

The Gamecock

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Case Closed?

Open container law intended to clean up streets likely to prove ineffective

With an open container law under consideration, the City Council is attempting to address the age-old habit of drinking and all the problems that go along with it. By forbidding people to drink on the streets of Columbia, city officials hope to reduce litter and public drunkenness, while bolstering the city's image.

Proponents of the law cite valid objectives. They claim the law will try to protect those who drink excessively and then roam the streets of the city. It also aims to guard the safety of the citizens who meet up with alcohol-influenced residents.

The goals of the law can best be described as worthwhile. Few people will say they oppose the elimination of pollution or the protection of other human beings. And most will say, and rightly so, that Columbia's image can always use a little uplifting.

While this end is highly favorable, the means may not be as effective as it could be. Unfortunate as it may be, people always seem to find a way to get around the law, especially when the detour route is pretty easy to locate. Drinking indoors is not a terribly unusual concept. Who's to say someone won't still get drunk at an enclosed party and then jump in car and endanger the lives of themselves and others? Just because a problem isn't seen doesn't mean it goes away.

The fact that people will try to work their way around the law to prevent the beneficial effect does not mean such an attempt at solving the problem shouldn't be made. Effectiveness is a factor City Council should take into consideration when deliberating over the concept.

If such a law is to go into effect, council members should keep something else in mind: The penalties for failure to comply with the ordinance should be annoying but not too taxing. Anything more than a fine would be going overboard in this case, as the law's intentions should be to curb minor infractions, not to provide material for "COPS."

Family discord leaves emotional trauma



MELISSA TENNEN
Columnist

ther. But my mind blocked those memories. It is just as well. I know those events happened because of my nightmares and the separation.

During that time, my father behaved insanely. Once, he punched Lindsey in the head when she had an ear affection. She cried for him to stop, but he ignored her. Later, he laughed about it while Lindsey roared in pain.

I can speak of other incidents, incidents where we didn't call the police, but should have. I regret that. And now, in retrospect, I know my father is a monster who took my childhood.

When I tell people my father is insane, they think I'm speaking figuratively. But my father won't return my calls, changed his number and took my college fund because I didn't tell him my mother remarried.

It is painful to say this, but I hate my father for tearing the humanity out of my mother. For so long, she isolated herself emotionally and nursed her career instead.

But now, my mother, Lindsey, my little brother Matthew and I are piecing life back together. It is truly an art which uses invisible tools of emotions and love to hook family bonds.

And I do. I love them dearly, and I have sworn never to let anyone trample across my soul like my father did.

As a child born out of madness and unlove, I can say survival is the key. Nurture yourself and run from evil. If you are married to a demon, run. And run hard. Just don't look back. It's a beautiful life. So, in theory, spit on the monster's grave. And maybe, in the long run, God hasn't really forgotten you.

Melissa Tennen is journalism senior.



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"If they would enforce the laws they already have, they wouldn't need new ones."

Rockafellas' co-owner, on the proposed open container law

Long distance romance works with right attitude

Have you ever been on the Anaconda, the wild, upside-down, twisting roller coaster at King's Dominion? If you have, then you know what long-distance relationships are all about.

I survived that ride this summer, with my boyfriend at my side and with a spinning head and a stomach that continued to flip-flop hours after the ride ended.

Looking back, I remembered that day with a smile, not because I'm a masochist, and I enjoy the feeling of high winds and whiplash, but because that weekend we celebrated our 14-month anniversary.

To the surprise of my friends and family, this relationship has survived the 535 miles between here and Annapolis, Maryland, where he is beginning his second year at the Naval Academy.

Last fall, I wrote a column about my fears of long-distance dating. This year, I know I have nothing to be afraid of.

Of the 15 months he and I have dated, we've only seen each other for about three, but we've learned many invaluable lessons.

The most important one is this: take nothing for granted.

When he comes home, for four weeks total in a calendar year if he's lucky, we make the most of the time we have together. I don't complain when he spends time with friends or family, because I know they don't get to see him as often as they'd



DORA DeVERA
Columnist

like to, either. Even though we don't bicker, or fight, our relationship is not perfect. If we can't resolve anything, we end it with a pillow fight until we can talk about what's on our minds.

We don't underestimate the need for communication.

Last year, he and I exchanged about 300 pieces of mail. Even if our letters aren't always tear-jerking and soulful, they say more than the average "no-speak" of an empty mailbox. For the bargain price of \$0.29 per envelope, it's easy to find things to mail, including discarded fortunes from Manchu Wok and free samples of No-Doze.

We also learned how easy it is to run up a \$500 phone bill, and how hard it is to pay off that debt. (When in desperation, it's not too difficult to swallow your pride and admit to the AT&T operator that your monthly phone bill payment will be sent two months late). After two years of outstanding bills, I discovered that the plans offered by these phone companies on the Russell House patio are only the basic plans. If you ask the right questions, you can save money. If I had signed up for the call-

ing plan I use now, I would have saved over \$700 since my freshman year.

