

"We're not where we need to be, but I thank God we aren't where we used to be."

Lou Holtz

# Viewpoints

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Friday, April 9, 1999

The Gamecock

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## The Gamecock

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### TAKE OUR WORD

## Web best place to watch hate groups

Davis Wolfgang Hawke and his white supremacist organization, the Knights of Freedom, should be repulsive to any rational human being.

Their views on "nonwhite" racial and ethnic groups are full of ignorance, prejudice and just plain hatred. They go against everything our country stands for.

But even though this group and its views fill us with disgust, they still have every right to profess them. Whether it be on their Internet site or at a public rally, Hawke and the Knights of Freedom are protected by the First Amendment, and it's a good thing they are.

The proliferation of hate groups and their Web sites on the Internet has led some to ask whether the Internet is actually encouraging the growth of these groups.

But these organizations do not create racism; they simply encourage it and give people an organization to identify with. While this is an undesirable outcome of their Web-based advertising, it is more important that they stay out in the open.

## Episode One makes Fox, Lucas too greedy

This year's "movie of the century" will undoubtedly be the first installment of the Star Wars prequel, "The Phantom Menace."

Fans, however, will have to be careful where they choose to see Episode One. Fox Studios is issuing a list of stipulations for theaters to meet before they can show "The Phantom Menace." In addition to having up-to-date screen and sound capabilities, Fox wants each theater to show the film for no less than two months. If a cinema shows this film on two screens, it still must keep the movie on both screens for the minimum time allowed.

Fox also wants a maximum of eight minutes of previews before the movie, and no non-movie advertisements are allowed. Although final terms are yet to be worked out between the cinemas and Fox, there is much to be

**TOPIC**  
Web sites for Internet hate groups.

**OUR OPINION**  
Letting them stay in the public eye is the best way to fight these organizations.

A Web site might drag in vulnerable followers who normally wouldn't join a hate group. But in addition to prospective bigots, the site can also be viewed by civil and human rights organizations that are trying to monitor them.

Keeping groups like this out in the open is one of the best ways to fight them. That way, their ideas and methodology can be fully understood. The best way to beat the enemy is to know him better than he knows himself.

Also, suppression of these groups gives them more leverage in attracting attention and positive publicity. If they are censored in any way, they can say they are being oppressed. This has the tendency to attract people who normally wouldn't sympathize with their cause.

Groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center and the Anti-Defamation League have the right idea. Hate groups should be monitored closely in case there are any clues to actual criminal activity. But until then, let them stay on the Internet. It's always good to keep an eye on them.

said about how our society is building up this movie.

George Lucas knows his picture is the most highly anticipated film ever, and he's using this to push the movie as much as possible. By making these stipulations, Fox is more or less saying that it knows the film will gross highly at the box office and that the audience should only see it in the best of conditions.

Although it appears Fox is trying to give its audience the best product possible, fans should be aware of the unique advantage Fox and Lucas have.

Lucas and Fox are only concerned about making as much money from this film as possible, and by creating such an uproar over this movie, fans are now more impatient than ever.

However, we do hope "The Phantom Menace" blows "Titanic" out of the water.

## REFUGEES



## People too obsessed with millennium

As we count down toward the apocalypse, medical experts have deemed tomorrow Millennium Conception Day.

Thousands of couples around the world want to have the honor of being the parents of the first child born in the third millennium.

And to have the best chance of having a child Jan. 1, 2000, people are supposed to try and conceive tomorrow.

So don't be surprised if you know some young couples who will be spending all day tomorrow in the throes of passion, trying to see if they can score the big one with the "millennium baby." Word is that some people have actually aborted current pregnancies out of their manic desire to have the first child of next year.

The first thing that comes to mind is that with everyone worrying about

the Y2K bug causing a technological meltdown, why would anyone want to be in a hospital on New Year's? Last time I checked, even for the most routine births, doctors use lots of electronic and computer equipment. And if there were complications in the birth, doctors would be using all sorts of monitors, jumper cables and other sorts of medical technology.

Ideally, hospitals will all be prepared for the potential disasters that could occur. But this desire to have millennium's child is just another example of the world's schizophrenia toward the coming of the next thousand years.

For every person who wants the Y2K baby or who can't wait to ring in the new year at "the biggest party of the century," there is somebody stocking up on tomato soup and building a shelter in the back yard.

First of all, these preparations are for such an arbitrary day. Other than possible Y2K computer bug problems, there is nothing special about the year 2000. The only reason it will fall on the day it does is because somebody centuries ago decided this was how our calendar would work. In fact, the next millennium doesn't even start next year. It's actually in 2001.



ROB GIOIELLI  
columnist

"I guess compared to a bloody glove and a semen-stained dress, the millennium is a big deal."

Our obsession with Y2K might seem ludicrous, but historically, it fits the pattern of putting meaning on dates that really don't have any. In 1899, there was a lot of hysteria about the world coming to an end at the turn of the century. Religious fanatics who practice numerology have put meaning on certain days of this century, saying those were the days the earth was going to end.

Needless to say, all these people were wrong about their predictions. And unless there is some major computer catastrophe, we will probably all be here one year from today. But this desire to assign significance to a date just because all the numbers turn to zero says something about our culture.

We seem starved for meaning and significance in our lives. Right now, if you were to define the American experience in the 1990s, the first two things in someone's mind could be the

O.J. Simpson trial and the Monica Lewinsky scandal. I guess compared to a bloody glove and a semen-stained dress, the millennium is a big deal.

Ideally, in nine months, the whole thing will end up being a blip on the historical radar. This would happen if we would all stop worrying about it and get on with our lives. Paranoia begets paranoia. Some people have talked about taking all their money out of the bank in case banks collapse because of the Y2K bug. Well, in case anyone hasn't checked, banks don't fail because of computer problems — they fail because people take all their money out. And most banks are federally insured anyway.

