

The Gamecock

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IN OUR OPINION

Bigotry against AIDS patients ignorant

To quote Maya Angelo, "It's the rust on the razor that threatens the throat. It is an unnecessary insult."

Persons with the AIDS virus have a death sentence, not immediate, but one that will assuredly come sooner than desired. AIDS patients must suffer unbearable pain and sickness. Blood becomes familiar, night sweats their companions. That is the razor that threatens the throat.

But with the physical pain comes emotional agony. Not only must these people face death, they must endure raging myths and ill-informed beliefs about AIDS and AIDS patients. Some people still believe they can catch AIDS by touching someone with the illness. Others won't drink after them. Former friends may avoid visiting. AIDS is sometimes a social plague. That is the rust, the unnecessary insult.

Why are AIDS patients shunned by the general public, and more intimately, by neighbors and friends, and sometimes even family? Do these people not deserve the same kind of com-

THE TOPIC

AIDS patients

OUR OPINION

They should be shown compassion and kindness

passion we show the woman with breast cancer or the child with leukemia? People with cancer have a chance, however slim, of survival. There are treatments that can effectively work.

AIDS patients have nothing of the kind, almost no hope. They deserve as much compassion and love as, if not more than, patients with other illnesses. Yet they are shunned.

Why, in this age of knowledge, do some people still harbor beliefs as stupid as old-wives tales? One can not catch AIDS or HIV by the simple human touch. One can not catch AIDS by drinking or eating after someone afflicted, or sharing the same sheets, or any other kind of non-sexual contact. Sexual intercourse is the only way this disease is transmitted.

Do not be afraid to touch an AIDS patient. Do not be afraid to show kindness with a hug, compassion with a visit. We can not all go to the local AIDS hospice and volunteer all our time, but if there is someone you know suffering, a simple visit and hello can make all the difference in the world.

World loses altruism with Mother's death

The Capitol Newsstand on Main Street takes its job of bringing the news to people pretty seriously, evident with the recent Princess Diana tragedy.

Last Friday, Scotch taped to the windows of the store were various newspapers announcing Diana's death, chronicling the progress of the situation.

Passerby's stared at the stories, reading the words and gazing at the pictures. In the late afternoon, the clerk running the store opened the door and spoke to the window watchers.

"Did you see this?" he asked, pointing to a white piece of paper taped to the door. In blue felt tip pen, there was a message that Mother Teresa had died.

"We're losing all our saints," he said, shaking his head.

Yes, sir, we are.

It's very hard to digest the fact that Mother Teresa died. She was all the things we as humans know we

THE TOPIC

Mother Teresa's death

OUR OPINION

A humanitarian of the truest sorts has left us

should be but rarely ever attempt to become.

She helped the illiterate, the sick, the poor and the poorer with her self-founded order of nuns in India, known as the Missionaries of Charity. She sacrificed her life so that thousands of others could live a little of theirs in comfort.

Sure, she won the adoration of thousands and prizes such as the Nobel Peace Prize. She was, in her own right, a cultural icon whose reputation will far exceed her legend generations from now.

But, more importantly, Mother Teresa gave us hope that, despite our religious differences and our cultural ties, we could appreciate the simple, unfiltered elements of pure human kindness.

This past Monday, another sign appeared on the door of the Capital Newsstand. Scrawled in the same cursive script as its predecessor, this sign said something along the lines of "all of our angels have returned to heaven."



Quote, Unquote

"There is no such thing as a serious illness that doesn't have an emotional component."

Dr. Einar Anderson of Baptist Hospital, on an AIDS patient's dealing with the ill-treatment of his community

USC mail trapped in conspiracy

STEPHANIE SONNENFELD
Asst. Viewpoints Editor

USC post office box 82320 isn't my friend. Heck, it isn't even my ally.

Rather, it's more like a symbol of my lost faith in the USC Post Office.

I check my mail twice daily, silently turning the mystical combination of numbers and letters that are the key to opening my box. Ninety-nine percent of the time, I don't get mail. Nobody writes me, and that's not a plea for pity or anything. Actually, I get a lot of e-mail.

