

## The Gamecock

Serving USC Since 1908

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## OUR OPINION

# SG Senate terms not over just yet

Senate took a huge step during their last meeting Wednesday. They actually passed the first piece of legislation of 1997.

One piece of legislation one month and two weeks into the year. What hard workers we have in Senate.

Not that there aren't a few exceptions in Student Government. There are actually a few people floating around in that first floor Russell House office who know what they are doing. They have put that knowledge to good use, such as setting up important race relation forums.

Passing only one piece of legislation aside, the Senate has also proved its incompetence by losing the Senate attendance books, according to Senate Clerk Donald Gore. So even though most of the Senate has not shown up for the past few meetings, it does not matter. No one, especially not the voters, has any idea who has been around and who has not. There is no record. It's unfortunate such relevant documentation was lost so close to election time.

We do understand why Senators have been slacking off lately. Their term is almost over. They have realized they

cannot get all those campaign promises accomplished, and no one on this campus, save for the head-honchos in SG and candidates, really care whether or not anything runs well.

As much as some would like to think, Student Government is not a real democracy.

This is merely practice for the real world, and with such practice comes a huge safety net. Said safety net being that if SG workers screw-up, no one really notices, nor cares.

The student body on this campus, as a whole, obviously doesn't care about Student Government, considering only about 8 percent of the student body voted in last year's election.

So why, if students are so apathetic, are we so riled that the majority of the Senate have been cutting sessions lately? Because we're part of that 8 percent.

Senators owe 8 percent of the student body 100 percent of the time and commitment they promised during last year's elections. Don't break a promise.

Oh, wait, what are we thinking? SG is practice for the world of real politics. Go ahead, break that promise and get in some practice.

# S.C. should revoke CCA prison pact

How do eight juvenile prison escapees and the S.C. Legislature fit together? Easier than you think.

This past Wednesday, the eight juvenile prisoners escaped from the Columbia Training Center on Farrow Road, a prison run by Corrections Corp. of America.

Enter the legislators. A group of them are apparently concerned about the competency of the Corrections Corp. of America.

This week's escapees were the second group to escape from the prison since it opened in July 1996.

The State reports there have been reports of prison officers using physical force to control the prisoners.

CCA gets paid \$14 million to manage the facility and has

been hired to manage 11 wilderness camps anticipated to open by 2000, according to The State.

Some want to CCA's contract revoked, which should be done.

The entire connection between South Carolina and CCA is a bit sketchy. Why can't the state use its own law enforcement officers and administrators to run this facility?

Prison and jail are not supposed to be great places—they are a means of punishment.

But, they, like an offshoot of the government, need to be run firmly and effectively to achieve maximum progress. CCA isn't doing this, which is evidenced by their inability to keep prisoners from running away.



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**If we didn't have student activity fees to distribute, and we didn't have SBL (97) 002, then we would have nothing.**

Sen. Matthew Richardson, SG senator on an amendment applied to finance codes.

# Things mama wouldn't tell you about boys

**O**n Valentine's Day, a time when men and women feel the need to express their love for one another by sending "Condomgrams," I think it is interesting to contemplate the differences between the sexes.

There is always a lot of talk about sexism and gender roles. Not only is there dispute between the sexes on this matter, but there are disagreements among women about the nature of feminism.

People want women to look a certain way, act a certain way and have certain jobs. Even though it is the 90s, women still dominate as teachers, secretaries and nurses and fall behind in top-notch administrative positions. Women still subscribe to magazines that feature "Fifteen Brand-New Ways to Look Sultry" as the headline. Women still glob on the make-up and squeeze into size six shoes with size eleven feet.

Men endorse this type of behavior because if they can convince women not to try, then they don't have to compete. Of course they're worried! Statistically, in elementary school girls are miles ahead of boys in terms of grades. This trend only slams to a halt, you guessed it, when girls hit puberty.

**Lucy Arnold**  
Columnist

One is forced to wonder what might happen if the trend continued...

However, I believe that a trend toward sexism begins in early childhood. One only has to watch a few minutes of TBS's The Disaster Area in the morning to get the picture.

There are girl toys and there are boy toys (and I don't mean Antonio Sabato, Jr.). The commercials for boys come on and there are monsters and action and heroes and racing and all kinds of exciting things going on.

Then the girl commercial comes on. Maybe there will be a little fairy flitting across the screen. Or maybe Barbie will put on a new dress. Or, even better, there will be a baby doll that cries like a real baby.

Thanks a lot, mom and dad. Does it pee, too? I think you might start to understand why men and women are so different once you consider the kinds of marketing ploys kids have to undergo.

Boys get balls (yes, literally!), GI Joe men, and guns. Of course they're going to be aggressive! I don't think anyone needs to start going around saying that male children are more

aggressive than females until they can eliminate childhood television education. Girls get doll babies, doll babies, and maybe a SkyDancer (pull the string and she twirls!). Is it any wonder women slip into the role of caretaker so easily?

