

Viewpoints

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

Research

Animal-rights advocates live in world that they owe to animal testing

If you're reading this, you're probably not dead. That being the case, you would have a difficult time arguing against the ideology behind animal testing.

Anti-testing protesters claim that animal testing is cruel and heartless because it usually kills the animal. Sometimes, the animals are in a degree of pain before they die, but animal testing has, like it or not, become the most effective and practical way to make sure that a new product or drug will not have an adverse effect on humans.

The fact of the matter is that animals are killed for human use everyday. If you eat meat, an animal was killed for your food. If you have ever driven on a road or lived in a house, chances are that an animal was uprooted from its home to make a place for you. If you've ever been vaccinated, you probably owe your lack of disease to an animal that took the vaccination first.

The argument against cruelty to animals simply does not wash. If it is cruel to test products on animals, then it should be wrong to use them as beasts of burden. It should be wrong to eat them. It should be wrong to keep them as pets. After all, what self-respecting animal deserves to be kept inside, away from nature?

Throughout civilization, mankind has used animals to its advantage. Is this a bad thing? By driving animals out of their natural habitats and, yes, sometimes killing them, mankind has been able to make safe homes, food and transportation for itself. Few have been so radical as to call that cruelty, especially while they cruise down the interstate.

The issue of lab testing is not that far removed. True, there are computer simulations that can reduce the number of animals used, but there will always be the necessity to make sure that some random factor does not result in the senseless, accidental killing of many people.

Those who complain about cosmetic testing would probably complain far louder if their eye shadow caused their blindness.

Animal-rights activists seem to imply that the scientists doing the testing are little more than mindless sadists who take pleasure in inflicting pain upon dogs and cats. Hardly. It is scientific research and should be treated as such.

It is impossible to make a compelling argument to protect the lives of cats and dogs being used for a legitimate purpose, when one would happily take advantage of the benefits such research brings.

Columnist not liberal, merely Yankee moderate

When I first started writing columns for The Gamecock three years ago, I was considered the ultimate moderate, especially compared to some of my colleagues. Today, I'm labeled, mistakenly, as a liberal Yankee.

Well, let me clear that label up. Most South Carolinians don't seem to understand that Maryland is considered part of the South by many of its residents, most of the United States, plus most atlases and statistical surveys. The only reason it stayed in the union 133 years ago was because it was coerced to stay through martial law.

And the idea that I am a mainstream George McGovern-type liberal is laughable. Compared to a Nazi I might be, but compared to most normal citizens in the American democracy, I am still the moderate I always have been.

Now of course, criticizing both the national and S.C. Republican parties is my specialty: it's really hard not to be critical of them. But in past columns, I have also spouted off against extremism of any sort, against creating black-majority districts, for more capital punishment and for basing foreign policy decisions on economics.

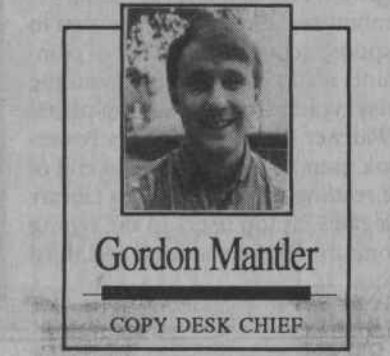
These are definitely not "liberal" views.

My other specialty is examining the Clinton presidency with a decent level of intelligence. Sometimes, this material is praiseworthy, and sometimes quite critical. But I definitely give him a fair chance. Yes, I tend to support the man and his policies, but I'm the first to point out his mistakes and character flaws.

However, I don't consider Clinton the anti-Christ as so many misguided people seem to do. It amazes me that Republicans of all types hate the Clintons with such a passion.

During the '80s, Democrats were critical of Reagan and Bush, but they didn't pledge their hate towards Republicans themselves. Democrats even tried to cooperate to a certain extent on accomplishing policies that would benefit the citizens of the United States; that's what office-holders are supposed to do.

But Republicans are too busy conducting a full-scale character-assassination campaign against the president of the United States to actually create any worthwhile policy ideas



Gordon Mantler
COPY DESK CHIEF

or compromise with the administration. They don't seem to care who they hurt as long as they win the White House in 1996.