But, every so often, my parents write me or a few assorted friends, who still appreciate the antiquated art of letter writing, will send me a note. These days, they tell me they sent me a letter so that I can anticipate it's arrival.

Such was the case last week. A friend of mine said they had written me a letter and had mailed it last Tuesday from an Atlanta post office. Last time this happened, I received the letter by Thursday afternoon. After all, Atlanta is not that far away.

By Friday, the letter had not arrived. Okay, I thought, maybe it's just a little slow in getting there. No letter on Monday, cause for concern. Finally, I peered through the hazy, tiny window on the front of my box late Tuesday afternoon, and the letter was there, stuffed in the back of the long, hallow box.

Maybe my friend lied and sent the letter after Tuesday. No, the post mark, in all its black and white truthfulness, reported the letter was sent Sept. 2.

It's really funny because I sent a letter out on the same day and it's arrival was confirmed in Atlanta last Thursday afternoon.

I'm not the only one who has these problems. Yesterday afternoon, my friend Emilie and I were sitting outside on the Russell House Patio, analyzing the reconstruction of the Golden Spur Corridor. The door near the mailboxes flew open and our friend Erin burst out.

"Why don't I ever get mail anymore?" she asked, her face sculpted with genuine concern.

Emilie had mentioned the same thing only a few minutes prior to Erin's arrival.

"Last week, all three of us were victims of campus mail... So I've devised the theory that there must be a mail conspiracy going on here."

"I haven't received any mail in the last week. No junk mail. No magazines, no letter from my grandmother (who writes Emilie almost weekly)."

Last week, all three of us were victims of campus mail. An organization we are members of had a meeting and the president had sent out letters two days prior to the meeting.

We didn't get the letters until two days after the meeting.

So I've devised the theory that there must be a mail conspiracy going on here. I know I'll probably be damned for trying to expose it. I'll receive lots of letters from people who work at the University Post Office telling me

I haven't researched my subject and that they work hard at their job. I admit my only research is first hand experience. And, I want to say I'm not necessarily damning the school postal employees.

No, I just want to know why it takes so long for me to get my mail? I don't want much. I only want my letters. What good is getting a letter telling me of a meeting two days after the meeting has taken place?

I've spent almost four years at USC, and I vow that by the end of my time here, I will figure out the enigma known as our postal system. Really, it's quite a riddle.

Game leaves lasting (sort of) impressions

KURT JOHNSON
Columnist

Strangely enough, I had never thought about it.

My friend had a good point.

"How do pole vaulters carry their pole vaults to competitions?"

"Maybe they break down like pool sticks," I suggested, still clapping

"No, they can't because they have to bend," he answered back.

I struggled with the riddle while the male cheerleader dashed across the end zone, with the huge Gamecock flag flapping in the wind. The football team had just scored a touchdown.

My first Gamecock football game (ever) was full of insightful, yet bizarre, occurrences. Oh, believe me, I had a great time. But minor-unusual-episodes inundated the game.

Let's start from the beginning. My sister, her boyfriend, and her friend, who was in from Germany, came up from Charleston because her boyfriend wanted information about the music department here. He was supposed to take a tour, but being the slow driver that my sister is and having no clue as to where to go, they subsequently missed the tour.

So, they came over to my dorm and we set out in Columbia for the day. Anyhow, when I got back (which was around 4 p.m.), my roommate informed me that the people I was going to the game with almost left me because I came home so late. Well, I got ready in a heartbeat and we were almost ready to go when someone realized they didn't have their ticket.

I praised the Lord because I had forgotten to grab mine, too! So I ran back to my room and secured my ticket in my back pocket.

From there, five of us crammed into a car and headed for Tallyho. After driving around for 30 minutes, in which we passed the Coliseum twice, the State

House three times, hit a dog, passed its remains four times, watched a train hit a dog, and flashed that camera that takes "scenic" views of parking lots and alleys on Channel 51, we were well on our way to driving around some more to try and screw someone out of a parking place.

