



The Gamecock

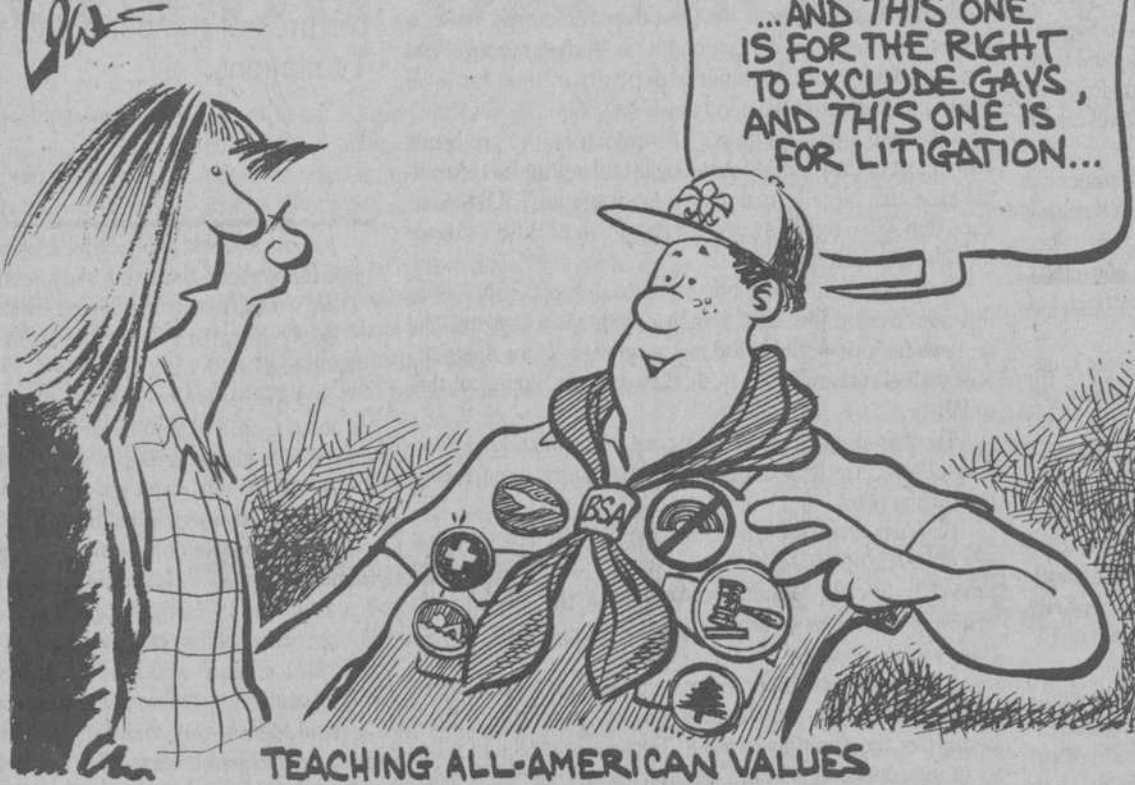
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NAPSTER

Where are our protest songs?

The end of Napster is near.

To prepare for this end of an era, I've spent the last few weeks staying up all night with the familiar homed Napster icon blinking in front of me, till the morning light streams through my window and my computer replies with hesitation to even the simplest orders.

The first week of my Napster-love was dedicated to finding all the songs I want — all the one-hit wonders and guilty pleasures I will not buy in my favorite record store. This includes, but is not limited to, disco classics and novelty songs. The first song I ever downloaded from Napster — and that's a milestone — was the Ohio Players' "Fire."

I am not ashamed, but I am waiting for Metallica to personally close Napster's — and my — shop. I can't blame Metallica

— catchy radio singles work well as hooks for bands who fill their albums with garbage. They don't want you to hear the rest of the album — they want you to buy their standard product unheard.

My second Napster week was more aesthetically dignified than the first. I used it to explore the rarities of artists I love. I was able to find Ani DiFranco's acoustic version of the communist anthem "Workers Internationale," and Liz Phair's early "Girlyounds," demos in addition to phenomenal live shows by Polly Jean Harvey and Diamanda Galas. My prize possession, from the second week, is Marianne Faithfull dueting on "I Got You Babe," with David Bowie.

The third week was more of a wildcard — now that I've settled the accounts of what I long for and what I can find only with the most difficulty, I'm dedicated to making sure I will never go without. So now I'm spending time sampling the work of artists I've only heard about.

After a few weeks of musical exploration and possible violation of intellectual property laws, one can come up with a lot of strange theories about music. My newest notion is that there are few girl bands on the level of *NSYNC and the Backstreet Boys because young women

are encouraged to undercut each other's efforts rather than bond over dance moves and pre-teen groupies. The most popular girl group right now, Destiny's Child, and the model on which they are built, the Supremes, are more famous for their changing lineups and backstage catfights than their music.

