



The Gamecock

Serving the Carolina Community since 1908

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Senators have problem with First Amendment

Student Government just doesn't seem to get it. Sen. Tyson Nettles proposed a resolution Wednesday discouraging *The Gamecock* from making endorsements in future elections. Fortunately, under the leadership of Sen. Chrissy Stauffer, this resolution failed.

What some SG senators don't seem to understand is that even if the resolution had passed, it wouldn't have had even the slightest impact on *The Gamecock's* editorial policy. The editorial staff of *The Gamecock* determines the content of the newspaper, not Student Government, the Department of Student Life, President John Palms or the university board of trustees. Many people have tried to influence the content of this newspaper, but we never let them. We will not be intimidated, and we will not be silent.

It's our legal right to make endorsements and offer political commentary, just as it's the right of every other newspaper in the country. For Nettles to say it's unprofessional for a newspaper to endorse candidates shows a high level of ignorance. Apparently, he doesn't read a single newspaper during national elections because he has somehow missed the fact that every newspaper in the country endorses political candidates.

Nettles has been a constant embarrassment to SG and would be wise to remain silent in future senate meetings. So far this year, he has opposed SG President Jotaka Eaddy's effort to extend the drop date, and one that would include sexual orientation in USC's anti-discrimination policy. His latest public display of ignorance sickens us and further demonstrates his inability to effectively represent students.

This latest incident is all part of a disturbing trend SG has been following regarding students' First Amendment rights. This past week, sources told *The Gamecock* that SG Attorney General Norm Jones trashed nearly 1,000 newspapers in protest of *The Gamecock's* endorsements. We're awaiting his resignation and a letter of apology. But even more disheartening is that Eaddy has been made aware of Jones' actions and hasn't fired him.

Even the SG election codes passed by senate for this election are a violation of candidates' First Amendment rights. Others have written letters expressing their disgust in our continual "defiance" of Student Government.

We hope our newly elected SG leaders will do a better job than their predecessors. President-elect Corey Ford has expressed his First Amendment support; however, SG Vice President-elect Nithya Bala and SG Treasurer-elect Hydrick Harden can hardly be described as advocates of free speech on campus — especially speech critical of public officials.

In the future, if SG members take the time to read the First Amendment, maybe they'll realize that SG policy doesn't override the Constitution.

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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SUBMISSION POLICY
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 telephone number for confirmation and should be e-mailed to gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.
The Gamecock reserves the right to edit for label, style and space. Anonymous letters will not be published. Photos are required for guest columns and can be provided by the submitter.

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Only two letters to the editor per student will be printed in a semester. Staff columns take priority over guest columns, unless the guest columnist offers expertise on a subject, or if the subject's relevance is limited by time.
Guest columns and letters may be submitted by e-mail to gamecockviewpoints@hotmail.com.
Call 777-7726 for more information.

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LETTERS

'USC kittens' a loss to student community

To the Editor:

In January, a mother cat had a litter of kittens on the ceiling space underneath the bridge that runs beside the Blatt P. E. Center. She was soon gone. Her litter was left to survive, trapped underneath the bridge. Most of them died before USC reopened.

Two kittens, a gray one and a black one, survived until students began using the bridge again. They had no food or water and mewed hungrily as the students walked by. They survived off scraps thrown by students before I noticed them. The kittens built a reputation as people offered them food, trying to keep them alive. I began giving them fresh bowls of food and water each day.

The kittens lived and could be seen playing and lying in the sun. Several people began calling them the "USC kittens" because of the community effort to keep them alive. They slowly became more trusting, and several people volunteered to adopt them once they were caught.

The last day I fed the kittens, the gray kitten ate a piece of turkey off my fingertip. We were within a hair's width of catching the kittens to give them safe homes.

Then Ron Byers called Animal Control. The kittens were on an area of the Blatt P. E. Center's ceiling that is over Mr. Byers' office. He said the kittens were too noisy.

We asked him to call certain people who would take the kittens home if Animal Control caught them, but he didn't. The gray kitten was caught, taken to the Animal Control office and killed. We called as soon as we found out, scarcely more than an hour after the kitten had been taken away, but it was too late.