Personally, I find this extremely counterproductive attitude disgusting, intolerant and anti-Christian. This state's Christian Coalition, which runs the GOP, spouts hatred and intolerance towards anybody not like them: homosexuals, Catholics, Jews, blacks, Asians, open-minded Protestants. The list goes on and on.

To the contrary of what GOP propaganda claims, the Clinton presidency does represent the country's best chance to achieve true progress: health care reform, welfare reform, stricter gun control, better schools and an overall more tolerant, compassionate government and society.

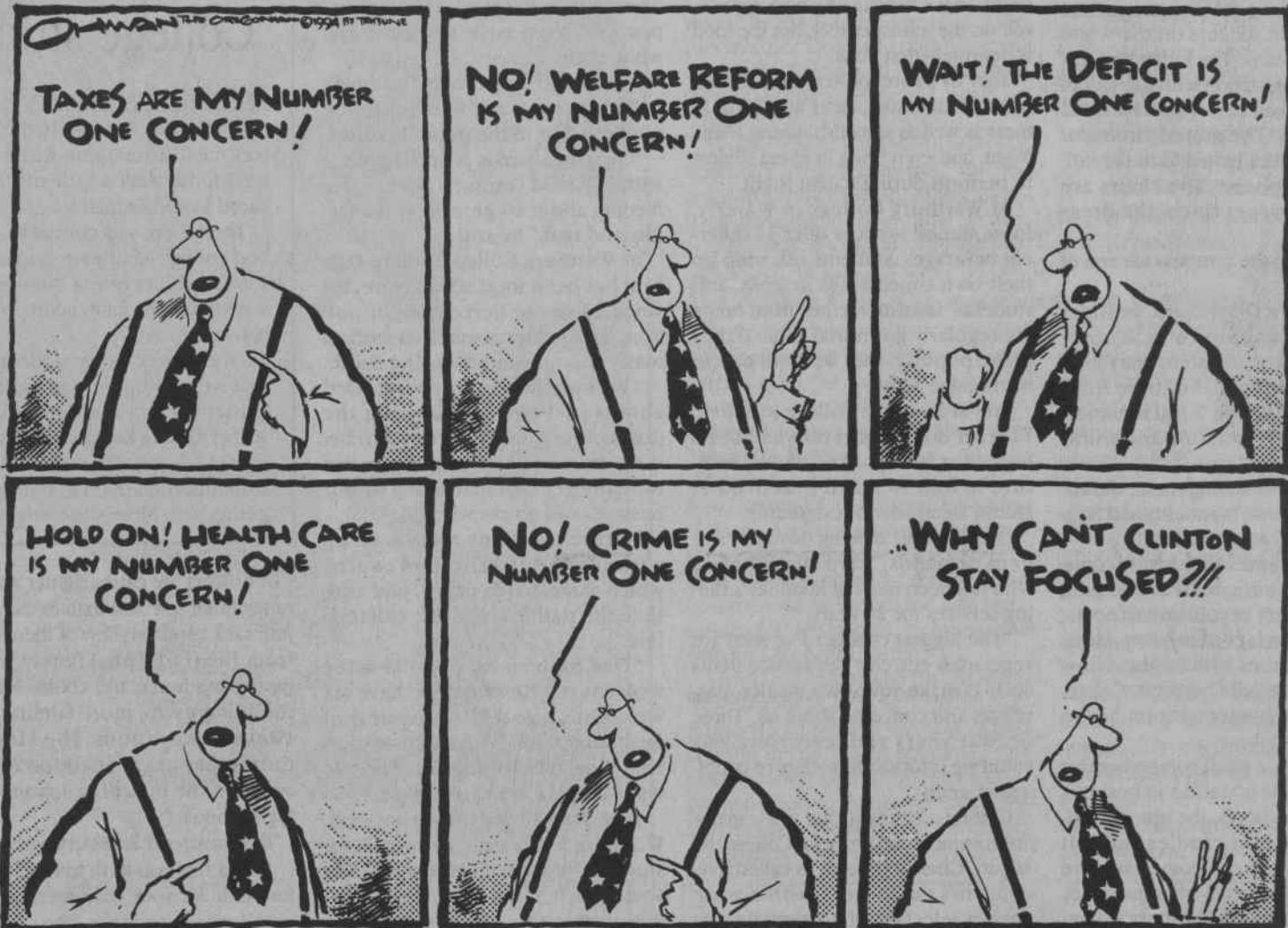
I don't consider shrinking the middle class, nearly bankrupting the nation through massive deficit spending and promoting severe intolerance and borderline hatred "reform" as we saw under the Reagan and Bush administrations.