My second theory came in the wake of a late night of listening to Phil Ochs. I decided my generation's musicians suffer from the crushing weight of legacy. After Dylan, Ochs and others, our protest music seems ethereal, young and callow. In addition, our issues aren't so explosive.

The Vietnam War had the byproduct of uniting an entire generation in defiance of war, that machine that eats the young. I feel our collective generational struggles are underrepresented. Protest bands like Rage Against the Machine and (to a lesser degree) Marilyn Manson are aberrations.

It's time to write the soundtrack to revolution, and we'd better start with an anthem praising Napster.

LETTERS

FDA's mifepristone approval dangerous

Reading Wednesday's editorial "FDA chooses wisely in RU-486 approval" was disheartening. The editorial board failed to present all the facts and inform the student readers correctly.

RU-486 (mifepristone) is an extremely dangerous pill. Dubbed a "human pesticide" by some, this pill has been known to cause internal bleeding in women.

How "wise" is it to ingest such a toxic pill? The FDA switched its ruling in only a matter of months.

Now, in a seemingly rash decision, the FDA approved the pill and did so forty days before the Presidential election in what could be an effort by the Clinton administration to influence the election in favor of Al Gore; such imprudence has already been recognized by many on Capitol Hill. Says Rep. Tom Coburn, "Congress now has the unenviable task of correcting the FDA's mistake."

I urge The Gamecock to not seek to influence potential buyers of the pill when you do not appropriate all the facts.

What was especially appalling was The Gamecock's rationalization behind believing this decision was intelligent: "Clinic violence by abortion foes...is a primary reason mifepristone's approval is a wise decision."

Yes, clinic bombings, break-ins, and, of course, homicide of doctors is abhorrent — against what being pro-life truly means.

That should stand without argument; however, the logic behind The Gamecock's excuse for the pill is faulty also.

The Gamecock often allows a dangerous RU-486 onto the market due to the wrongful actions by a handful of the movement against abortion who do not represent the rest of the pro-life community.

The decision to have an abortion is critical. This pill will only help to increase the number of abortions when both the pro-life and pro-choice community agree

that the number of abortions needs to be reduced.

Sara Mareno
International Studies Junior

Greek fining system a form of tyranny

Each morning when I wake and see that lovely building (South Tower) with its clever window decorations just out my window, I again struggle with the weighty questions its structure poses, as in: How is it that they never manage to blow a fuse despite the multitude of hair dryers and curling irons in each room?

Needless to say, Brock Vergakis' recent column was just "fine" with me. He raises a valid point about the rather questionable practice of sorority's fining their members for serious infractions like missing a meeting, smoking in their letters, wearing Wal-Mart flip-flops or eating a Chalupa in public. Not that I, nor any one who survived the 1990s, can refuse to recognize the importance of image. I mean, really! Can you imagine the nerve? It's enough to make you break your own nail. But personally, I wouldn't subject myself to any other forms of tyranny outside those already required of me.

Catherine Baab
Journalism Freshman

Columnist right in saying pot is safe

This message is for Patrick Rathbun. I really appreciated your column in the Oct. 4 issue of the Gamecock about the use of marijuana. I am an avid user of the substance, more so than alcohol, and I thought that your arguments held great relevance to college students and other people alike. You made some good points and I hope people will read your column and

in turn have a better understanding and acceptance of the drug, or whatever you choose to call it. I know I am not alone in my views. There are several of us who feel unfairly oppressed because of our choice to use such a harmless substance. We look around and see the violence and tension brought about by alcohol and don't understand how the legality of such is the way it is. I believe that more people should be educated and informed about the truth and myths of both substances and possibly sample them to have better knowledge of the arguments on the table.

If support is needed or desired for any further discussion of the topic let me know. I'll always be willing to participate. Thanks again.

Ryan Siddens
Business Sophomore

Parking lots better than paradise

I thoroughly enjoyed Michael Kerr's column titled "Cities Don't Need Grassy Fields." I am a native South Carolinian, but my mentality is far away from Southern thinking. I think exposure is everything sometimes, and you can almost decipher the mindset of those who create these ideas. This article needs to be published in The State! It needs to be heard. I am a student/staff member for the university, and parking is horrendous. My parking space is in the garage, and I have the option to park free but far away from my building, which is okay. However, for quick emergency parking, to get in and out of a building is difficult here. There is no parking available at all, not even on a yellow curb, but only grass.

I will have to get back with you later, but your column was just great. Keep writing.

Eric Shuler
USC Employee

CREED WEEK ISSUES

Preserving our dignity during USC Creed Week

Because this is a Carolina Creed Week, I thought it would be appropriate to have my column contribute to this in some manner. Actually, this is just a pitiful attempt at an introductory paragraph.