After cutting some people off in traffic and emptying our bank accounts to pay for parking, we were well on our way to dodging cars in pre-game congestion, in which two of us didn't make it.

Onwards through the splendor that was (is) Tallyho. My friends and I mingled with the fraternity guys, watched a couple of bands play, looked for one of my friends' little brother, and drank a lot of, uh water, yeah water. It was good water.

Well, my friend's brother was supposed to meet us there, but we never did spot him. This made my friend quite irate. I think his brother was using his high school charm to try and pick up some college girls (I would be).

Anyway, we stagg...no, strolled to the stadium.

It was monumental.

Having never seen it live, I was struck with awe. We took our assigned (yeah right!) seats behind the goal post, about ten rows up.

Unfortunately for us, or at least my roommate and I, we were situated next to one of those guys, you know, who never shuts up even if he's in a library or standing in line for this week's lottery tickets in Pago Pago.

This guy talked all game long, about the defense, the offense, the running back Moritz, the stadium, how Jupiter's gravitational pull played a role in the assassination of JFK, the differences between a lemur and an impregnated Chinese orangutan, and even why flies weren't attracted to him, even though he neglected to shower for several eons, I believe.

"My first Gamecock football game (ever) was full of insightful, yet bizarre, occurrences. Oh, believe me, I had a great time. But minor-unusual-episodes inundated the game."

Then, because everyone was not in their assigned seats, we stood up for almost two quarters because people were standing where their seats were, while people who were in their seats stood behind them. Well, as people left early, seating became available and the entire section was blessed with the comfort that is cold aluminum.

That was about the time fights started breaking out. No, not in the game, in the stands!

A guy who wanted his real seat, I guess, asked the lady who was sitting there to kindly move. When she "kindly" replied no, the guy fetched a security officer to resolve the problem.

The officer "kindly" asked the lady to move and let this guy have his seat (by this time the entire East wing was standing up, peering at the action, "ohhing" and "ahhing.") The lady "kindly" started getting in the officer's face, pointing, screaming, spitting.

Well, the officer, after feeling he had more saliva on his face than desired, "kindly" escorted the lady to the exit, while the crowd started to boo the guy who had made the lady leave (not the officer, but the guy who wanted his seat). The lady was then ordained a martyr (even though she didn't die) by the East wing in memory of all those who got screwed out of good seats because the rightful owners decided to show up in the freakin' second quarter. A moment of silence, please.

So the game went on, that guy kept talking, and my friend was still looking for his brother. After the game, we all

crammed back into the car and waited several minutes to screw somebody in the long line of traffic that blocked the driveway to the parking lot.

Finally, after again flashing that camera on channel 51 just for fun, we got back to the Towers (it turns out that my friend's little brother was waiting for him in the dorm). Having not eaten since that afternoon, my friend and I decided to order pizza. I won't tell you what place (Roadrunner's Pizza) so as not to damage the integrity of pizza delivery operations, or those who serve under them. They were to call us when they arrived.

We were starving. To pass the time (45 minutes until delivery), we started playing golf-basketball, in which my friend chipped a golf ball and I tried to hit it with my drum sticks in the hallway. We played for about 45 minutes.

No call.

Another 15 minutes passed as we hung out in my neighbors' dorm.

No call.

Another 15 minutes passed as we set fires to, oh wait. I shouldn't tell about that. Anyway, this place (Roadrunner's Pizza), which I'm keeping anonymous, was 30 minutes late. By then, my stomach had imploded of hunger and was on the brink of total destruction when the pizza guy finally decided to show up.

The day ended with the watching of "Dirty Dancing," for no apparent reason.

My first football game experience was over. I'm sure in a couple of years I'll look back and...well, probably forget about

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WHO WE ARE

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The Board of Student Publications and Communications is the publisher of The Gamecock.

The Department of Student Media is its parent organization.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 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 newroom 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.