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Viewpoints

"First we thought it was fireworks, then we saw them shooting."

Jake Apoeaca, sophomore
Columbine High School, Denver

The Gamecock

Serving the Carolina Community since 1908

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TAKE OUR WORD

Computerized test requires adjustment

The general GRE has joined the Age of Computers and done away with the pen-and-pencil version.

An unofficial score is available immediately upon finishing and the official score is ready in half the time of the old version.

TOPIC

The electronic version of the GRE.

OUR OPINION

Students will have to relearn their test-taking skills for the new version.

tion before going forward and there's no more going back to a hard question after you've had a chance to do all the others.

Educational Testing Services, the company that produces the GRE, claims that the paper version and the computer version

The new GRE is an example of what is known as "computer-adaptive testing," in which the test adapts itself to the taker during the test.

The computer has access to thousands of questions, and each question is chosen according to its relative difficulty compared with the preceding question and whether that question was answered correctly.

Rather than reporting a score out of a set of standard questions, the test score assesses the level at which the student answers questions correctly.

Some of the new format's biggest drawbacks are the rules that you must answer every ques-

are statistically equivalent in terms of scoring.

On the whole, the pros do seem to outweigh the cons, but we wish there were a way to preserve the test-taking skills drilled into us since elementary school: If you get stuck, do the other problems first.

Success at standardized tests is as much a psychological feat as it is an intellectual one. Statistics cannot "prove" anything, and even though most of us are quite familiar with computers, a new testing format requires adjustments. We'll just have to take the statistics with a grain of salt and then take the test, as well. Change is good, and we'll live.

Knowledge of law needed for position

The Student Government senate just approved President Malik Hussar's Cabinet. But the senate had some reservations.

Some tension arose over the appointment of Chris Dorsel as the attorney general when one senator asked Dorsel if he had taken a constitutional law class. Dorsel answered "no" but cited his familiarity with the codes, the SG constitution and ability to be impartial as his main qualifications for the job.

We would like to remind Dorsel that the attorney general must know more than just the SG codes.

Sometimes, the attorney general must overrule SG actions not only for violation of codes, but also for violation of state and federal law.

Of course, *The Gamecock* has a vested interest. Last fall, former Attorney General Peter Siachos proved his knowledge of law and his dedication to the job.

During a "tiff" between SG and this newspaper over what is and is not public information, Siachos

TOPIC

Chris Dorsel's appointment to attorney general.

OUR OPINION

Dorsel needs to know more than the codes and realize his loyalty is to the law.

ruled that SG had violated state public records laws.

Siachos, a second-year law student, had a difficult time deciphering the law. We expect a rising senior English major will, too.

So, what does *The Gamecock* want Dorsel to do to prepare for this job? We want him to organize a workshop for both student journalists and Student Government members.

This will help us, SG members and Dorsel get a better understanding of federal law.

We also want Dorsel to understand that his loyalty is not to SG. His job is enforcing law and doing what is right despite whom he might be up against.

We acknowledge that Dorsel has other qualifications for the job and that he's obviously an intelligent and talented person. We just hope he will familiarize himself with the necessary laws outside of SG codes.

If he educates himself and those around him, we have no



Son realizes true love for his father

Amid the end-of-the-semester headaches, my mom called Monday night to tell me our dog, Bell, had died. As I heard my grief-stricken mother deliver me the bad news, I got a little choked up. Even a 20-year-old gets a bit sad when he hears his mother cry. My mom told me Bell had been refusing food and water and wasn't being the energetic and loving canine we had known for 11 years.



KEVIN LANGSTON
columnist

She also told me how my dad cared for her in her last days. He hand-fed her food and water, spending several hours by her side. My dad actually saw Bell take her last breath on the back-door stoop.

The image of my dad caring for Bell warmed me up. While I listened to my mom, I thought of my dad and how sad

he really must have been to see Bell die.

My dad was hard on Bell. If she dug holes in our back yard, Dad would scold her and send her away with her tail between her legs. He was always tough on her, but, to the very end, he loved her. I know he did.