Even with all the letters and phone calls, a friend of mine was generous enough to introduce me to the wonders of e-mail, a quick, inexpensive way to talk everyday, all day if I really wanted to.

The people of computer services will probably want my head on a platter for saying so, but honestly, e-mail messages are what keep me in touch with him in a way that costs me nothing but my time and my roommate's patience when I tie up the phone lines with her modem all night.

Hallmark cards and roses are still very sweet, but they just don't deliver as quickly, and as cheaply, as the bitnet. The old-fashioned way is fine, but if you want to chat immediately, why not log on?

You'd be amazed at how easy it is to sit down between classes for a quick "hello."

It's also a nice way to begin your day, when you log on at 9 a. m. to find that someone was thinking of you at 3 a. m. And it gives you reason to reprimand your loved one for going to bed at that time of morning.

Long-distance dating is not as bad as it used to be. In the days before e-mail, couples suffered from empty-mailbox asphyxiation and telephone tag. Nowadays, the emotional roller-coaster is not nearly as rough when you have someone there holding your hand, even if it's via the keyboard.

LETTERS

Columnist displays wit not insensitivity, arrogance

Regarding Mr. Phil Rothenberg's letter of Sept. 2, I must admit I was somewhat taken aback by his vicious attack of Mr. Horgan's column (Aug. 29). Personally, I found the column quite humorous.

Who hasn't had the experience of waiting in a line at the Coliseum only to find out that they now need to go to the cashiers, where women with the appearance and disposition of caged monkeys sit and wait? And Mr. Rothenberg's politically correct whinnies about stereotyping females is an old tired argument that's about as interesting to listen to as the agricultural production of the state of Mississippi.

I was on campus this summer and I heard of the MIBS students' reputation of looking down their noses at the rest of the student body, but little did I suspect that this self-right-

eous arrogance would manifest itself so early in the semester. It's sad to see that some of my fellow MIBS students apparently have the sensitivity (not to mention cranial capacity) of monkeys, or even lower primates. Anyway, I want to encourage Mr. Horgan to continue writing columns that irritate and annoy. And, as for Mr. Rothenberg, guess what? You are back in college now, so just lighten up.

Joseph Kaplan
First year MIBS student

Helms needs to represent constituents, not judge

Marc LaFountain's defense of Mr. Helms in his column that appeared in the Aug. 31 issue is weak for the very same reason most people object to him and his politics. If you don't understand what I mean by that, Mr.

LaFountain, just look at the following list of words and phrases you used in your defense of Mr. Helms:

"which he feels is offensive"
"stop artists from doing blatantly offensive works"
"he believes homosexuality is a sin"
"does things because he believes they are right"

Have I made my point? You see, people may transfer their hate to him as a person instead of just hating his politics because he attacks people from a personal level.

Just to further clarify my point, I am not an artist, I don't want to see a person urinate on stage, I'm not a homosexual and I'm a registered Republican. But I have a personal problem with Mr. Helms because I don't think his judgments are always right. And if he is striving to "do what is right," who made him the only human

to know what is "right"? He is an elected official. His job is not to tell us what is right but to do what the people he represents want him to do.

And speaking of offensive, do you realize that many people would find your use of the word "shit" in your article offensive?

I'm not offended by your use of the word "shit." And I guess by now you understand why I don't like Jesse Helms. We can just agree to disagree and that's OK with me. I'm not going to say you are "wrong" or "sinful" or "offensive."

That's the biggest difference between Mr. Helms and me. I will stand up for what I believe is right, but I won't try to take away the rights of people who disagree with me.

Elizabeth Milligan
Marketing sophomore

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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.

Do you think there should be an open container law?



"I think there are going to be a lot of unhappy people. I don't think it's going to affect drinking. I don't know what it'll do to business in Five Points."

Kevin Ortiz
Criminal justice senior



"Yes, for safety purposes. I think it will cut down on drinking. Public drunkenness will decrease. I think they should try it. Every little bit helps."

Melissa Owens
Broadcasting freshman



"No, because it's really up to the individual. An open container law really doesn't affect the usage of alcohol."

Shiricka Fair
Computer information systems junior



"No, I don't think there should be one. I'm from Charleston, and they have one there. It puts a damper on things."

Jason Drake
Sociology junior

The Gamecock is the student newspaper of the University of South Carolina and is published Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the fall and spring semesters, with the exception of university holidays and exam periods. Opinions expressed in The Gamecock are those of the editors or author and not those of the University of South Carolina. The Board of Student Publications and Communications is the publisher of The Gamecock. The Department of Student Media is its parent organization.