

Viewpoints



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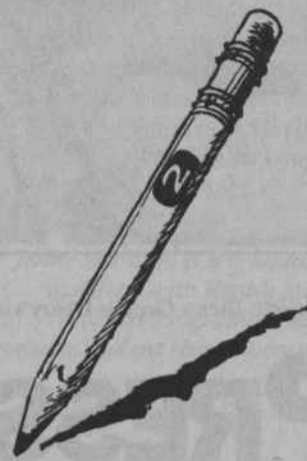
Wendy Hudson, Carson Henderson, Gordon Mantler,
Nancy Salomonsky, Tony Santori



LIMOUSINE



WORD PROCESSOR



F-18



ETHICIST



Quote, Unquote

"I'm very honored. There were so many other people that applied, and so many of the finalists are friends and peers of mine. I feel that they deserved the award as much as I did."

Krista Nichols

On being named USC Outstanding Woman of the Year

Location of Confederate flag shouldn't affect pride

"If Johnny Reb wants to hang a Confederate flag on the antenna of his pickup truck while he spits tobacco out the window, that's his privilege. That's his truck. But that house on Main Street belongs as much to me as it does to anybody else in the state."

-Statement by the Rev. John Hurst Adams of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Columbia.



Patrick Sharbaugh

COLUMNIST

Someone, clearly a very wise someone, once noted that you cannot reason a person out of an opinion he didn't arrive at through the use of reason to begin with. Unfortunately, the latter characterization accurately describes about 95 percent of the most vocal personalities on either side of the flag debate in South Carolina these days.

As a result, the tactics of argumentation seem to have shifted. The logic inherent in either side's case is, evidently, completely transparent to the other, and each side therefore seems to have forsaken logical arguments altogether.

Currently, the reigning strategy appears to be something along the lines of an effort to insult the opposing party into capitulation, for representatives of both camps have hurled themselves into the foray of calumny, invective and sweeping, derisive generalization with verve.

Although I personally have never managed to persuade someone over to my cause through such means, perhaps others see potential in the method. The ubiquity of the strategy would seem to imply as much.

The Confederate flag atop the State House has a deep symbolism to all those who feel strongly about it, regardless of the source of their feelings. Clearly, there is widespread disagreement on the nature of that symbolism, and for that reason, much as it saddens me as a native Southerner, I feel the flag should go to a new home in a memorial to commendate with the strength of feeling which has defended it thus far.

I make that statement not as a person who has

decided finally to acquiesce to the opposition, but as one who has decided there can be two equally valid but different ways of understanding the symbolism inherent in the Confederate flag, as one who does not need the capitulation of an opposing interpretation to feel secure in my own.

The State House is not intended to represent merely a simple majority of South Carolinians, but, ostensibly, every last one of us. That truth is incontrovertible. More importantly, though, the flag should mean the same thing to those of us who revere it whether it is atop the State House or not.

Our reverence for it should not wax and wane with the flag's physical location, not if it is in fact true reverence for the flag itself, and not merely an affinity for the statement that keeping it above the State House is making to certain groups.

If the latter is true, the flag is indeed up there for the wrong reasons. But if the reverence we claim to have is truly for the symbol itself and the heritage it represents, moving it to another location will have no effect on the value we place in it, for the value is in the symbol, not in something as intangible and trifling — compared to that of the symbol itself — as its physical location.

There are, of course, those who dismiss out of hand the possibility that the flag could have any positive connotation for those of us who make that claim. Southerners, though, are a people for whom pride is vital and as natural an essence as the air we breathe. We are fiercely proud to be from the South — proud of our reputation for friendliness and hos-

pitality, of our obsession with propriety and the simple, slow love of life that are our hallmarks throughout the world, the things that draw other people here in droves.

We are proud of our ancestry, whether it be slave or plantation owner; we are proud of the fierce sense of integrity — integrity meant here in the strictest sense of the word — that led us to secede from a Union we felt was being overly restrictive of state's rights.

We are proud of pecan pie and salt marshes, grits and Spanish moss. These are the things we mean by heritage. The Confederate flag is the one tangible symbol left to us that incorporates all these things into its aegis.

But is a culture disallowed any pride at all in the instance of a single, or even several, blemishes in its history? Surely cultures have made the mistakes in the past which they acknowledge as such; yet manage to retain a pride in that past, pride not in the mistakes but in the accomplishments.

The bumper sticker that reads "I Love N.Y." is a symbol of the pride many Americans have in living or even having visited that great city. But although NYC is the setting for terrible crimes every day, astonishing pollution, massive ethnic and racial strife, corruption, graft and unconscionable greed by thousands, I do not object to that bumper sticker, because it is a symbol not of the unfortunate things that happen there, but of the wonderful.

For me to claim that people who display it are espousing crime, pollution, racism and corruption would be utterly ridiculous. It would be equally ridiculous if I demanded that the bumper sticker be banned because it meant those things to me.

I can appreciate that there are conflicting interpretations of what the flag symbolizes, and while that may be unfortunate, it cannot be gotten around. The next we can do is what reasonable adults do; instead of hurling insults, we should work around it.

Letters

Viewpoints section biased against feminists

To the editor:

For the past few weeks, the Viewpoints page has been host to countless misguided attempts to define feminism. Are we really trying to develop a sisterhood of victims? Do we all want to mutilate men for the cause of our own advancement? No and no, and it's time for someone who actually identifies as a feminist to address this misinformation.

With economic and discrimination problems declining, feminism has run out of unifying political issues.

The fact that we're having a running commentary on whether women must tolerate sexual harassment suggests that discrimination problems

are, in fact, not declining. The fact that at least three Columbia women have died in the last month as a result of "domestic violence" suggests that discrimination problems are, in fact, not declining.

