

► Check out two more new faces in our columnist section.

# VIEWPOINTS

"They come from all walks of life. They're all different."  
**Kristi Davis**, program director of Personal Touch

## The Gamecock

Serving the Carolina Community since 1908

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### TAKE OUR WORD

## Indecent exposure questions security

Around 15 minutes after midnight Friday, four female students living in Bates West received some surprise guests. The unexpected visitors, two men they had never seen before, came into their apartment and sat down.

**PROBLEM**  
Indecent exposure prompts the question of dorm safety.

**SOLUTION**  
Housing should increase security. Desk assistants can't let suspicious people in the dorms.

One of the men exposed his genitalia and behaved crudely. When asked to leave, the men did so peacefully, but the incident definitely raises serious concerns about dorm safety and "random" acts of indecent exposure.

The men claimed they are students at South Carolina State in Orangeburg. So, what were they doing wandering around unaccompanied in USC's Bates West dorm in the wee hours of the morning? Why weren't they noticed by desk attendants when they arrived? Will they return? Episodes like this question the security of USC's residence halls and how safe students really are when in their rooms.

When considering the casual manner in which this particular incident was carried out as well as the innate nature of this type of dis-

turbance, it may appear humorous to many people.

However, something horrific like abduction, rape or murder could have easily occurred. It's very fortunate that the offenders were neither malicious nor violent.

Desk assistants should not be allowing any unknown people into student residences. Housing needs to increase security of the dorms. Something like this should have never happened.

The unsettling issue of whether our campus in general is a safe place to be is beginning to materialize. The crime of indecent exposure isn't exactly "random" nor unprecedented at USC. It wasn't too long ago that a persistent flasher roamed the lower levels of the Thomas Cooper Library. Even the Horseshoe has experienced its share of crime in the form of armed muggings over the winter break.

All students must be wary of any suspicious persons walking around the residence halls or campus buildings. Report any dubious or shady behavior to an RA and the police.

## Design of states' quarters good idea

Ah, yes, what would you like on your quarter? Yes, South Carolina, as well as all the other states, will be allowed to design their own quarter. Each state will get their quarters in order of their entrance into the union. South Carolina was number eight, so they'll start our minting in the year 2000.

**PROBLEM**  
All the states get to create their own quarters.

**SOLUTION**  
This is a great way for states to promote and endorse their state.

Why? Who knows, maybe to promote the state, or maybe the government is showing that they have some creativity. However, the Treasury Department has created guidelines for the design: it should appeal to a wide variety of people, avoid controversial subjects, no living people, no state flags or state seals and no double-headed coins.

These regulations are set up to prevent people from keeping the coins as collectibles and to ensure that the coins will have some creativity and originality. Some ideas have been fire ants (by the governor himself), the confederate flag, a cotton ball, the magnolia blossom, the Boykin spaniel, and the palmetto tree.

However, it will all get under way when Gov. Beasley sets up plans to get public input. The governor himself must submit three to five ideas, and then the Treasury Department must approve the design.

What a great idea. This is a great way to promote and advertise our state, as well as everyone else. It would be interesting to see what kind of designs other states come up with. People all over the country can at least learn one interesting thing about the state of South Carolina.

And it is right to give the idea to the people. They should decide what they want on the quarter to represent their state. People will be taking great pride in their state by picking a diverse and equally representative symbol to place on our quarter. It could also give the state something to brag about; people would say "yeah, that's OUR quarter."

This is a great opportunity to present our state in a well-deserved manner.



college press EXCHANGE

## Manipulating English crucial

Language is a power stronger than all the men who use it combined. Knowing not only how to write well, but also how to speak well, can be your ticket to countless venues. Unfortunately these talents are quickly becoming a lost art in our American society.



**ruth NETTLES**  
Guest Columnist

Think back beyond English 101 and even beyond high school senior English. When was the last time you were actually taught grammar? When was the last time a teacher stood in front of your class and explained phrases and clauses?

If you can name a class after middle school, I congratulate you on having good teachers who went against the rules. It is no longer considered proper to teach children grammar through all the familiar exercises and spelling lists we all once endured.

Now the desired way of teaching English is through a student's writing. Tell them to write, and when they make mistakes, only then can you correct them.

However, the majority of students need more. As college students, we should each have a wide range of vocabulary. We should know how to write

foreigners come to the United States with more knowledge of the English language than some people who have spoken it since they learned their first words. At the root of the problem are a failing educational system and a stereotypical but true apathetic American attitude.

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a concise, clear paper without splitting infinitives, dangling prepositions or misplacing modifiers. But that is not the case for far too many college students.

The second problem is the apathetic attitude of many Americans concerning their language. While there is an increasing encouragement to learn at least one foreign language, the majority of students take their requirement and run.

I have heard on more occasions than I can count that everyone in the world should just learn English and it would be easier. I can't think of better examples of a closed-minded, inconsiderate attitude.

