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"This is one piece of the educational program that is of tremendous value to you. It will change your life if you let it."  
*Pat Willer, director of International Programs for Students*

# VIEWPOINTS

Wednesday, October 7, 1998

The Gamecock

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**The Gamecock**  
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**TAKE OUR WORD**

## Scandal finds its way into history

We've been reading American history all our lives. The different wars, slavery, the Great Depression, presidential assassinations - they've all been tattooed into our minds.

But rarely does there come a time when we live history; when we know that this moment in time will go down forever, and that years from now people will be learning the names and events that occurred today.

Well, history is now. During the past few months, the public has been blitzkrieged with the presidential scandal. And during the whole process, talks of impeachment have boiled hotter and hotter.

Well, as of press time on Tuesday, the vote to begin impeachment proceedings (that is, the vote to vote on impeachment) is scheduled for Thursday by the full House.

As you may recall from your history textbook, no president has ever been removed from office, and only one president, Andrew Johnson (1865-1868), has ever gone through impeachment proceedings. He escaped impeachment by a single vote.

One other, President Richard Nixon (1968-1975), was told that if impeachment proceedings started, he would be impeached. He re-

**TOPIC**  
*History is occurring right before our eyes.*

**OUR OPINION**  
*The public needs to pay attention to the events.*

signed before it all happened. This is only the third time in American history that the thought of impeachment has been taken seriously. And this time it's President Clinton's name making the books.

Clinton's possible reasons for being impeached are "high crimes and misdemeanors." Essentially, Congress is trying to decide if the president abused his power and if there was a breach in his duties as president.

These charges, of course, go way beyond the affair with Monica Lewinsky. They include possible cover-ups and enforced lying on the part of the president.

We, as a nation, are posing serious questions about what we consider the 'private' lives of our public officials.

These proceedings are of great historical significance. We, as a public, need to pay close attention to what is going on.

Even though we may be tired of hearing the sensationalism and lurid details of the scandal, it's important we play an active part in these proceedings, because what we do today affects the future.

What we do today will remain, as a guide, a reference, to those in the future who look to the past for inspiration.

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## Family reunions need a little spicing up

**W**oo-ha! It's the fall season, so you know what that means... No, it's not the imperialistic takeover of your favorite Third World Country season - yet. It's family reunion time! Yeaah!

I, being in a family that reunites once a year (hence the word "gubernatorial"), have recently endured the arduous and wrenching adult ritual of the reuniting of relatives last weekend, and I must say, I have no idea how I lived to tell the tale.

This is not to say I don't love my family, because I don't. It's just that, when you're there and you're saying "hi" to people who keep saying, "Oh, I can't believe how big you are! I remember when you were still wetting the bed! Gee, that must have been four years ago now," it gets kind of mundane.

Well, it was kind of good because I saw a couple of cousins my age whom I have not seen in a long time. I also saw my 90-year-old great-grandfather, who is 90 years old.

Bored, along with my cousins, we decided to come up with ways to make this one hellacious shin-dig.

These are the essential ingredients we came up with, but you're free to include anything else you may find pertinent to your own reunion: 1) Kegs, 2) family (optional).

After 30 minutes of laborious, mind-exhausting planning and scheming, plus a lot of chicken and a couple interruptions from grandmom, we decided that the aforementioned ingredients were all we needed at the time to improve our current condition.

We cited past experiences in which the "nectar of the gods" and family were mixed. We came up with this equation, which was verified as accurate by the National Hurricane Center in Miami and the Yale "Tang" Organizing Committee in New Haven: frosty adult beverages plus family minus proper authorities equals a superfluous amount of fun and family bonding.

This is now an official theorem or mathematical law or whatever. But yeah, imagine the stories you could tell

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your kids of grand mom taking an 82 second keg stand, or watching your 10-year-old cousin call Ralph on the big, white telephone.

I remember when I went to Philly one time for my cousin's wedding. At the reception afterwards, there was an open bar. Those two words attract my family faster than a Japanese businessman falling out an 18-story window. Because my family up North, well, they know how to drink. And boy did we ever (you've got to see the video tapes).

My cousin cited another time when he went to a wedding up in Philly, and his family did the same thing.

