

VIEWPOINTS

Fondly looking back upon one's college career

The end is near! No, these are not the twisted ramblings of a paranoid man in anticipation of judgement day and all the "hell-fire and brimstone" that come along with it. I am talking about my college career.

Yes, college has been fun and I will miss it dearly. I am almost certain I will find myself looking back every day and smiling upon the memories of all the great times I've had at the University of South Carolina.

But through it all, there has been one constant. There is one thing that has gotten me through all of the tough times and allowed me to have fun through just about anything ... beer. No, wait, I mean the support of my friends. Beer is good and all, but friends are much better to talk to.

When I came here, my graduation date was set for May 5, 2000. That was it; I had four years ahead of me to goof off and have the time of my life. Often, it didn't seem like I was utilizing my time as I wished I would, but in retrospect, I've made the best of my four years and I would never change one thing about them. My graduation date has been pushed back to December, but even with that extra semester ahead of me, I still have no idea what I want to do when I grow up. I don't want to grow up. I will be ready to leave college after I graduate, but there is no way I can be torn from Columbia, the city in which so many of my greatest moments have taken place.

College teaches you so many lessons, and 99 percent of them take place outside of the classroom. I have learned so much that I couldn't possibly go over even half those lessons here. But I will cover the most important ones for you. Hopefully you can learn from my mistakes.

1) Don't be shy if you come to school not knowing anyone. Everyone has reser-



Pete Johnson is a journalism senior and Viewpoints Editor. He can be reached at gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.

vations about making friends when they get to school. There will be open doors on your hall and music will blast from them. Find the one playing your favorite band and start a conversation. These people are your hallmates and are reaching out to you.

2) Just because you cannot taste the alcohol in a drink doesn't mean that it isn't there. Yes, Hornsby's tastes like apple cider the first time you drink it, but trust me, there is PLENTY of alcohol in there.

3) Shooting liquor is fun for awhile, until you actually taste it. I was much better at taking shots when I just drank them and didn't think. It's a lot like shooting free throws with the game on the line. If you think about how important the shot is, you are going to miss it.

3b) One more important note: If you get sick off of a particular kind of liquor, do not attempt to drink it again for at least six months. Depending on how bad that tequila night was, you will probably taste vomit upon taking a tequila shot the next weekend.

4) Whatever you do, do not become friends again with the girl who slept with your roommate and lead her to believe that all the pain that she caused you is "in the past." Pretty soon she'll be asking you if she can smoke up in your room and bat her eyelashes at you until you give in and say yes. Be thankful when the cops haul her away - it was for the best. This is just a hypothetical situation, of course.

5) Stay away from drugs. Well, it is almost impossible to stay away from drugs, just don't get involved by toking up with your stoner friends. Peer pressure is just a myth. Willpower conquers all. You shouldn't be concerned with meeting others' vision of "cool." Avoiding drugs is one of the best decisions I've ever made. Most of those stoners on your floor will have dropped out by the end of the year. And how much fun are you going to have living back at home and working as a pizza delivery boy because you couldn't keep your grades up?

6) Don't take college life too seriously. You can always make something good out of a bad situation, no matter how bad you think it might be.

7) Always keep in touch with your

family and friends at home. You might really be enjoying your new life at college, but just because you've gone from the chess club to the party star, doesn't mean you need to ignore your Dungeons and Dragon-playing friends at home. Your desire to be "cool" should not drive you to cut off people whom you don't think stack up to your new social class standing. This is high school behavior.

9) Be prepared to have spring fever, but more importantly, be prepared to deal with the fact that you are a fresh-

men and you will not be getting any from that hot brunette who just ignored you as she walked by. No, she did not smile at you. No, she did not look at you. No, you are not in love. It's all right to be a coward; you are a freshman and these girls are out of your league. Some day you will realize most of the girls you thought were hot will come across as fake in a few years.

10) HAVE FUN!! You're in college for chrissakes. Don't take anything too seriously, but know when to bear down

and put your nose to the grindstone.

I hope these pointers will be taken to heart. Remember to be remembered. Leave your mark wherever you go, physically and emotionally. If you spent a great year in your dorm room, take down a ceiling tile and write about it on the back. Chances are, somebody will appreciate it 30 years from now when they find it.

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