

The Gamecock

Serving USC Since 1908

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OPINION

Organizations ask for deserved funds

The USC NAACP had the gumption to ask for almost \$20,000 in student activities funds.

The African American Association of Students asked for almost \$24,000.

That's a lot of money. A hell of a lot, actually.

But, you've got to give organizations that ask for money credit. Why? Because they're asserting themselves and doing what they're supposed to be doing: using their money.

Every year, when we pay our tuition, a small amount goes to the student activities fee. Now, wouldn't you want the money you're paying for this fee go to activities that are run by and for the betterment of the student body?

If they aren't used by students, who will use them?

OK, we admit \$20,000 is a lot for one organization to need. Really, think what you could do with \$20,000.

But, the NAACP should be commended for taking the chance and asking for this money because it shows that

they, like other organizations, are interested in taking a piece of the pie they helped to bake.

Perhaps it sounds a bit selfish to advocate this money grubbing, but if organizations can't ask for money — their money — what's the point?

Each full-time student pays about \$40 a semester in student activities fees, while part-time students pay a smaller portion, all of which comes up to \$1.25 million a year.

Out of that, \$18,975 will be divided among graduate organizations, and \$68,928 will be given to undergraduate organizations. Student Media, Student Government, Carolina Productions, Sport Clubs and Student Services receive close to \$1.2 million.

This year, about 60 undergraduate and graduate student organizations put in requests for funds. It's nice to see that USC organizations are making the effort to get money.

After all, that's what it's there for.

Airline pilot strike affects entire world

Thank to a little-known 1926 Railway Labor Act, President Clinton was able to temporarily halt the American Airlines pilot strike.

A *New York Times* article cited Clinton's action as the result of economic reasons — reasons that affect everyone.

Some may think that Clinton intervened in the strike unnecessarily.

But, the reasoning behind his action is legitimate and understandable.

What some may not understand is that a strike of this magnitude not only affects pilots, but you too.

The *Times* article said that the strike could cost the economy up to \$200 million a day.

If the strike had been successful, thousands of people would have lost out by not being able to complete their travel plans. This would have affected tourism, jobs and personal plans.

Plus, how will customers ever really be able to trust American Airlines?

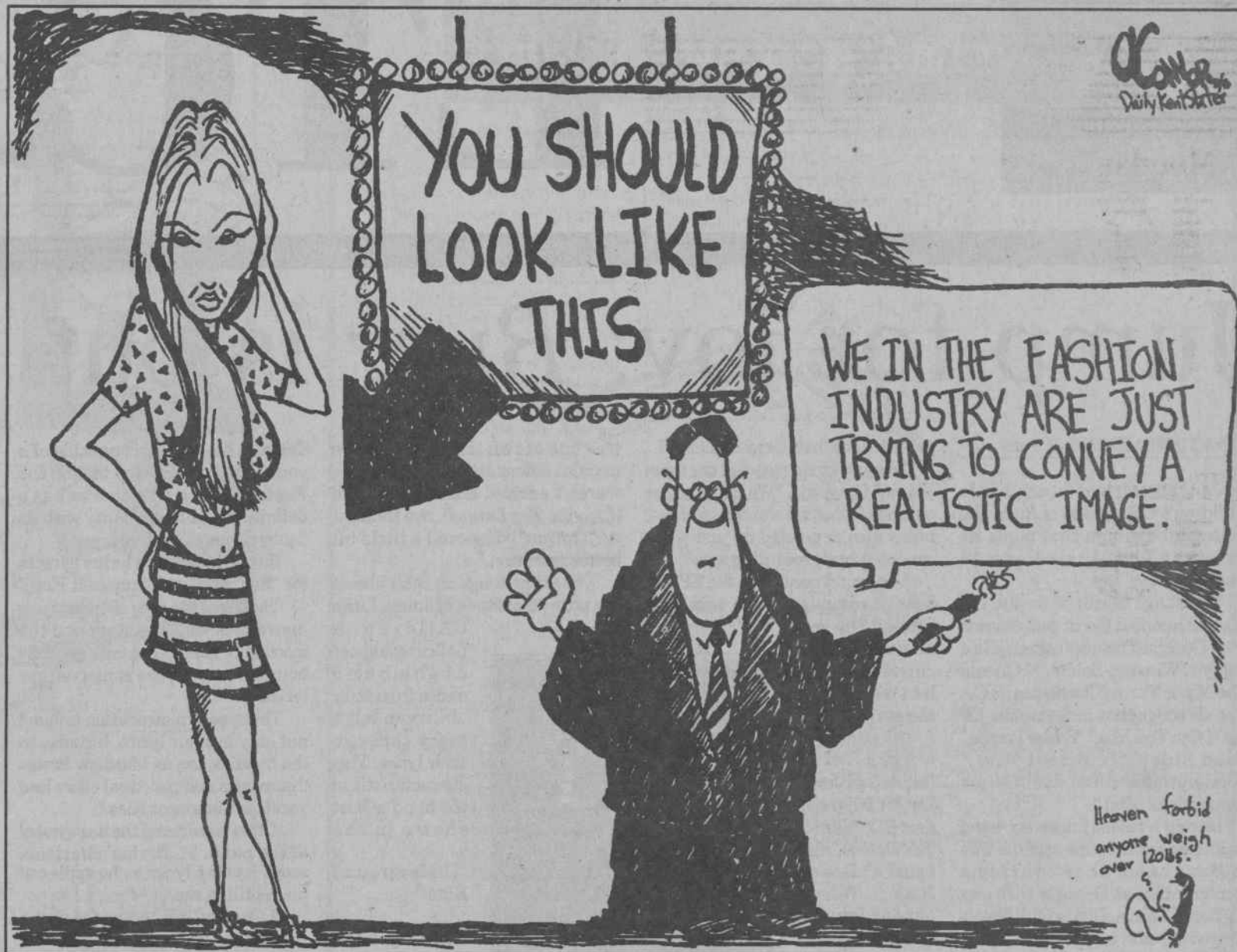
Before Clinton's intervention, American Airlines canceled flights to Europe, Japan and South America. People were stranded at airports because of canceled flights.

