



# VIEWPOINTS

IN OUR OPINION

## Students should be able to choose

In the past, University Housing has allowed smoking in some dorms.

But effective at the beginning of the Fall 2003 semester, the student housing office will no longer allow smoking inside or within 25 feet of any dormitory.

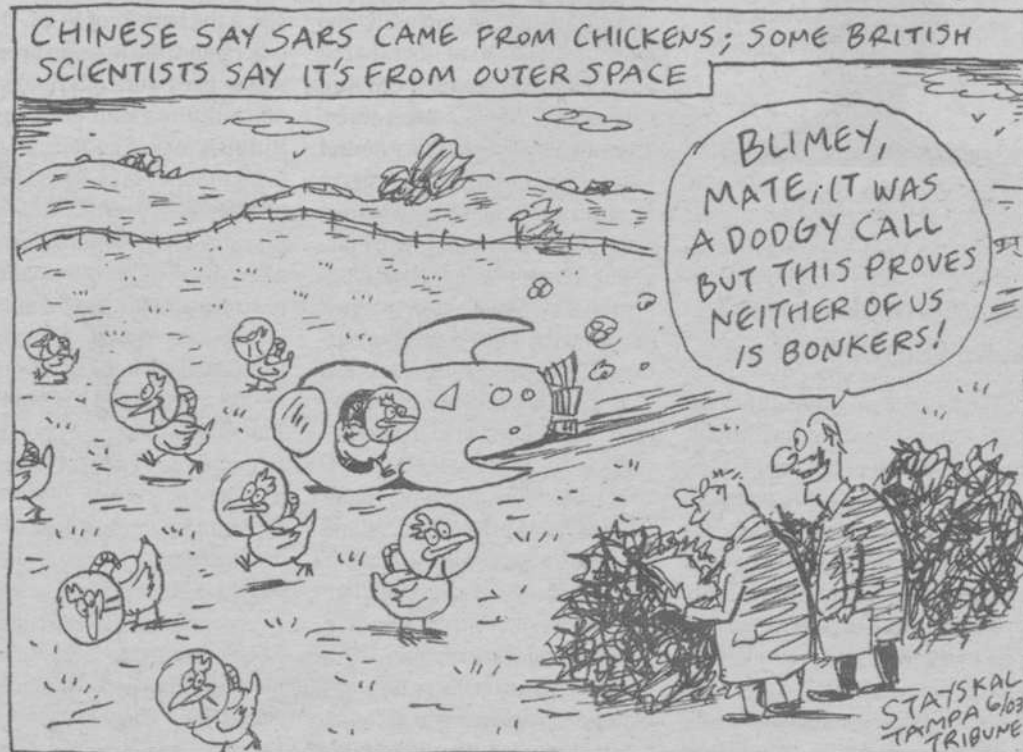
Formerly, students in some dorms could smoke inside their dorm rooms or on their balconies with the written consent of their roommates. Now they will no longer have that option, regardless of how their roommates feel about it.

The housing office cites recent studies about the dangers of second-hand smoke as its reason for the policy change.

The dangers of first- and second-hand smoke have been known for years. But in the past, students who agreed to let their roommates smoke in their room knew about those dangers and chose to disregard them.

They should continue to have that option. So long as their consent is informed, no one's rights or privileges are abridged.

There is no reason for the university to forbid smoking in or around the dorms. Knowledge in hand, students are competent enough to make their own choices about where to live, study, and breathe.



CARTOON COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

## Single parents have it hard



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### Father's Day deserves greater significance

Imagine that half of our baseball team's coaching staff decided that the team was too heavy a commitment, and left midseason — just like that. Where would our boys be then?

Would the team have done so well this season? Maybe.

But such a suddenly gaping hole in such a vital part of the team would almost certainly have, at best, a crippling effect on the team as a whole.

It is not a situation that we would ever wish upon our Gamecocks.

However, it is exactly the position that millions of children

and teenagers find themselves in today. Half of all marriages in the United States end in divorce, and many leave children to be raised by only one parent.

Not to say that a single-parent can't raise a successful child with only half of the usual coaching staff. Many have, and I applaud them. However, the fact remains that instances of everything from truancy to teen pregnancy, from drug use to divorce are higher in children of divorced parents.

Not to say that all divorces are bad. There are certainly situations, such as cases of child- or spousal-abuse, where divorce is called for.

Still, I think that many divorces happen because one or both parents feel that working through whatever problems they have at home is too difficult. It is easier to just call their differences "irreconcilable" and end it there.

In the midst of all this, I cannot help but wonder if Father's Day has not become an obsolete

holiday. Why do we set aside a day to honor our fathers when so many have ducked the responsibility of the position?

I believe that if you choose to have a child, you have a responsibility to raise that child as well as is humanly possible; that is, from within a family united under a committed marriage. I don't think it is possible for one parent to give that child all the care he needs. It is just as wrong to choose to bear a child and not care for him as it is to choose to eat at a restaurant and walk out on the bill.

In a time when responsibility is so disposable, maybe we only hang onto Father's Day out of habit. It deserves more significance than that, as do our children.

I may not have been any good at baseball when I played it as a kid, but I had my dad to coach me, and that made all the difference.

*Joshua Hanley is a fourth-year philosophy student.*

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