People will get drunk, a few computers will crash and a lot of babies will be born. Then we can get on to worrying about things that really matter. Like who will win the Super Bowl.

## U.S. has no business taking action in Balkans

The United States of America: kindergarten teacher to the world. Be nice, share, don't hit people,



EMILY STREYER  
columnist

hug and sign a treaty, then go have a cookie.

We are on the verge of starting another world war (do we really want to play Who's Got the Button with Russia?) because of a few dangerously misunderstood analogies. The current global crisis, which exists only because the United States is paying attention, recalls the pre-World War I powder keg and 1930s appeasement — but not for the reasons people think.

World War I didn't start because a legally elected leader was killing people, it started because an outside power got involved in a local incident. A Serb assassinated an Austria-Hungarian. The conflict escalated, and Russia stepped in to help the Serbs. Austria-Hungary called in a favor from Germany, and France had said it would back Russia. Then we had a war.

Let's talk about NATO, whose forces are supposed to be defensive. NATO counterbalanced the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War and has been running around like a loose end ever since it ended. During the Cold War, the arrangement was that if an Iron Curtain-aligned country started something with a free country, everyone would go to war. Another way to put it: If my hand's on the button and your hand's on the button, we'll both be nice to each other.

There's your pre-World War I Europe: A bunch of major powers agreed to support each other during a war, and when a local conflict erupted, everyone got involved. Other people take the humanitarian approach, which is commendable, but the truth is that atrocities go on everywhere. Man's inhumanity to itself is one of the world's oldest phenomena, and it's not going to stop any time soon. Why are we in the Balkans? Why aren't we in South America or Africa? Why aren't we fixing some of our own problems?

I'm not trying to say Slobodan Milosevic is a nice person. But in the words of Henry Kissinger, he's a "Balkan thug," not a military mastermind. Milosevic is a politician who got hold of some big guns.

But let's talk about the KLA. People point out that the Kosovars sup-

ported the most recent pact. Of course they did — NATO was willing to beat up their enemy if he didn't sign, too. It was the smart, tactical move. A few mere months ago, the United States regarded the KLA as a terrorist organization. (The most recent "official" State Department list available was from 1997.) The KLA's goal is not to get away from oppressive Serbs; they want an Albanian state. Milosevic is trying to keep a province of his country from seceding. The KLA wants Kosovo and parts of Macedonia, too. Think the KLA will stop once it gets Serbian independence? Think again.

There's your appeasement. Milosevic wants to kill his enemies. The Kosovars want to create a nation of Albanians and recapture their homeland. Who's your Fuhrer?

The United States is the most resentful nation in the world, and I know that if it weren't involved, people would be complaining about that, too. So it might as well please itself, and what it should do is get out. America shouldn't be there. It has no interests in the Balkans, and it shouldn't be financing someone's civil war. If the Kosovars get independence on their own, more power to them. If they decide they want Macedonia or Greece, too, then the United States might have reason to get involved — on the side AGAINST the Kosovars.

The media keep spouting rhetoric of "peace and stability" in Europe, but I have news for it, too: There's never going to be peace in the Balkans. In that part of the world, people don't align themselves according to nationality or lines drawn on a map, they identify with races — tribes that go back further than maps.

If you need identification with a group to define yourself, take your pick — some groups are more arbitrary than others. As an economics student, I believe the acceptance of and capitalization on differences between groups can make the world a better place, but you can't drive enlightenment into people with tanks.

Why are Americans so hung up on making everybody live together in a happy melting pot under beautiful democracy? Not everybody wants to be like the United States. It's not that happy over here, and it's not that beautiful. Americans are still trying to reconcile hundreds of years of prejudice and misunderstanding. Parts of Europe and Asia Minor are working on thousands.

America can't fix it for them in a few days over a cushy diplomatic retreat, and it can't fix it with a week or two of fire bombing. They have to do it themselves.

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## Braves problems go back years

To the Editor:  
Just when I thought nothing could surpass Shawn Singleton's ill-informed, gutter-minded flirtations with defamation suits as testimony to *The Gamecock's* desperation for sports writing, along comes David Cloninger's broadside at Braves manager Bobby Cox ("Braves' Cox Worst Manager in Baseball," April 7). Like the heckler he is,

Cloninger doesn't let reality get in the way of his desire to seem witty.

Cloninger writes of Cox's first managerial stint: "If he couldn't win with the likes of Dale Murphy and Bob Horner, what makes us think he could possibly win now?" Well, here's some news: neither could Joe Torre, who now manages the Yankees. Neither could Chuck Tanner, who managed the World Champion 1979 Pirates. Both managed the Braves of Murphy and Horner — and, between them, couldn't get beyond a single league championship series. Why don't we hear Cloninger ranting

about what miserable managers Torre and Tanner were?

The problem with the Braves has always been too much starting pitching, too many home runs, not enough manufacturing and questionable bullpens. That's not just under Bobby Cox; that's also under Tanner and Torre in the 1980s, under Cox and Dave Bristol in the 1970s, under Luman Harris in the 1960s, and in Milwaukee under Fred Haney in the 1950s. That's why the Braves have Hall of Famers like Hank Aaron and Eddie Matthews and not Lou Brock and Joe Morgan.

The last time I checked, Bobby Cox had seven division titles, four pennants and a World Championship as Braves manager. David Cloninger had none. I'd suspect Cox knows a thing or two more about managing a ball team than does Cloninger. Maybe that's why Cox is in the dugout and why Cloninger is nothing more than a loudmouth in the bleachers.

Jodie Peeler  
Journalism Graduate Student

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