One of the tenets of the Creed is to "respect the dignity of all persons." Apparently, several students on campus have forgotten that they themselves are persons and that they must respect their own dignity.

The people I am referring to are those wankers riding to class on those scooter things and those tools toting luggage things with wheels to class.

These people obviously have no self-respect. Those scooter things are for little kids like my three-year-old niece and the luggage things are for people who travel on airplanes. They are not for college students who must maintain a certain level of superficiality.

Yes, the scooters are a quick, convenient way to get to and from class, but come on, they're so gay looking. And yes, those luggage things with wheels are certainly ergonomic, but come on, they're so gay looking.

Some of you are probably thinking, Nathan, what about bike riders and one-strappers (you're probably not thinking that, but let's just pretend)? First, people on bikes can't fold up their bikes and stick them in their backpacks.

Also, have you been by the Towers lately? Look at all those mangled bikes. We've pretty much taken care of that problem even if there are a few still out there. And as for the one-strappers, I just don't know. I guess they just didn't get the memo that all of us cool folks were going back to the two-strap method with the backpacks.

Bike riders and one strappers are a dying breed of wankers that we need not waste our time with. They are working themselves out of the gene pool. It's these scooter riders and luggage wheelers that are the new challenge to the college coolness status quo.

So what are we cool folks to do about these tools? There won't be any memos this time, we're just gonna nip this one right in the bud. If you see scooter riders, push them off their scooters, beat them senseless with their scooters, break off the wheels and run away.

As for the luggage wheelers, push them over (or spear them, whatever floats your boat), beat them senseless with their luggage and then break off the wheels and run away.

If God wanted us to wheel around to class, he would have given us wheels instead of feet. So when you're in a pedestrian area, if you have dignity, you'll use your *pieds*. *Comprenez-vous?*

I talked with the UPFW (United Popular Front of Wankers) president and he told me the "scooters and wheeled luggage will completely revolutionize campus life for students."

Why can't we be content in our mediocrity? Who are these capitalist villains trying to usurp the status quo?

Please, save yourselves and our school from the scooter/wheeled luggage onslaught. If we don't stop this madness now, what kind of Carolina is my three-year-old niece going to inherit?

If you'd like more information on joining USC's chapter of UPFW, feel free to call 7-UPFW. Of course, you have to be a tool or wanker to call.



Nathan White is a senior history and political science major. He writes every Monday. He can be reached at gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com

Recent bike incidents raise safety concerns

Two hit-and-run bicycle deaths in the Columbia area this past week have raised concerns about bicycle safety. Dr. Harry Sunshine, 55, died Sept. 30 when a car hit him from behind on U.S. 1 in Northeast Richland, and this past Wednesday, 28-year-old Cedric Ward was struck dead in rural Lexington County.

On USC's campus, where bikes are common, these deaths should be a warning sign to both cyclists and motorists to be aware of each other to prevent tragedies like these from happening to a member of the campus community.

Campus bikers, regardless of experience, should be mindful of their surroundings at all times while riding and, of course, wear a helmet. More than 3,000 bikers have been injured in collisions involving motorists in the past five years, and 81 of those have died, according to the state Department of Public Safety. The majority of those who died were not wearing helmets.

At the same time, motorists must respectfully share the road with bikers and give them plenty of space. When a car and a bike collide, no matter who's in the wrong, the biker will probably get the worst of it. And because bike lanes are all but nonexistent here, it's even more important for motorists to keep their eyes open.

All it takes is one miscue for someone to be seriously injured — as the campus learned in 1998 when a car struck and seriously injured a Bates House resident on Sumter Street. If cyclists and motorists alike use common sense, we can prevent another such tragedy from happening here.

Survey boasts dubious numbers on drinking

Have you ever seen the survey by the Office of Alcohol and Drug Programs about how "71% of USC students have 0 to 4 drinks when they party"?

Who are these people in this bracket? More importantly, where does this 71 percent of USC's student body party?

The survey errs by including those who don't drink with those who do. It might be that a greater majority of students just don't drink, while those who do, drink heavily. The advertisements give no clarification as to how many of those surveyed don't drink. Perhaps that's why the advertisement's numbers seem inaccurate when students go to parties with alcohol and see hundreds of people drinking a six-pack just to get started.

The intention of these advertisements seems to be that students don't have to consume mass quantities of alcohol to have fun at USC. But something they probably didn't think about is that a little drinking does a lot to some people, especially females, of which there are about 13,000 of at USC. So what if they've only had two drinks? Perhaps they'd drink more if they weren't already drunk.

ABOUT US

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 nine 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. The Gamecock is supported in part by student activities fees.

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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 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 a phone number for confirmation and should be sent to gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.
The Gamecock reserves the right to edit for libel, and space. Anonymous letters will not be published. Photos are required for guest columnist and can be provided by the submitter.
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