Mr. Byers is making continuous checks on the bridge in preparation of catching the black kitten. He will, no doubt, call Animal Control again, and the black kitten will be murdered, as well. If he doesn't wander into the Animal Control trap, a few students and I will try to rescue him.

It's sad that a single individual can slaughter the joy of the entire Bates House area.

Daniel Davis
First-year student
College of Engineering

Time has come for Fogler to move on

To the Editor:

Well, Eddie, if you're going to go out, might as well go out in flames, huh? Another close game and, surprise, another close loss. The fourth game in a row that USC lost by six points or fewer, and the eighth of the year.

People have been asking for your head for a long time, but I was a believer. Everyone else around me was shouting, "Fogler's got to go." I kept thinking all we needed was a few bounces or a couple of calls to turn this mess of a season around.

After your departing performance, a stellar 68-67 overtime loss to Tennessee on Tuesday night, I join the mass of victory-starved fans asking for your resignation, Eddie.

A 7-point lead with a minute to go? This one's in the bag, right? Of course not.

I know you're not out there shooting the free throws, Eddie, but you are on the bench. You can scream your head off to foul UT's Terrence Woods before he hits a 3-pointer to tie the game as the buzzer sounds. Put Woods on the line for a one-and-one with less than two seconds to go, and that's a Gamecock win.

Alas, we all knew he was going to make that shot. The icing on the cake was the great play you called out of the timeout with 6.3 seconds left in overtime. Did Erik Kimrey magically show up and whisper in your ear, "Coach, I can throw the fade?" A lob and a prayer to the lane? Took you a whole time out to come up with that one, did it?

Eddie, it's time for you to go.

Craig Smith
Second-year student
College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management

Future endorsements should be balanced

To the Editor:

It was with a certain air of dismay and disappointment that I read the latest *Gamecock* staff editorial endorsing Sen. Nathan White for Student Government vice president. I value both Nathan White and Nithya Bala very much as colleagues and friends, and I am pleased they have received so much positive publicity from this campaign.

I take issue, however, with *The Gamecock's* persistent defiance in choosing to endorse a particular candidate in this race. While I am not disputing this newspaper's right to support a candidate as part of its editorial commentary, I am saddened that *The Gamecock* chose to do so in such an inappropriate manner. It's quite clear that the prejudicial value of such an endorsement far outweighs any probative value that is offered.

Furthermore, the fact that the editorial staff is supporting a candidate who has previously written for *The Gamecock* serves only to damage the credibility of the paper and Mr. White. Because such a move would obviously be detrimental to the fine campaign run by White, I respectfully urge *The Gamecock* to take a more balanced view of future Student Government elections.

Hydrick Harden
Student Body Treasurer-Elect
Third-year student
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Editor's note: President-elect Corey Ford is also a former writer for The Gamecock and did not receive an endorsement.

Catholicism a 'love story,' not a game

To the Editor:

I will confess that I found Ann Marie Miani's column "New rules for good Catholics" (Feb. 26), to be mildly amusing. Caricatures tend to provoke amusement. Like every caricature, it was also a distortion. Let me offer an alternative perspective.

At its heart, Catholicism is a love story, the story of a God who is passionately in love with us, his creation. A God who would gladly abandon the 99 good sheep to go in search for the one stray.

A God who so wants our hearts that there is "nothing in all creation" that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39). At its heart, there is also a paradox — that true love takes its most powerful, real form in the shape of a man, arms outstretched, cruelly nailed to a cross.

"For by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). If we are "made right" in God's eyes, it's not because we've earned the requisite number of heavenly brownie points. God is not this old man in the sky with a long beard, bizarre rules and a mean thunderbolt who gets his jollies by watching us puny mortals jump through a maze of divine hoops. God is on our side.

Anyone who has been in love, who has experienced love, knows that love calls for a response. So it is with God's love. This is what holiness is about: responding to and cooperating with God's grace. This is where the "rules" ought to fit in — for laying the groundwork for our lives.

This is, admittedly, a very idealized picture. I will be the first to acknowledge that Christians — Catholics — continue to screw up and live as if they can manipulate God. We in the Church need to ask ourselves to what extent we are responsible for this distorted image of a God of senseless rules and "heaven points." And to Ms. Miani, and the others who might share her views, I can only respond with the invitation Jesus gave his disciples, "Come and see!"

