



Viewpoints

QUOTE, UNQUOTE

'It's history. It [the Confederate flag] belongs in a museum, not in our faces.'

Jonathan Garrick, English senior

The Gamecock

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USC J-school students lack ambition, drive

If the graduating class was contingent on experience, the journalism class would consist of six people. Five of them are sitting in this newsroom. Granted journalism, seniors gain experience through the Carolina Reporter, but that is because they are forced to participate in order to graduate. The journalism school refuses to be embarrassed by its students' apathy.

Journalism advisers have admitted that this same apathy has resulted in a low talent pool and extremely inexperienced graduates. Sure, the students have made it through their required journalism classes, but they lack the real-world experience that is needed to survive within their field—experience that is available through Student Media, but disregarded. The resources needed to expand a person's resume are available, but not many people take advantage of those student-run organizations that are good for learning and making mistakes. *The Gamecock's* summer new writer's meeting is a prime example. We had a meeting because someone showed up—note the one. And this person was not even a journalism major.

Student Media offers opportunities for all fields of journalism, from advertising to broadcast to print to public relations, but despite a large journalism school enrollment, the department is always looking for students to assist.

Some argue that ambition and drive are lacking, that apathy is not the problem. Others will present the point that Student Media does not pay for most starting positions. Maybe they are right on both counts. However, the time it takes to write one article a week, building a portfolio of tens of articles in one semester and the experience gained by making your mistakes early far exceed the "now" rewards. Regardless of whether you begin your post-graduation career with only a waitressing job as experience or four internships, two co-ops, and student newspaper experience, you reap what you sow.

THE WASHINGTON POST

"NOBODY TOLD US ABOUT THE BUGS"



"NICE TIMING"



SOCIAL ISSUES

Not good enough to be a cop?

Each semester, *The Gamecock* runs articles, editorials and even guest columns on the parking situation here at USC.



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There aren't many people interested in publishing a letter to the editor thanking Meter Maid Mark for that \$15 ticket he left under their wipers. That's like thanking your dentist for pulling the wrong tooth.

Students complain about the University's lack of parking or their use of meters, but most fail to recognize the true villains ... the City of Columbia. The city owns all the meters running along the roads around campus and seems to have hired the city's most bitter, power-hungry tenants for meter maids.

Summer sessions are usually not as bad, but that could be due to the fact that there are only about 1/16th of the people on campus.

During the fall and spring semesters, the garages, student lots and vulture lots cannot accommodate the need for park-

ing, forcing students to pay their precious laundry money to the city meters.

Students living on campus are so thrilled with finding a spot during the week that they don't want to budge until the weekend comes because of fear of losing their spot.

Students who live off campus must either pay a pretty penny to get a spot in the packed garages or spend their semesters toning their calf muscles on the walk up from the Coliseum.

Almost everyone has had to park at a meter and feed it between classes. And what of those who arrive too late? The city meter maids advance on your car and slap the ticket up regardless of whether you're standing there watching or have only been gone for 59 seconds. You would think they work on commission.

Towing cars, however, seems to be the highlight of their day. Taking money from college students who are here to simply expand their minds is amusing, but taking their most prized possession and watching them cry must be FUN.

They show no mercy. They just call up Elgin's Towing and watch it go. Do not bother pleading or bargaining with these people, they don't care. They are in it for the game.

Empathy is simply an incapacity for them. I have heard the retorts—they are only doing their jobs, they HAVE to give you a ticket if your meter is expired, and

it's possible that I have only encountered the bad seeds.

However, after the number of tickets I have compiled in the last two years, I consider myself an expert at dealing with parking services and their employees and I have nothing positive to say.

I have had my car towed, received three tickets in one day, been accused of having stolen my car because I did not know my license number, and dealt with the end-of-semester towing ritual.

I have even feared for my life after walking up to a meter maid who was giving me a ticket and telling her to have a nice day. I think she sensed the sarcasm. But the time when I almost had my car towed in Five Points for having seven \$5 tickets and arguing with the meter men for more than half an hour takes the cake. I usually don't have destructive tendencies, but it took every ounce of self-control to keep from ramming their little white Cavalier.

Since the first week of May, I have regained control and my vengeance has turned into a crusade to investigate the inner workings of the parking services of the city and the university and devise a reasonable plan for trying to rid us of the city meters. If we cannot succeed, we will simply have to piss parking employees and services off every week.

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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. Anonymous letters will not be published. Photos are required for guest columnist and can be provided by the submitter. Call 777-7726 for more information.