My mom said he cared for Bell when no one was looking. This fits my dad. I can imagine him sneaking out the back door to care for her when no one else was paying attention. My dad has a heart of gold, but he doesn't reveal it very often, or at least not in a typical manner.

Throughout my life, my dad has been a stern figure in the household. He is the authority of the family. He lets my mom take care of the nurturing part, while he issues the rules. He shows few emotions, other than anger and frustration. My dad has never cried in front of my brothers and me, and I can't remember the last time he told me he loved me.

But my dad proves that to me every day. He has been a pillar for our family, his mom and his brother. He has to be the strong one and set an example for his three sons. I know my dad

"I know my dad cares for us. He might not say it often, but that doesn't mean he doesn't love us."

cares for us. He might not say it often, but that doesn't mean he doesn't love us.

One of the biggest surprises I ever had was when my dad called me last week to wish me a happy 20th birthday. My mom was in New York, and my brothers had just left Columbia after visiting me when my dad called *The Gamecock* production room. How he got the number, I don't know, but there I was, talking to my dad. He took it upon himself to call me. This was very special — perhaps the greatest gift I've received in a long time.

I love my dad. I love him dearly. I know I haven't told him so in a long time, but I do. My mom tells me how he brags to his co-workers about his three sons. She tells me he's proud of us and loves all of us. For the longest time, I wondered why he couldn't tell us that himself, but now I realize he

has been. He tells us in everything he does. He tells us when he cooks supper or does the laundry. He tells us when he reprimands us for staying out too late or talking back.

Something would be terribly wrong if my dad weren't upset every time we broke the rules. He makes those rules to ensure our safety and well-being. By breaking them, not only do we disrespect our parents, but we disrespect ourselves.

My dad loves me, and he loves my brothers. I love him back. He's my dad. Whether he's yelling at us or telling us he loves us, I'm a part of him.

I used to hope I didn't have any of my father's qualities inside me. Now, I pray I have a fraction of his strength, his morals, his dedication and his heart. I am my father's son, and I couldn't be any happier about it.

A guide to the wonderful world of free stuff

Spring is here. The Horseshoe resembles Fort Lauderdale, the flowers suddenly show their glory and laugh their yellow breath at our relative drabness, and we take off our sheltering coats and begin to feel things again. The natural world and people's interaction



ALI FREEMAN
columnist

with it morph before our very eyes, and change seems inevitable.

The feeling is furthered with the impending doom of an approaching graduation. Oh sure, now we get to go out in the world and do what we're trained to do or wait tables. We get to stop accruing debt and start accumulating capital. Oh, it's a very exciting time. But with the gain of our high-paying jobs as shoe salespersons, we lose the low-cost freebies of college life.

Underclassmen, this, too, will one day be your fate. Don't let college melt away like your vernal season sinuses. Appreciate it. There are, of course, many ways you can revel in the glory of collegiate life, but one method is

through appreciation of free and cheap stuff.

There are often people handing out goodies on Greene Street, and Carolina Productions is always up to some creative expenditure of student activity fees, but there are other student advantages you might not be as familiar with.

Take advantage of student discounts, and supplement your learning with a little culture. The Koger Center sells \$5 student rush tickets for every show in its "Koger Presents" series, which includes all traveling shows that visit Koger. Thirty minutes before a show, you can get the next-best seats in the house. Of course, you're not guaranteed tickets. The next-best seats for January's sold-out "Smokey Joe's Cafe" were in the lobby. But you could have had front seats for acclaimed pianist Ian Hobson's beautiful concerts, and it's likely you can get pretty good seats to hear world music by The Festival of Four tonight. An insider's tip: Surprisingly, there is a multitude of open seats for the majority of Koger events.

If you're looking for a cultural bargain that's a little less mainstream, try the theatre department. The Puppet Regime, the student theater organization, often performs wacky plays for \$3 or less in Benson, the black-box theater. And the end of each semester is greeted with a multitude of free per-

formances of directing projects by the undergraduate or graduate ilk.