Well, I guess that will be my last Republican crack in The Gamecock. On May 14, I will graduate, and my conservative critics will no longer have the pleasure of reading my columns.

I appreciate all the letters or verbal comments I have gotten in the past. That means my ideological opponents respect me enough to read my material. That must mean I made some good points.

By the way, as the first member of the Hall of Shame, Wesley, when am I getting my plaque? Thanks for reading and good luck.

The Gamecock wishes Gordon Mantler good luck at The Greenville News and thanks him for four years of diligent service and liberal dogma. Break a leg, Gordo!



Quote, Unquote

"I think the change in the publication schedule is a good idea. We can dedicate our resources to producing three comprehensive and provocative issues instead of struggling to pull together eight weekly sections."

Wendy Hudson

Newly elected summer editor in chief of The Gamecock

Pornography, eroticism not synonymous in society

Pornography and eroticism are not the same thing. Erotic, rooted in "eros," the personification or passion of love, involves positive choice, free-will, yearning for a particular partner. Pornography on the other hand, begins with "porno," meaning prostitution or "female captives," therefore signifying domination and violence.

Yet in our books, movies, television shows and minds, the two are often endlessly intertwined. So often, stories of "love" are only examples of dehumanization and objectification of another human being.

Erotica involved knowing your deepest self. Your body opens itself to the deepest sensual responses. Erotica is love expressed physically but also spiritually — the ultimate experience of love beyond just the physical. Sex is viewed as a gift to be shared, the desire for it rooted in a longing to unite completely with another person. Once having experienced the fullness of this depth of feeling and having recognized its power, in honor and self-respect, we can require no less of ourselves again. Not a tall order, just reality. We then see pornography in all its hate and dehumanization.

Examples of erotica are difficult to find in our culture, for the media seldom offers straightforward eroticism without pornography sprinkled in to further confuse the two. Similarly, in Louis Malle's movie "Damage," Jeremy Irons plays a respected man who enters into a torrid affair with his son's girlfriend Anna. They make love in almost every conceivable place, including the kitchen sink. The



Vicky Holmes

COLUMNIST

movie is extremely erotic in its depiction of the tormented lovers. And notably, the lovers treat each other as equals. There is no sexual domination introduced as normal or desirable.

While erotica encourages heightening of the senses to better enjoy pleasure, pornography requires repression of feelings to further the myth that women enjoy domination and degradation. Pornography demands a conqueror and a victim because it requires power of one person over another.

Most often, though, this new "accepted" pornography involves the victimization of women. And it comes in unexpected places like our literature books.

In Robbe-Grillet's "The Secret Room," we read of the brutal murder of a woman the author describes as fragile and vulnerable. In his homage to Symbolist painter Gustave Moreau, Robbe-Grillet artistically savors human sacrifice. Detailed, erotic passages surround the slaying of a woman, obviously suggesting that there are erotic pleasures to be found in female victimization. Through beautiful descriptive passages, our erotic senses are height-

ened. We read in appreciation of the author's ability to bring us into the secret room. While in this heightened state, he brings the reader to a climax with the awareness that we have just enjoyed the slow, methodical death of a beautiful human being. If we are not sickened by this, if you do not feel betrayed by the author, then we have become desensitized to human victimization.

Exploitative images of women such as those promoted by Playboy's Hugh Hefner may seem innocent, but they contribute to today's atrocities in pornography. The danger in Playboy is that it is an accepted version.

Have you ever noticed the physical positions of the nude models? I am reminded of a lone dog cornered by a pack. When it has given up, the captured prey usually falls to the ground and exposes its most vulnerable part, the neck, in an act of submission. Notice the necks of these models. Notice their vulnerable positions. Let us make that distinction. Don't let it pass you by that you are being sent the message that sexual domination is normal.