Language is an integral part of culture that should not be lost. I urge you

not to fall into apathy. Do not expect other people to understand you. Strive to understand them. Learn another language. However, before you can begin to learn another language, you must first know your own language well.

When you hear a word you do not know, don't mentally skim over it. Look it up, learn it, and expand your vocabulary. When you hear a common phrase, endeavor to learn where it came from. You may be pleasantly surprised and fascinated by what you find out. Find an answer to the questions you hear like, "Why do we drive on parkways and park in driveways?" Take the power of language and use it to your advantage.

## Different factions divide USC

Walking through the Russell House the other day, something caught my eye. I had never really looked at it before. On the wall is a large copy of the Carolinian Creed.



**brock VERGAKIS**  
Guest Columnist

Among its words were "striving to learn from differences in people, ideas and opinions." This is something I've always tried to encompass in my life. Often it feels as if I'm in the minority that holds this belief. We are fortunate enough to have one of the most diverse student bodies in the country, and it is time for us to embrace this diversity.

The University itself offers many events for students so that they can learn from each other but rarely is this opportunity taken advantage of. Too many times jokes are made about cul-

tural differences. It is this hatred of what is not known that ultimately is the problem.

USC can be divided into a variety of different groups. Among the most prevalent is Greeks and non-Greeks. It's easy to divide our school up, to identify someone with a certain fraternity or sorority and thus brand them without even knowing them.

Anyone who has been on the fifth floor of the library can literally read the writing on the wall about Greeks and non-Greeks. It's amazing how people can find a way to turn every sororities' letters into a rhyme scheme with the word "whore" in it.

For those in fraternities or sororities, no love is lost over what non-Greeks think of them; they already have friends. The same contempt for each other will continue until an effort is made to actually socialize and get to know each other.

Pride in your heritage is generally something we associate with the Southerners on campus. However Northerners seem to be just as intent on letting people know why they are God's gift to the world. Time and time again we are reminded by these "superior" people why everyone here

"Too many times jokes are made about cultural differences. It is this hatred of what is not known that ultimately is the problem."

is a stupid redneck. Obviously this isn't the truth.

However there are times when I can see their argument any time a shouting match takes place that always ends up with someone challenging the "Northern Aggressor" to a good old-fashioned brawl in the lobby area. For both Northerner and Southerner, rarely does either person associate with the other. People from the North stick together, and other students from out of state—just as in-state students—tend to keep to themselves.

One issue that divides the nation as well as our campus is definitely race. Chances are you can't even remember the last time you went to a party or even had a real conversation with someone of a different race. I'm not just talking about black and white, but also Hispanics and Asians as well.

Way too often when walking by somebody different from ourselves we look at them as if they were in a cage in a zoo. We stare in amazement at how somebody could be so strange, so different, so completely opposite from anything we've ever known before. After looking at them for a brief moment we continue walking, thinking the same stereotypical things we did before.

College is supposed to be about learning something new. Unless an effort is made to associate with someone or something different from the known, nothing can truly be learned. So I ask everyone to at least give others a chance. Hang out with someone in a fraternity or sorority, somebody from a different religion, race, state or nationality. You might be happily surprised at what you learn.

## The Gamecock

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### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

#### 'Yes, Virginia, there is a God'

To the editor:

I am writing this letter in response to Michele Dames' article on "Bible pushers." I am in no way planning to "bash" Ms. Dames. In fact, I respect her views and writing skills. I am, however, going to clear up a few things that have been on my mind. I am deeply saddened by the lack of morality of this campus in particular and the country in general. I have read many disturbing things in this paper ranging from the cloning issue to whether

or not a mother has the right to choose an abortion. And where I could spend hours speaking my mind on these controversial items, I am, instead, going to tend to the topic at hand.

Ms. Dames has stated that she was "attacked" by someone trying to push their faith in her lap. She went on to state, in no uncertain terms, that these people should leave her alone. For the most part I agree with Ms. Dames. Not to take anything away from my "Bible pushing" brethren, but that type of witnessing is a bit overzealous and tends to push people further away from God, not bring them closer. In 1 John 4:12, John states that "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God

lives in us and his love is made complete in us." This verse is one of the fundamental writings that express the belief of witnessing by example. If we're living the life that Jesus requires of us, then that will become evident to nonbelievers. They will see the joy and excitement in our lives and with a burning desire or just morbid curiosity, they will come closer to see what it is that we have that they are missing. That is the way you should be witnessing, not pounding people on the head with your Bible, trying to meet some nonexistent quota of saving 20 people in one day. Again, your exuberance is commendable, although a little misdirected.

As for Ms. Dames' belief that God does not exist, I ask you this: have you ever looked at a sunset? If not, then I suggest that you do so. Look at that masterpiece in the sky, the ultimate work of art, and tell me that you honestly believe that it came from nowhere; that it simply came into existence one day from absolutely nothing.

In closing I leave you with this: the next time you're walking to class and you see the complexity of a flower or the beauty of the sky, I ask you; who do you think made all of that?

Jason Ravan  
Studio Art, sophomore