Canceled flights and a divided company aren't good for American Airlines' reputation.

People are looking for an affordable airline and one they can trust in light of recent ValuJet scares.

Sure, 9,000 American Airlines pilots want more money, but they want it at the expense of the national economy, thousands of customers and thousands of American Airlines employees.

Looking at it that way, it's a good thing Clinton stepped in. Very good.



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I'm pretty damn pleased about it. This certainly says we are for real.

Eddie Fogler, on the Gamecock's successful basketball season.

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There's no excuse for apathy at USC

ADAM SNYDER
columnist

Even though time and time again the suggestion has come up around the newsroom, we haven't done an article about apathy on campus. Maybe that's because we are apathetic ourselves.

But what could you do with this fascinating story idea?

Oh, there is so much. We could dive deep into this hard-hitting issue to find out what everybody already knows. People just don't care.

In passing, maybe they do. As a whim, as something to whine about, they will wonder why nothing seems to get accomplished.

But that slips away as thoughts of tests, papers and how to get this weekend's supply of beer quickly take its place.

So come Thursday, less than 10 percent of our student body will take the time to vote. They will go in and out of the Russell House, not bothering to take a step towards the polls.

The Election Commission has

made it so simple this year too. Most of the voting booths will be located inside the student union.

Others will be located conveniently at your respective college. You'll be more than likely to be there anyway, or you at least can get there between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. But, you don't care. Not on election day at least.

I heard someone say the other day that there's no point in voting because either Greeks or African Americans (and lately a combination of the two) dominate the campaign.

So, in either case, close to 80 percent of the student body doesn't feel represented in the executive or legislative side of Student Government.

Whose fault is that? Albeit, both factions have had increasing political prominence in student elections recently. But their strength lies in the fact that they can get their constituents to vote. Other

"independent" candidates have very little or no constituency.

All they have is every 9 out of 10 students not giving a damn if they or anyone else represents them throughout the university.

But, you do care when your tuition is being increased. You do care when your club or organization gets short-ended by the Finance Committee.

You care when you're tired of the food Marriott is serving. You care when you miss two classes because you're looking for a parking spot.

You still don't care on election day.

You don't care at 5 p.m. Wednesdays to sit in on a senate meeting in the Russell House Theatre. You don't care to call your representative to find out what he or she can do for you.

And guess what? They don't care either, and they know it, as portrayed by last week's tirade led by some exiting senators.