Children's television shows aren't much better. Boys have the X-Men and girls have My Little Pony. I wouldn't call it an even trade.

Call me a conspiracy theorist (which would just happen to be true), but men are purposefully trying to keep women from realizing their potential. Actually, and this is a whole other column, the white men in power are doing their best to ensure that nobody gets the opportunity to rise to the top of the bucket.

Men control women in a lot of ways. The magazines, movies, commercials and other media which portray desirable women as emaciated corpses are a start. There aren't too many better ways to make sure someone won't achieve than by starving said person.

And smart women are never given the credit they deserve. A smart woman is invariably Scooby Doo's Velma—ugly, annoying and often obnoxious. (Although even I was impressed with one episode that featured Velma and Shaggy in a tree sporting cave-people costumes. "You

Tarzan, me Jane." Wink, wink, say no more!)

I must point out my favorite exception to the entertainment industry's babe rule, The X-Files. Chris Carter and Gillian Anderson have crafted a Dana Scully who is intelligent and beautiful, in a non-emaciated sort of way. Of course Carter also subscribes to conspiracy theories, so this could explain the exception.

Unfortunately women cannot put all the blame on men. Men don't usually help (thanks to my father for being just the opposite), but neither do many women. Instead of recognizing the truth behind so much of this objectifying commercialism, women slap on the high heeled shoes and the 52-week bra, then grin and bear it.

If women want to be taken seriously as people, unfortunately the perceptions most of us get from the media have to change. Well, or people could read my column from last week and stop believing everything they see on television.

And maybe one day women will be in charge of the entertainment industry, and we'll only allow men to appear on t.v. in g-strings and flip-flops.

Except for GI Joe. He's quite the boy toy already.

# Valentine's Day isn't much fun these days

**M**y mother always hates it when I say 'suck.' She says it's disgusting. Thankfully, though, she won't be reading this, so I can say what I want to say without fear.

Here goes: Valentine's Day sucks. Ok, I'm sure you're thinking "Yeah. Another column by a female complaining about Valentine's Day cause she can't get a date who's literate or doesn't have a boyfriend—real good. Maybe I'll move on to the sports section..."

Read at your will, but what I say is true: Valentine's Day really sucks. But, you know what else? I really like it.

Nothing like being a grade A hypocrite, is there?

Once, many years ago when I donned bowed pigtailed and smocked dresses (circa first grade for the confused), I loved Valentine's Day. Back then, Valentine's Day was special.

You had to give Valentine's to

**Stephanie Sonnenfeld**  
Viewpoints Editor

everyone and you got Valentine's from everyone. Room mothers would come to respective elementary schools, throw parties and everyone would have a good time snacking on sugar saturated snacks and drinks. We were hyper and happy. We knew no better.

But, the best thing about Valentine's Day were the boxes you got to make to hold your Valentine's. Oh, white paper dollies and shiny aluminum heart stickers pasted all over an old Nike shoe box. Those were the days. Everybody—no matter how much you hated or liked them—got a Valentine. Everyone went home with Valentine's. Nobody was left out. It felt real good.

Somewhere, in the skewed area of middle school and puberty, Valentine's Day became an extremely selective holiday—you were either loved or not.

Guys started giving girls little gifts—wilted carnations were popular

at my school—and if you got one, you were cool. If not, you were left to watch everyone else enjoy their deflated flora.

February 14 wasn't really a good time for my friend Kate and I. Basically, the only Valentine's we received were from our parents and of course we always received a \$5 check in the mail from Grandmom.

It made us sad to see all these girls we know get Valentine's from the boys they were "going with."

We were young then and pretty clueless about love (ok, so now we're old and still fairly clueless), but we made a vow to wear black every Valentine's Day.

We decided that Valentine's Day was depressing because it reminded us that we weren't "going with" anyone.

We felt unloved. So, we were a bit immature, but I talked to her last week, and we discussed Valentine's Day at length and almost eight years later, we still think Valentine's Day is depressing.

We thought college would be a

better time for Valentine's Day. But, I still remember living in Preston and McClintock and seeing all these flowers and mylar balloons covering the lobby, waiting for loved individuals to come and fetch them.

DISCLAIMER HERE: Valentine's Day isn't depressing in the sense that it's driving us to take above average amounts of prozac or pull a Sylvia Plath and stick our heads in a oven. No, no, no.

It's just all the pink and red hearts, make us wonder if we'll ever find the love of our lives. Pretty simple.

And, pretty narcissistic. Luckily, Valentine's Day is only one day long. Twenty four hours—1,440 minutes.

Yet, there's a plus to Valentine's Day and that's the candy.

There's a whole aisle devoted to Valentine's Day at the Super Wal-Mart and it's glorious. It reminds me that right now, I may never find my perfect guy—a combo of Holden Caulfield, Paul McCartney, Hugh Grant, Eric Clapton and Matthew McConeaughy—but I can always buy cherry cordials.

## The Gamecock

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