

The Gamecock

Serving USC Since 1908

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OUR OPINION

Grad students deserve better housing options

After four years of undergraduate studies, a diploma under your belt and perhaps some time spent in the workforce, how would living at Bates sound to you?

That is precisely the situation graduate students face at Carolina.

Some graduate students are financially secure enough to continue living in their own homes. Those with little to no income cannot live off-campus. On-campus housing is the only option.

On-campus housing is particularly crucial to foreign students.

But Bates, a freshman dorm, hardly seems the appropriate place for actual graduates. They've done the freshman dorm thing at 18, when it was crazy and fun and awesome.

At twenty-something, or even thirty-something, hall baths just don't swing it anymore.

Walking through the Horseshoe to your home sweet home in Bates must not be overly-inspiring, either.

USC's graduate program is not given much attention, save by our own administration.

It is in the interest of this university to build the reputation of its graduate program.

One small way to enhance the program would be to offer decent housing.

We're not advocating a completely new building. We're aware of the monetary situation at this university.

However, would it not be possible to house the graduates in another building?

Or possibly renovate their wing of Bates so that it is apartment-style, or at the very least, suite-style.

Granted, housing is not the top priority of students when they consider universities.

But it is a definite icing on the cake. And if other universities are offering up devil's food cake, who wants angel food, though it may be more healthy?

The more students we attract, the more selective we can be in quality.

Higher quality students call for a more challenging program, more prominent professors, and all that means more tuition.

So maybe it won't work out quite that simply, but, hey, better housing is a good start.

Porn mags have rights despite the arguments

Pornographic magazines have always been controversial, there's no doubt about that.

Recently they've been in the limelight for a variety of reasons, thanks to the recent movie "The People vs. Larry Flynt."

In 1996, something called the Military Honor and Decency Act of 1996 came about.

It was a part of the defense budget bill. Basically, the act forbid the sale or rental of sexual material at any military facility.

The act passed without any debate in the capitol and Clinton signed it into law in September. It was supposed to be enacted in December of 1996.

But Bob Guccione, the publisher of Penthouse magazine, said the act violated the right to free speech and free expression.

He's right. So maybe magazines like Hustler, Playboy, Playgirl and Penthouse (among other choice

publications) are not the purveyors of good taste.

We do not condone the pictorials in these magazines, for they are degrading to both sexes involved in the pictures.

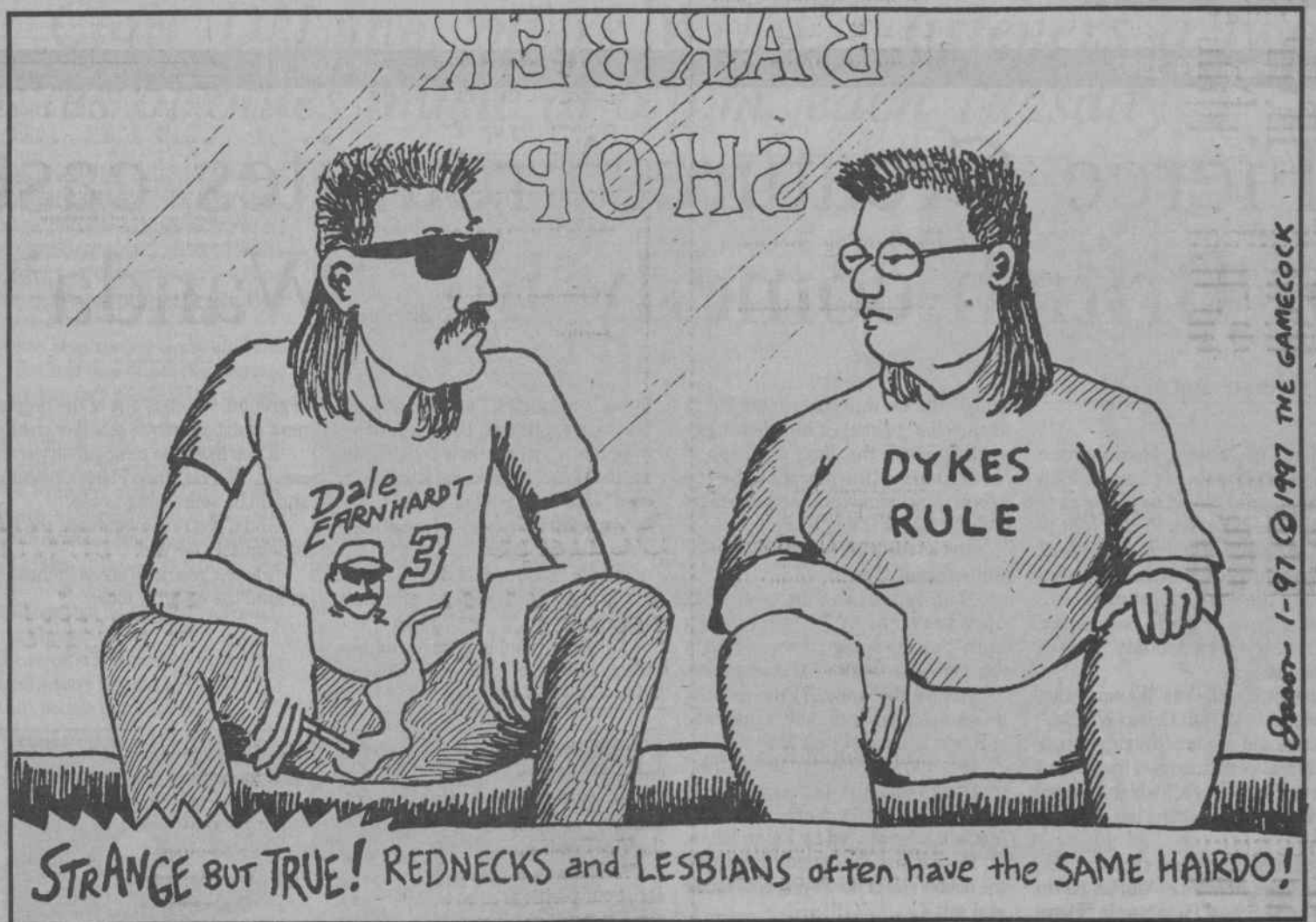
However, these magazines are entitled to be sold and produced in the United States of America, and that includes everything from military bases to the local Circle K.