I have never seen a group more deserving of the do-nothing nickname. Absences were outrageous this

session. Legislation has been nil. The call for old business brings a chuckle, and the call for new business has them rolling in the aisles.

This time the fault is shared though.

Student apathy bleeds into the senate where they are unmotivated to do anything for the small portion of people who even know they exist.

Some representatives are in it for resume packing, while others just like the ring of an official title.

What can be done? First, you can vote to show the powers that be that you are out there and you want to have a say in how your university operates.

Second, you can follow up your vote with pressure.

Ask why it has taken over a semester to decide what to DO with the Assembly Street tunnel art design, much less pick up a brush and paint it.

Other universities' student governments actually accomplish something.

Care enough to get our representatives doing their jobs.

Some guys will do anything for love

JASON MOORE
columnist

With the recent cold spell, and the news of snow in the Upstate, I'm reminded of a trip I took this time last year. And with my wallet still aching from Valentine's Day, this story only reinforces the notion that a guy will do almost anything for love.

After a semester at The Citadel, I was convinced that I could handle almost anything — so I was foolish enough to believe that I could learn to ski. Now, for those of you who aren't familiar with skiing, count your blessings and leave the idiots from Sweden who don't have anything better to do. But, not wanting to let my girl down, I agreed to go and put my life in her hands (mistake No. 1).

What you must understand is that the hardest part about skiing is not the process itself (this consists of sliding down icy cliffs going about 200 mph), but getting ready to ski.

First, you must navigate through the ski lodge while wearing "ski bibs" that look like a space suit minus the helmet (looking back, a helmet might not have been such a bad idea). Then, after being sized up by Sven, the Swedish

equipment man, I was given a pair of skis and two poles. The skis were approximately the length of a '72 Plymouth, yet good ol' Sven failed to mention that the bigger the skis, the faster you go. And for a novice like me, this was important information.

My girlfriend, however, assured me that I would "catch on fast and be flying down the slopes in no time."

This proved to be true because it took me no time at all to perfect the art of falling, and I was definitely flying down the slopes, although it would have been much nicer if I could have done this in an upright position. And all this occurred before I even made it to the bunny slopes.

The bunny slopes are not supposed to be that difficult, but to the beginner like myself, the only hope of reaching the top is by airlift.

This is because it is scientifically impossible to walk in skis. If you lose your balance and fall down, you're stuck. Guys just like me have frozen to death because they kept telling their girlfriends,

"Go on, honey — I'm just resting. I'll get up in a minute." (These are the same guys who refuse to ask for directions. Two weeks later, they can be found in the exact same spot.)

Another problem I had was stopping. This may not sound that complicated, but let's face it, skis don't have brakes.

When I inquired as to why this minor detail was overlooked, I was quickly informed that all you need is technique. This refers to the most famous, and most overrated of ski maneuvers, the "snow plow."

Oddly enough, this works when executed properly.

The skier simply crosses his or her skis at a 45-degree angle and presto, they fall flat on their face, low through the snow and come to a gradual halt after taking out Sven and his friends. Really, it is a beauty to watch.

But let's suppose that you're actually stupid enough to want to go to the top of the mountain. Then, you must first master the ski lift. This takes great timing and can only be compared to trying to leap into a moving Volkswagen that's already full. Once this is accomplished (most people quit right here), you can enjoy your ride to the top,

where if you're smart, you'll calmly take off your skis, and walk down the mountain, thus being spared from imminent disaster.

If you are, however, an idiot with something to prove (namely, that you're an idiot) you will hurdle yourself down the mountain.

This usually proves to be a tremendous rush because you get to watch your life pass before your eyes. At some point down the slope you may encounter a mogul (mounds of packed ice that send you into orbit). These will not be seen until you re-enter the atmosphere because there aren't any signs!

So as I rocketed down the mountain, like Clark Griswold in his lubricated saucer sled, I remembered my girlfriend's advice to use the poles for balance.

But after a few futile attempts, I realized that the only thing those oversized shishkebabbs are good for is smacking the squirrels that entertain themselves by laughing at you.

This is not to say that skiing is not enjoyable. In fact, I love to watch people wipe out as I sit all cozy in the ski lodge. It's a fine spectator sport, but I'll leave the actual skiing to Hans and Franz.

The Gamecock

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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 333. The Gamecock reserves the right to edit all letter for style, possible libel or space limitations. Names will not be withheld for any circumstance.