Gaurav Shroff
Graduate student
College of Liberal Arts

It's OK to laugh at yourself sometimes

To the Editor:

I am rather taken aback by the response Ann Marie Miani's column received in your letters to the editor. When I read the column Monday, I laughed heartily, and even now my ears are still ringing with its cynicism and sarcasm.

Apparently, on the subject of religion, some people just check their sense of humor at the door. I assure you, "The Big Guy" has been the butt of so many jokes throughout history that he must be quite used to it by now.

Either the writers (with the possible exception of Father Cass) were totally oblivious to the satire, which was practically oozing off the page, or they simply aren't able to step back from themselves and laugh for a minute.

I understand, for many, religion is a serious and touchy issue. However, that doesn't mean that there isn't humor to be found in it. But I suppose for every good joke there's someone who has to take offense.

Basically, lighten up, people. I might not be a Christian (and I'm wisely keeping my views out of this), but I've had people take jabs at my faith, and I've learned to roll with the punches and laugh with them. I'm big enough to laugh at myself once in a while, and besides, nothing in life, even religion, is worth having if you don't enjoy it.

So lighten up and enjoy your life. I think you'll be forgiven.

Jonathan Bailey
Third-year student
College of Journalism and Mass Communications

POPULAR CULTURE

Grammy awards reach new low

This past week's Grammy awards proved something that I had feared for quite some time. The awards have absolutely nothing to do with talent and everything to do with the amount of stroke an "artist" has in the business.

I haven't bothered watching the Grammys since Jethro Tull beat out Metallica's *...And Justice for All* in the Best Metal category more than 10 years ago, but I did check E-Online for the results of this year's show. I think I might even start boycotting that in the future.

At first, the results seemed promising. U2 stepped back into the spotlight with three awards. All seemed right in the world. It was all downhill from there.

Steeleye Dan won the award for Album of the Year. Now, maybe I'm a bit out of the loop, but I didn't even know Steeleye Dan was still a band. I wouldn't have been more surprised if Elvis had won the award for a live album recorded this past December. C'mon. Steeleye Dan? What gives?

From there, Shelby Lynne wins Best New Artist. Now, I could be mistaken, but hasn't Lynne been around for about 13 years and put out six albums? Just when do the Grammys consider someone no longer being "new"? Maybe Elvis could have won this one, too.

But I really got pissed off when I saw the nominees for Best Rock Album and Best Rock Song. Creed's "With Arms Wide Open" defeated Lenny Kravitz, matchbox twenty, Three Doors Down and the Red Hot Chili Peppers. Personally, I would have gone with the Chili Peppers, but that's not the point. Where was Poison's nomination for "I Hate Every Bone in Your Body (But Mine)?" Poison is the epitome of "rock."

But Poison had zero nominations, tying them with rock superstars Warrant, Slaughter and Skid Row. The one true "rock band" nominated for Rock Album of the Year was Bon Jovi, which lost. The Foo Fighters are a better band than New Jersey's finest? I think not. This proved one thing: Rock is dead.

Eminem went on to win all the rap awards — big surprise there — but his performance with Elton John overshadowed it. The gay community was up in arms that John would lower himself to perform with Eminem. They seemed to ask, "Why, John, why?" I'll tell you why. He did it for the money. That's the same reason the Grammys hand out awards to undeserving groups and the same reason Poison wasn't invited. It's not about the art anymore, and now I wonder if it ever was.

The best pure musicians nominated were Metallica and Phish. Both bands were nominated for Rock Instrumental Performance. That's right, Metallica and Phish were nominated in the same category. Makes sense to me; their music is so similar (note the sarcasm). Metallica won the award for a live version of "The Call of the Ktulu," and millions of fans downloaded the song on Napster.

The Grammys had been ridiculous in the past, but this year they hit rock bottom. If there were any doubt that MTV's Video Music Awards show was now the top in the business, it has been erased. That's a scary enough thought on its own.

The Grammys have little to do with art or music anymore, and everything to do with giving awards to big names. It doesn't matter how many people buy an album (take a look at sale records for *The Marshall Mathers LP*). If you stick around long enough, you'll snag an award.

But the biggest question coming out of the show is one that I'm sure I share with music fans worldwide: Where the hell was the Insane Clown Posse?



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