Evidently, Federal Judge Shira A. Scheindlin agreed with Guccione's argument.

Scheindlin ruled Wednesday the Military Honor and Decency Act is unconstitutional, according to the Associated Press.

"Society is better served by protecting our cherished right to free speech, even at the cost of tolerating speech that is outrageous, offensive and demeaning," Scheindlin wrote.

Plus, Playboy really does have good articles. Believe it or not.



The flag issue does not educate one child, build one road or create one job.

Governor David Beasley, in the 1997 South Carolina State of the State address

Modern conveniences not so convenient

Lucy Arnold
Columnist

I've heard a nasty little rumor that parking is the worst it's ever been at USC this semester.

As an off-campus student for the past four years, I'd like to tell you it isn't true. I'd like to say to all you young whippersnappers, "Back in my day there used to be more parking spaces than there were dusty old books untouched since 1892 in the Thomas Cooper Library."

"Why we could pull right into that lot beside Russell House and park any time, day or night! And we didn't even have to leave our hazard lights on."

But it would be a lie. Parking has been the same disgusting disaster since at least 1993.

I have to admit that I'm impressed with the administration's new parking plan, however. The Plan: It will be so much more convenient for everyone if we just eliminate most of the parking.

Now that's the kind of caring attitude to which I feel good donating my five dollars per parking ticket!

Speaking of convenience, there's more than enough of it going around Columbia this year. I recently went up to the BellSouth building on Huger Street to pay my telephone bill where I encountered a very polite sign:

For your convenience, we have

closed this BellSouth payment center. Please use one of the other payment centers conveniently located at addresses other than this one. (Well, it went something like that.)

I felt like kissing BellSouth (were it a person and not a corporation) for making my life so much easier!

So I went to the next payment center on the list, the very convenient parking ticket division of Columbia, a place where USC students rarely dare to tread. Conveniently, their computer system was down, leaving them unable to process my bill. (I know, I know, it's the first time I've encountered city personnel unwilling to take my money, too.)

Fortunately, there was another payment center conveniently located ten miles away.

Actually I'm starting to think the rest of the world is using a dictionary I don't have and therefore has an updated definition for convenience that has emerged since I finished learning the South Carolina Word List.

Take convenience stores. I find it so convenient to go to one of these stores to buy an item that's not exactly what I wanted, in a smaller quantity from what I had in mind and at a

higher monetary value than I had planned. You can't really get more convenient than that.

Even more convenient are the new machines at grocery stores that take ATM cards. No longer do I need to waste the minute I was taking to write my checks. Now I only spend five minutes answering questions (English, Spanish, German or Latin?), punching in secret codes (Was it 007 or 1982?) and waiting for the thing to process. That is so convenient!

Probably one of the most convenient things of all for our current generation of lazy bums is the drive-thru. (Note the spelling—we're dumbing down American fast food joints!)

I find it quite convenient to shout my order continuously at a post (which incidentally has a greater IQ than many a brain between those headphones) until I finally hear something that sounds like "Please drive around" in garble-ese.

It's also very convenient to get home and discover that while you ordered a cheeseburger and fries, what you got was a fishwich and boogers.

I'm just joking, of course; it only appears to be boogers. It is really the stuff they scraped off the fry basket and dumped in a fry box after the grease had been licked off.

What do you want, whiny-butts?

you may be asking. Obviously, you say with great wisdom, these things won't change, that's just the way it is.

And you're right. But I don't necessarily want the service to change. (Although it might be nice to get the meal I order every now and then.)

All I want is a little honesty. I want USC to send a little flyer out with next registration packet that says, "Look, we're not trying to make things better for you students, we're trying to make this school look like a good place for foreign investors to toss their cash. Live with it."

I want BellSouth to post a sign that reads: We have closed this site, not for your convenience, but because there's a bomb on the ninth floor! Get out now!

I want convenience stores to rename themselves Not So Much Convenience Stores As Small Stores With Larger Candy Supplies Than Grocery Stores.

I want ATM machines in grocery stores to say: This isn't more convenient than writing a check. But it saves trees or something.

And I want drive-thru windows to eliminate the speaker and the nerd in headphones and replace them with a sign declaring: Drive around for a random food grab bag.

Don't even think about asking for ketchup.

Avid Viewpoints readers will note Nikki LaRoque's column is missing. Don't fret...She'll be back next Friday.



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