiske has let it be known that he doesn't want the hearings to interfere with his criminal investigation.

But if this probe continues to drag on like the Iran-Contra effort did, the pressure will build for Congress to take action. If the hearings continue through 1995, the Senate may have the aid of a true cover-up expert: Oliver North.

Patrick McNeill's column appears every Monday.

## Catering to 'sexually harassed' getting out of hand

A man makes romantic gestures to a woman. She either reciprocates or rebuffs. It really was pretty simple, until the Supreme Court changed the rules.

This feeling-out dialogue between men and women used to be called flirting. Today, this can be called sexual harassment, and it represents, on one spectrum, a new McCarthyism where angry women can use innuendo to destroy careers and reputations. On the other, it entails another exception to First Amendment guarantees to free speech.

One problem with this crime is that with men being left to do the majority of the courting in this society, the crime of sexual harassment is inherently biased against men. How is he supposed to know how a particular woman will handle romantic attention? Second, it attempts a social engineering scheme where 40,000 years of nature is ordered to yield to nouveau feminist ideology.

People are usually socially involved with their co-workers. These are the people with whom we spend the largest blocks of our time. Social and even romantic relationships are inevitable. While out-and-out harassment is wrong, romantic overtures to co-workers are natural.

This new dictate — that men should treat women the same as they do men — is as hopeless as it's ridiculous. Men will always wink and stare, and as



Jeff Turbitt

COLUMNIST

long as the situation doesn't turn violent, women will have to deal with it. Laws can't attempt to cover people's sensitivity to how they're looked at.

Haven't the Anita Hills of the world ever been to a tavern or had a date? Haven't they ever flirted or learned to handle the attention of someone they weren't interested in? Can't they just tell the harasser to beat it, or is it just more powerful to the women-as-victims feminist agenda to make it a political issue?

But what sexual harassment isn't exactly clear.

The Navy, in response to its Tailhook problems, has classified the giving of personal letters or poems, or asking questions about the personal life of a co-worker, or displaying sexually suggestive posters or calendars, and making sexually explicit remarks as sexual harassment.

Yet the Supreme Court didn't even write a definition of sexual harassment when, in its last term,

it took and favored with the case of Minneapolis woman Teresa Harris, who claimed she was sexually harassed by her employer.

The Court, in an opinion written by Sandra Day O'Connor with a concurrence from Ruth Bader Ginsberg, agreed with Harris' case and ordered compensation. They made no clear mention of what sexual harassment is, but they said when a workplace is permeated with enough insult or ridicule to alter the conditions of employment, it violates Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

In effect, the Court struck a blow to the First Amendment by discouraging romantic and/or sexual speech. And men must now be petrified as to what they say to women for fear the women are too thin-skinned to handle a romantic advance. While rhetoric flies about the power of women, it's sad the Court has chosen to buttress the notion that women need special protection.

Personal ads in newspapers and the shameful 900 numbers on television will probably be the only real beneficiaries of the Court's ruling.

## Voices

### Are politicians creating an unnecessary hysteria over crime?



"No. Crime has gotten really out of hand, and something needs to be done about it."

**Laurel Coker**  
French/theater sophomore



"There needs to be awareness that crime is out there."

**Justin Jones**  
French education sophomore



"No. Crime is a problem that I believe needs to be taken care of."

**Synece Means**  
English senior



"Crime is getting hectic. They should try to put an end to it."

**Victor Jones**  
Biology freshman



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