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IN OUR OPINION

How to keep your bicycle

USC Police have already received reports of 10 bicycle thefts this semester — only 11 were stolen during the entire fall semester 2002.

Bicycles are a fast and environmentally friendly way to get to class, so it's a shame so many have been stolen. Many bicycles disappear because students lock them with chain or cable locks. Students should use the hard U-bolt locks to secure bicycles; USCPD hasn't received a theft report from a bike with a U-bolt.

Many bicycles disappear because students lock them with chains or similar locks. Students should use the sturdy U-bolt locks to secure bicycles.

Students should also register bicycles with Parking Services at the Pendleton Street garage. It only takes five minutes, and while its benefits aren't stellar, it can't hurt. If your bike is stolen, the USC sticker on your bicycle could be used to identify it if you

think you spot what looks like your bicycle.

But the dorms also could do a few things to stymie criminals. If USC dorms had interior rooms where bicycles could be stored — perhaps one of the closets — students could keep their bicycles off the street and away from bolt cutters.

Also, a lot of bicycle racks are kept rather far from the street. USCPD has better things to do than patrol parked bicycles, so well-hidden racks like the one near the Towers invite crime. These racks, poorly lit and never seen, could be moved directly under a streetlight near the road.

Winners and Sinners

SEC With four teams ranked in the country's top 15, who wouldn't want to be a football fan in the Bible belt?

JOHN EDWARDS Democratic presidential candidate speaks at USC. Three down, six to go.
DARK CHOCOLATE Study suggests it could lower your blood pressure. Medicine never tasted so good.

GAS PRICES AAA says gas prices will skyrocket for Labor Day. Don't hit the beach; hit the Horseshoe.

BIKE THEFTS USCPD says about 10 bikes have been stolen so far this semester. So much for helping the environment.

PRESTON PARKING Lots disappear as green space takes over. What's wrong with asphalt?



CARTOON COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

Strange allies in Iraq are perilous

ERIC BOST

OKLAHOMA STATE DAILY O'COLLEGIAN

Using former Iraqi intelligence isn't wise.

We're all well-versed with the phrase "war is hell," but what is it after the war is over? Well, as we have seen, it is just a continuation of that: hell.

Yes, we are still in Iraq in an attempt to make the country's transition to democracy happen.

Establishing a stable government and economy is crucial because there is still a danger of Saddam coming back or another unfriendly power taking his place.

So, although more and more soldiers die in Iraq on a daily basis, that is the reasoning behind the continued presence in Iraq. But there are other costs to our presence in Iraq.

Recently, CNN Headline News ran a story about how our military intelligence machine is actively recruiting Saddam's former spies to provide intelligence for us.

Now, in theory it doesn't seem like a horrible idea — only in theory.

These spies already know the area, they already know the people, and they already know how the system works. Theoretically, they could provide valuable intelligence to help win over the Iraqi people and save American lives.

But just think about this for a few seconds and the inherent danger should be painfully obvious.

These Iraqi spies were some of the most feared elements from Saddam's regime. And now they're working for us.

Yep, that's the way to get the Iraqi people on our side. Instead of representing a dictator, they are representing democracy.

Whatever methods they used to gather intelligence under Saddam are probably the same methods they will use now in working for the United States. For the Iraqi people, the enemy has the same face, but has changed names.

This could potentially do much more damage than good for relations with Iraq, assuming it can eventually become more than an occupied territory.

I understand the reasoning behind this apparently common practice by our military, but I still don't understand how it is supposed to work.

Since my first government class in high school, I have not had any delusions that any government that has ever existed is only trying to work solely in the public's good.

There are different levels to which a government or official will try to take advantage of situations.

But this seems to be going over the top, even if we claim to be doing this for the safety of our troops and the safety of the Iraqi people.

It might save some more American lives, which is good, but what about the Iraqi people?

The reign of terror will continue with a different name and will probably do more to make us seem like "The Great Satan."

There is a point where a government is faced with an idea. The idea is theoretically good, and is entirely possible. The question is, "Can we?"

We have asked the question and the answer came back a resounding yes, apparently.

But the second question of, "Should we?" was either ignored or not asked. But that's where we stand now, using Saddam's spies to do our dirty work, supposedly for the good of all the people in Iraq.

Whether it actually works the way it has been planned is something that we will have to wait to see.

And for the good of Iraq and America, let's just hope this new weapon we have doesn't backfire in our faces.

'Mr. Right' is a wrong ideal



JOHN RABON

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Consider finding a nice guy for your next beau.