If we choose to think of pornography as eroticism, we rob ourselves of ever having a society in which men and women can relate to each other as human beings with dignity and worth. And even worse, we will never know what it means to have truly loved someone.

Vicky Holmes is an English senior.

Letters

Animal activists make false claims

To the editor:

In a letter to The Gamecock, Ms. Kristin von Karowsky made statements about the use of animals which are misleading and totally inaccurate.

First, contrary to the misinformation of Ms. von Karowsky, research conducted by Dr. Wolf, an internationally recognized scientist, was not cancelled, but repeatedly funded by the Navy. The work was thoroughly reviewed and found meritorious by a panel of eminent scientists in the field. The project has now been completed.

Second, while some schools have discontinued the use of "dog labs," the use of animals in teaching is an important part of medical education. A majority of medical schools do use animals in teaching programs. The use of all animals in the USC teaching program has been carefully evaluated by the faculty. Computer simulations and models are used; however, performing certain key exercises teaches concepts that are vital to clinical situations facing physicians. Physicians' patients are not computers, but complex, living beings. The animals used

are fully anesthetized during all procedures and experience no pain or distress. They are not allowed to recover from anesthesia.

Ms. von Karowsky uses the term "pound seizure." The term is totally false. No animals are, or can be, "seized" from the Columbia animal shelter.

Following strict guidelines for their release, the pound makes some animals available for sale to the university. The only animals made available are those unwanted, adopted animals that are to be killed at the pound. In fiscal year 1993, the Columbia animal shelter was forced to kill nearly 7,758 dogs and cats, while 274 were sold to USC.

At USC, the use of animals for teaching and research is carefully regulated and evaluated by federal laws and regulations and internal USC oversight. Dogs and cats account for less than 1 percent of the animals used, while mice and rats make up 97 percent. The Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee, which includes community and student representation, as well as scientists and non-scientists, reviews all animal use to confirm that the well-being and humane treatment of the animals is assured. Every student at USC, including Ms.

von Karowsky, has benefitted from the medical advances made through research and teaching using animals. For the foreseeable future, continued medical progress such as vaccine for AIDS, new treatments for cancer and gene therapy for birth defects will depend on the use of animals at some point in their development.

Robert J. Beattie
Director
Animal Resource Facilities

Gays know lifestyle wrong, abnormal

To the editor:

The Gamecock's editorial of April 15 asserted that anyone who disagreed with the activities surrounding BGLAD week simply did not understand the reasons for the "festivities." This was typical of the liberal habit of attempting to discredit or ridicule those who do not agree with certain ideas or behavior. It also falls in line with attempts by homosexuals to portray their lifestyle as normal, while portraying those who disapprove of their behavior as dysfunctional homophobes. Not everyone who dis-

agrees with the homosexual lifestyle is a homophobe (i.e. hates gays).

I also believe that the real reason events like BGLAD week are held by the homosexual community is to seek acceptance from others for what is normally considered unacceptable behavior. I believe that in their heart of hearts, most homosexuals know that their lifestyle is wrong. This conclusion can be reached free of religious influences. A simple study of anatomy proves homosexuality abnormal, while a detailed study of history shows that no civilization has ever succeeded that sanctioned homosexuality.

Finally, I believe the media is continuing to promote the inaccurate assertion by the homosexual community that they make up 10 percent of the general population. This is an outdated claim that has been dispelled by scientific polling within the gay community itself. Although certain fields are over-represented by gays, like the arts and higher education, studies have shown homosexuals to make up only around 2 percent of the population.

Terry G. Cline Jr.
1989 USC alumnus

Voices

Should laboratories utilize animal testing?



"I don't think it's right. It is cruel to do tests on animals and cut off their appendages."

Lori Toland
Finance sophomore



"I don't believe in unnecessary testing, as in makeup, where it doesn't matter. Scientific testing for AIDS or sibling death research could prolong our lives and must be tested."

Mary Hawkins
Economics sophomore



"I'm against it. I don't feel that it is right. I kind of agree when it is to help disease, but against it for cosmetics."

Kyle Schorman
Business freshman



"It depends. Certain products should be tested, such as medical products. Not for cosmetics or anything like that."

Aaron Lewis
Physics graduate student

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