The fact that, on the average, a woman with a baccalaureate degree will earn the same wage as a male high school dropout suggests that economic problems are, in fact, not declining. And the single unifying issue of feminism continues to be the belief that all women are entitled to full political, social and economic rights and privileges.

(Feminism) teaches us to be more aggressive, demanding and self-centered....

Powerful, assertive women are often characterized as "aggressive" and "demanding" in order to make them

seem less "feminine," less women-like. "Feminine" is a loaded term that has traditionally been used to prevent women from being open about any feminist ideas they may have harbored, because for a woman's femininity to be questioned calls her sexual identity into question.

This is known as "dyke-baiting," and we find an example of it here:

"How many young women are going to run to the picket lines over lesbian rights?"

Martin Luther King Jr. wrote that oppression anywhere is a threat to freedom everywhere. Feminist women and men recognize the truth in that statement, and most would be happy to march with lesbians and anyone else whose freedoms are threatened by bigotry and intolerance.

I don't know whether Paul Jon, Pat

McNeill and Jeff Turbitt have studied feminist theory. I have, and what I have learned is that feminism is about self-definition and self-determination. The reasons I call myself feminist aren't the same reasons my roommate is feminist.

Aside from a basic belief in women's social, political and economic equality, the rest is up to you. There are pro-life feminists, pro-sex feminists, Christian feminists, lesbian feminists. There is room under the feminist umbrella for anyone who recognizes that sexism hurts everyone.

Perhaps "less than one-third of young females consider themselves 'feminists'" because of misinformed diatribes like those which have appeared in The Gamecock these past weeks.

Wendy Powell

Religious studies junior

Voices

Should South Carolina courts continue to allow an insanity plea?



"Yes. There are people who are mentally unable to decide between right and wrong. They should be treated, not punished."

Philip Crotwell
Math graduate student



"People should be tried for what they do. Anyone could say they are, and there'd be no proof."

Chris Lykes
Engineering freshman



"People should be able to get off for mental anguish if they've been beaten up or abused."

Natasha Witherspoon
Public relations sophomore



"People should be tried for what they do. If everyone could get off for insanity, it would be absurd. People need to get help."

Terri Evans
Nursing freshman

Insanity

Supreme Court's ruling should prevent accused from abusing system

Monday, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to review a Montana man's insanity defense, suggesting that individual states may abolish the defense if they desire.

Without dissent, the Court refused the claim that the Constitution forbids convicting an insane person of a criminal act.

The question as to whether people deemed insane can be convicted of a crime has been hotly debated over the past several years, particularly since Congress tightened the restrictions in 1984 after John Hinckley was acquitted by reason of insanity of attempting to assassinate President Ronald Reagan.

Hinkley's "insanity," wanting to impress Jodie Foster, deemed him insufficiently capable to control his own actions.

The question remains, at one point does a person go from maliciousness to true insanity? It would seem that line can never be adequately determined.

Few would argue that most murders are performed in a completely stable frame of mind. An angry person who kills another could hardly be considered to be "sane" at that particular moment.

That being the case, anyone who kills another person should be eligible for a "temporary insanity" plea, and all too often, lawyers try to use it to get their clients out of trouble.

The lack of a defined "normal" prevents the insanity plea from being a dependable legal clause, and the law must be, above all, dependable.

Without any qualifier, pleas of "The Twinkies made me do it" and lust for Jodie Foster become legitimate considerations which can, in some cases, clear people of violent crimes.

The present insanity system is like a bad joke which is being intolerably abused.

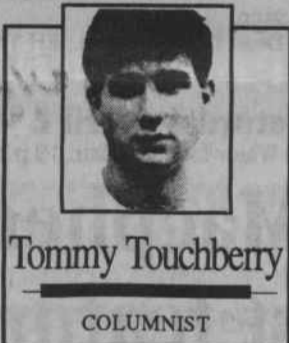
In the Montana case, a man assaulted a forest ranger with a tree-planting tool. His "insanity" was breaking into other people's houses, eating their food and watching their televisions, and violently asserting that the houses were his own when he was discovered.

Obviously, the man needs some degree of psychiatric help, but he should not be released into society without repercussion. If a violent crime, in particular, is committed, a conviction is an absolute necessity.

The Supreme Court's reiteration of the conviction is clear. Until there are ways to strictly define insanity, it simply should not be used to liberate a violent offender.

Closing X-rated business constitutionally valid

On March 16, Circuit Judge Walter Bristow ruled that Columbia unconstitutionally applied its law regulating sexually oriented businesses in the case of Chasers' Mags-n-Mixers. The city cited Chasers' location within 1,000 feet of both a residential boundary and a church as reason for the business being asked to move to another location.



Tommy Touchberry

COLUMNIST

blame them?

Local and state government has always had the right to shut down or remove a business which causes a "health hazard" or a "disturbance" to the community around it. Two immediate examples come to mind.

One is the restaurant that fails state health standards. The state shuts down a business to protect the "health and well-being" of the consumer. Two is the bar or nightclub that directly causes "rowdiness" or "property destruction" to the surrounding neighborhood. The city or county forces the business to move, through zoning laws, to protect the residents of the neighborhood.

These, I believe, are legitimate precedents which legally give local government the right to "zone" or "zone out" sexually explicit businesses. I don't believe it to be constitutional or right for the federal government to make these businesses illegal, but I think that local governments have to be granted the right to control their own zoning laws.

If a constitutional basis can't be found to support local government zoning laws, then the Legislature ought to put the issue on a referendum and let the citizens of South Carolina democratically decide what zoning power they want their local governments to have.



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

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