Can the little girl's dream of a "knight in shining armor" exist anymore? This what I find myself asking while on the receiving end of two tales of woe regarding some of my female friends' dealings with guys.

Every little girl, it seems, grows up listening to fairy tales about a guy who's going to sweep her off her feet and take her away to be his princess, only to reach adulthood with the realization that life isn't a fairy tale, and they're going to have to kiss a lot of frogs before finding their prince.

I don't suppose this realization could be any more true than it is with my friends Claire and Paige (names have been changed to protect the innocent, a la Dragnet).

Claire is probably the less dramatic of the two cases, just com-

ing out of a relationship that's been off and on with the same guy since high school. She left him when it no longer appeared that he had any drive in his life and left before he started taking her downhill with him.

This was hard for her because he's the only guy she's had major feelings for, and then he winds up degenerating before her very eyes into someone that wasn't half the man she fell in love with.

Since the breakup, she's sworn off all serious relationships.

Paige, on the other hand, comes from the opposite end of the spectrum. She has had many different relationships, most resulting in bad breakups that have spawned trust issues and deep inner fears. This has caused her to second guess practically any guy that asks her out, wondering if he's really interested in her or just trying to get in her pants.

Now she finds herself sexually involved with a guy who practically ignores her until she threatens to leave, then comes after her begging for her not to leave. She has opted to wait around and see if he ever comes out of this "I love her, I love her not" phase.

Both of the cases are pretty hard for me to judge from the out-

side because the way I see it, it's these kinds of situations that leave girls feeling burned and ruining a lot of chances with decent guys.

Whether it occurs following one bad incident or multiple heartbreaks, the classic image of the knight has been shattered, leaving the girl wondering if "Mr. Right" hasn't just been a figment of her imagination this whole time.

Is it still possible to hold onto that image after having life throw you so much crap?

I think so, perhaps you just overlook him because you aren't looking in the right place, or maybe he just doesn't exist in the sense that women are looking for.

I believe what comes along tends to look a little more like Don Quixote. His armor is battered, scratched, and he wears a shaving basin for a helmet; it is his spirit, however, that shines through like a true knight. He opens doors, pulls out chairs and puts a coat over the ground for you to walk on; he just doesn't look like an Abercrombie model. Maybe he's just the average-looking guy across the hall who needs a chance. Think about that.

John Rabon is a second-year English student.

The Viewpoints section has a new e-mail address.
gamecockopinions@hotmail.com

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Racial perks are still unjust

ALBERT CASTLE
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON DAILY COUGAR

Racial admissions hurt students for no reason.

One exceptionally bland day of high school my senior year, I received a yellow pass in one of my classes. A yellow pass was almost always good because it meant that the counselor was pulling you out of hell briefly, most likely to ask you some random question about something unimportant. Naturally, I was elated and headed to the counselor's office.

Once I got there, the counselor politely asked me if I was aware that my information labeled me as "Hispanic."

"I guess," I replied.

"Well, you know that one of your parents must be full Hispanic or both of your parents must be of half Hispanic origin for you to be considered Hispanic?" she asked.

"I guess," I again replied.

"Are you clear on what is considered a Hispanic country?" she asked.

"Uh, well, my dad is full Cuban," I said, beginning to wonder where this all was going.

After being asked if I was sure of this, it was explained to me that I had been selected as a finalist in the National Hispanic Recognition Program. The situation immediately struck me as funny, considering the counselor's reaction to the fact that I'm as white-looking as they come.

The issues and considerations surrounding affirmative action are a complicated many; therefore, it would be imprudent for me to make a broad judgment. But from my own personal experiences, I have found that affirmative action spells nothing but injustice for the prospective college student.

If affirmative action is meant to ensure equal opportunity, it is self-defeating. Nothing is equal about giving certain groups of people an advantage because of the color of their skin or their heritage.

It is unjust to punish an entire generation of young Americans because they are white.

Redressing past discrimination shouldn't begin by inhibiting one group to advance another.

Universities will stop at nothing to become more diverse, even if it means employing devious methods. In one such scheme, the University of California decided to give the SAT II twice as much weight in admissions as the SAT I. This decision seemed innocuous until under-qualified Hispanics began to be admitted in others' places. How did this happen? They aced the Spanish language SAT II, a test designed to measure second language acquisition.

In a society where our doctors, scientists and national leaders have reached their positions due to merit, affirmative action as it is implemented in universities today is a step backward.

The only real and fair solution is to attack the problem at its source. Politicians avoid this because bringing our educational system up to date and funding disadvantaged schools costs money that can only be raised in taxes.

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