

NEXT WEEK

▶ We'll have a column from Quentin, if we can find him! Call us if you know where he is 777-7726.

VIEWPOINTS

QUOTE, UNQUOTE

"I'd like to think this would be an introduction to the real world."
Dr. John Saffo, professor of self-paced astronomy course

Wednesday, June 10, 1998

The Gamecock

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The Gamecock

Serving the Carolina Community since 1908

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TAKE OUR WORD

There are few good reasons not to vote

Did you vote in yesterday's primaries? If not, are you planning to vote on November 3? We hope you are nodding "yes" to one or both of these questions.

We know it's hard, especially for those whose precincts are miles away. But don't forget that you can vote with an absentee ballot. Make sure to plan ahead if you choose that option, though. Richland County's Voter Registration recommends that you request a ballot by October 1st in order to get your vote in on time; call your county's office early this fall to ensure that you'll have your ballot when you need it.

Of course, there are obstacles other than distance that keep college students from voting. Some are simply apathetic. Others think their vote doesn't really count, a notion we reject as rather silly fatalism. Some races are closer than you think; your vote could truly help your candidate to be elected. When a candidate you helped elect makes policies that you believe in, you will be glad you made yourself heard. And if that same candidate does something with which do not approve, you have a legitimate reason to call in and complain.

There is yet another reason that people don't vote, a reason that is difficult to address, because it occurs for so many different reasons. It can be characterized as a general disgust with the system.

PROBLEM

There are many excuses people use for not voting.

SOLUTION

Candidates can help make voting easier.

While this problem has innumerable causes, we think part of the issue starts with the fact that we are bombarded with advertisements for candidates. That isn't a problem until you

consider the fact that many of those ads don't include information about the candidates, unless you call party association and possibly a slogan information.

Our roadsides are littered with red, white and blue signs that encourage us to vote for a candidate without offering us any good reason. The candidates hope that we, the voters, will recognize their names on the ballots and therefore vote them into office. Isn't it scary people might vote based on name recognition alone? We fear that this tactic might work; candidates obviously believe it does or they wouldn't invest in the signs.

Ideally, each citizen would come to the voting booth armed with pertinent information about the candidates, so he or she can make informed decisions. We have to take the initiative to learn about them on our own, but our research needs to be facilitated by the candidates themselves. Candidates should use the money they pour into tacky roadside signs on more meaningful tools. They could invest in literature that explains their positions in detail. Then, voting will be based on something more than name recognition.



college press EXCHANGE

Columnist eschews fashion

This weekend at my grandmother's beach house, I saw an old picture of myself from the eighties. I can't



kiki MCCORMICK
 Viewpoints Editor

pinpoint exactly how old I was, but I'm certain of the decade. I could tell by my attire: jams, long feather earrings, a twist-a-bead necklace and twenty or so jelly bracelets. I mention this not to reminisce about the tackiest decade to date, but to illustrate the sort of travesty that occurs when I try to be trendy.

In recent years, I've paid very little attention to fashion trends. I don't read women's magazines or watch TV, so I'm pretty much out of the loop where fashion is concerned. I only notice that which is "in" if, say, every girl on campus seems to be wearing a certain item. Such was the case with the chunky high heeled black shoes that seem to be so popular right now.

I never would have bought a pair if I hadn't experienced a rare

moment of insecurity, coupled with an even rarer full checking account. These two oddities occurred at the same moment, when I found in my mailbox both my tax return and an invitation to my ex-boyfriend's wedding.

Never mind that I've been married for nearly two years. The idea of an old boyfriend being officially taken is still weird.

This, after all, is the guy who begged me to run away with him up until the day before my own wedding; the guy who tried to make me promise to marry him if my marriage didn't work out.

I had to wonder, who is this fabulous girl who could make him forget about me? Is she prettier than me? Nicer than me? Smarter? Somehow, I came to the conclusion that she must just have better fashion sense.

So, after depositing my tax return, I went shopping. I bought a few dresses, tops, a bathing suit and a pair of the aforementioned chunky high heeled black shoes.

Then, I planned a trip to the beach (where my ex had moved, supposedly to withdraw from life and become a hermit, after I married).

I was going to meet this girl, and I was not going to do it in cutoffs and my favorite pair of sandals, which are not in fact a pair, but are leftovers

from two similarly styled pairs that have each lost a member.

It was on my way to the restaurant to meet my ex and his fiancée that I turned my ankle. It hurt, it really hurt, but I met the fiancée anyway (she was prettier than me and nicer too).

I was just fine until I turned my ankle again. Yes, that's right, I put the shoes back on after injuring myself the first time. Oh, well, at least my ex was amused.

My poor husband wasn't amused, though, after four hours in a Florence hospital with a whining wife and our antsy baby.

We had tried to make it home to Columbia, but the pain got so bad that I was displaying mannerisms that, according to my husband, I hadn't shown since giving birth.

Six x-rays later, the doctors couldn't find any broken bones, so I was sent home with a pair of crutches and an Ace bandage. I felt a little guilty, having wasted so much of my husband's time for what was diagnosed as a bruised foot.

I didn't go home with a cast to show for this experience, but I sure got a good lesson: it is, in fact, better to feel good than to look good. I am determined that this experience will remain my last foray into fashion consciousness. Unless, of course, jelly bracelets come back in style.

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