But not my family down here. Maybe it's the conservatism, but there was no alcohol at this last family reunion.

So we were subjected to playing badminton and paddle-boating on the lake.

Now, I'm not saying that I didn't have a good time, because I didn't, but the fact is it would have been less not fun if I had been able to mumble incoherent phrases to my relatives.

Also, with the liquid courage in our veins, we would've been able to make fun of those relatives we really didn't know and just really got on our nerves, right in front of them.

It wouldn't matter because we wouldn't see them for a year or so and we could plead ignorance.

So, the next time you have a family reunion, why not liven it up a little with some golden Kool-Aid, and just have a good ol' time? And make sure to stay away from games like lawn darts and horse shoes, for they might puncture the kegs.

## USC's funding may distract from learning

At first, it sounds like good news. USC has received \$92 million in research funding this year, putting us closer to the goals President Palms has set for making us a top-notch research university. We are currently designated a "Research II"

school, while most members of the American Association of Universities (to which we aspire) are "Research I."

But there is something rotten here. While we like the idea of improving USC's reputation, we worry about what is sacrificed.

Deans are setting goals for professors to publish more and submit more proposals.

Obviously, this takes time. It takes time that could be spent teaching and helping students out

**TOPIC**  
*USC's personal success may be interfering with teaching ability.*

**OUR OPINION**  
*The university needs to worry more about the quality of education its students are getting.*

with their problems. Students come to this university to learn. Larger classes with distant professors are not as conducive to learning as are smaller classes with professors who are available.

When professors aren't being pressured to produce constantly, they can more easily devote themselves to teaching.

We may be looking at a situation where a degree we get from USC gets us more respect because our university is more prestigious, but in reality, that degree means less because we haven't been taught well.

We are hoping the administration of this university will address this possibility even as it pushes towards AAU status.

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## Morality should become enforced law

My husband related to me what I hope was a whopper the other day. Listening to NPR, he heard about a study someone did on parking lot courtesy that tells me all I want to know about the state of our collective soul.

Apparently, the researchers sat watching a parking lot and recorded the time it took for cars to back out of their spaces once their owners got to them. Their data showed people took longer to pull their cars out if there was someone waiting for the space.

What does this say about human beings? If this report is true, it seems people "have it in" for their fellow man. They (notice I didn't say "we" - I hereby disaffiliate myself from mankind) willfully thwart the efforts of other peo-

ple, even when it's easier to go about business as usual. While this example is a petty concern, you've got to wonder if this attitude extends into relationships less fleeting.

After all, it's easier to be nice when things require little effort, what do we do when it's difficult to give someone a hand?

Sometimes, not much. We've all heard stories of crimes that have taken place while numerous onlookers failed to interfere, even to pick up the telephone and call for help. And recently, we've been appalled at the story of David Cash, who watched his friend molest a 7-year-old girl, who was then killed because Cash didn't bother to intervene.

Sure, the Cash case is a little extreme, but his reasoning isn't. He said he didn't feel it was his responsibility to step in and help because it didn't affect him personally; he didn't want to deal with other people's problems. In other words, he just recited modern mores.

He showed us what happens when our current "do what's right for

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me" philosophy is tested. He showed us the future.

So what can we do to make the psychopathic portion of the population realize and care that they don't live in a vacuum? (By the way, I'm thinking that portion is pretty large, and growing rapidly).

Well, it seems we're going to have to - hold on to your seats - "legislate morality." (I love it when people say we can't do that, as the evidence is on my side. We do it all the time. It just means we're building a code of conduct for living in our society.) In this particular case, we need laws that institutionalize kindness.

You'll remember the last episode of "Seinfeld," where the characters were thrown in jail for "doing nothing" while someone was robbed.

I think we should be hauled off for lesser offenses. If we know someone is doing something bad or stupid, we should be required to step in. We used to have religion to compel us to behave; we need to find a substitution now that higher laws are out of vogue.

Anyway, you'll be happy to know there's hope for at least half the population.

The same study that showed people dallying when others waited for spaces showed that men tended to move faster if the waiting car was expensive. Apparently, wealth commands respect for men.

That kind of thing makes me glad to be a woman; we may be as mean as men, but we're not as shallow. That makes us more redeemable.

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