Or, guide yourself to a free, independent music appreciation study by wandering down to the music building. Student recitals, ranging from not bad to pretty amazing (like the music ensembles in the little recital hall), seem to go on nearly every minute of every day.

Similarly, lectures, ranging from the hideous to the enlightening, occur all over campus at about every minute of every day. Giving up on school and reading to obtain an education purely through lectures and thesis defenses might not be the best idea, but it can be a pretty great supplement. You live in a knowledge factory; be a part of it.

Engage in new modes of physical vigor. We have a P.E. center complete with opportunities to do something crazy with your body. You can take yoga, swimming, fencing or horseback riding, no experience required. There are tons of dance classes, and you need not be a prima ballerina to take them. You can take jazz, ballet or modern dance for credit.

A lesser-known fact is that, as a USC student, you can take USC Dance Conservatory classes for free. These cover everything from classical ballet to African or Irish dance. And since elementary, middle and some high school students dominate the classes, there is

a spring recital. So you might just be lucky enough to get that sequined moment of glory you have dreamed of for so long.

Go to a sporting event. Other people pay big money for this privilege. And if you get bored watching the game, check out Cockey. And even if you aren't bored, you might get more for your money (or free-ey, as the case might be) by supplementing your entertainment with visions of the kooky red bird. In the middle of a football game, Cockey is frequently spotted searching the cops, harassing children, stealing golf carts or sweeping the sidelines.

There are also less legal ways to enjoy campus freebies, like feasting on the frequent campus or wedding receptions or finding the hidden secrets of parking pleasure. There are a few parking oases on or near campus to be found by the adventurous student who's not afraid to accrue a few tickets in his quest. These treasures aren't as abundant as student rush tickets, though, so you will have to be brave explorers.

As graduation approaches, the notes from the alumni club are beginning to clutter my mailbox, asking me to give money back to the university that gave me so much. Soon the bills and loan payoffs will follow. But as long as you're a student, take advantage of being a net receiver in society.

The Gamecock

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The Gamecock is the student newspaper of The University of South Carolina and is published Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the fall and spring semesters and five times during the summer with the exception of university holidays and exam periods. Opinions expressed in The Gamecock are those of the editors or author and not those of The University of South Carolina. The Board of Student Publications and Communications is the publisher of The Gamecock. The Department of Student Media is the newspaper's parent organization.

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SUBMISSIONS

Letters to the editor or guest columns are welcome from all members of the Carolina community. Letters should be 250-300 words. Guest columns should be an opinion piece of about 600-700 words. Both must include name, phone number, professional title or year and major, if a student. Handwritten submissions must be personally delivered to Russell House room 333. E-mail submissions must include telephone number for confirmation. The Gamecock reserves the right to edit for libel, style and space. Names will never be withheld. Photos are required for guest columnist and can be provided by the submitter. Call 777-7726 for more information.

SG needs student input to succeed

To the Editor: The 1999-2000 Student Government Student Services Committee has high expectations for the University of South Carolina in the coming year. We have been working hard to gather information and ideas about the student body's concerns. In order to successfully meet these needs, we thought it best to go

straight to the source. We have developed a survey that we will use to determine our goals and programs for the fall. A table will be set up on Greene Street today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in order to allow students to voice their concerns to Student Government. In addition, the survey will be available outside the Student Government Office in the Russell House for students to complete and drop in a suggestion box the entire week. There will be another box that will be circulated around

campus for the remainder of the semester. If you are incapable to drop your survey, please e-mail your concerns to us at uscstudentservice@yahoo.com

We cannot accurately assess the needs and wants of the Carolina community unless we get feedback from the student body. With your input, Student Government has the power to implement your ideas and accomplish goals that you have set forth for us. By participating in the survey and sharing

ideas, student will have a stronger voice on campus. Please support your Student Government by encouraging all Gamecocks to express their thoughts and opinions.

Melissa Fletcher,
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