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VIEWPOINTS

ONLINE POLL

Should Lou Holtz retire? YES 37% NO 63%

IN OUR OPINION

Don't hide big decisions

Relative to region and tradition, USC's administration has made a bold move by deciding to add sexual orientation to the university's nondiscrimination policy...

But USC President Andrew Sorensen made the decision about a month ago; he just didn't tell anyone. Whether you agree with the decision, one thing remains clear: The administration shouldn't have hidden this information from students.

Though being hailed as strictly ceremonial in nature, this policy change will serve a legally important role for gay students and faculty members.

The policy change, along with benefitting many students and faculty members, is a wise decision. Should someone try to sue the university for sexual-orientation discrimination, USC would have no defense without the nondiscrimination policy.

With any other policy change, however, the administration would have sent out news releases and announced it publicly. As South Carolina's flagship university, USC carries the responsibility of leading by example and should not hide its actions.

Gamecock Quotables

"With the new president and a new outlook on the university, it's definitely good news to receive."

MICHAEL MAZZELL

THIRD-YEAR PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENT AND FORMER BGLA VICE PRESIDENT, ON THE DECISION TO INCLUDE SEXUAL ORIENTATION IN USC'S NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

"Every faculty member has an active research program with Ph.D. students that needs to produce results. Lost enzymes could take years to replace."

SCOTT GOODE

USC CHEMISTRY PROFESSOR, ON THE POWER OUTAGE THAT THREATENED HIS RESEARCH

"You don't have to be gay to contract AIDS. I contracted AIDS from my husband."

STACEY GLADDEN

STUDENT AT SOUTHERN WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY AND SPEAKER AT USC'S WORLD AIDS DAY

"Her young, virgin mind was corrupted by this devastating and truly illegal virus."

ANDREW CHRISTOPHER

FOURTH-YEAR ACCOUNTING STUDENT WHOSE SISTER ACCIDENTALLY DOWNLOADED A COMPUTER VIRUS THROUGH AOL INSTANT MESSENGER THAT POSTED PORNOGRAPHIC IMAGES ON THE COMPUTER SCREEN

GAMECOCK CORRECTIONS

In the picture for Wednesday's World AIDS Day story, fourth-year Spanish student Monika L. Scott was misidentified as Holly Tyler.

A story in Wednesday's paper should have said Stafford McQuillin's bike was worth \$1000. The Gamecock regrets the errors.

If you see an error in today's paper, we want to know. E-mail us at gamecockopinions@hotmail.com.

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STUDENT MEDIA

The Gamecock is the editorially independent student newspaper of the University of South Carolina. It 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-activity fees. One free copy per reader. Additional copies may be purchased for \$1 each from the Department of Student Media.

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CHARLES TOMLINSON GAMECOCKEDITOR@HOTMAIL.COM

The Gamecock is an invaluable part of USC.

Another semester is over, and The Gamecock again has met its share of supporters and detractors. But that's how it's always been. It's what I call the hometown-paper syndrome.

People love to criticize their local papers. Among the names I've heard have been "The Lancaster Liar" and the "Florence Morning Mistake." USC's paper probably has been called "The Gamecock" more than I realize.

In the past few years, some of The Gamecock's detractors have vainly tried to deprive the paper of student funding. Some members of Student Government two years ago suggested taking away funding because of its SG candidate endorsements, which many think are unfair because The Gamecock is the campus' only paper.

But endorsements are only a recommendation based on the staff's general opinion, and past editorials have made that crystal-clear. Moreover, The Gamecock has a constitutional right to make endorsements.

But recently, based on an infamous error regarding ex-Vermont governor Howard Dean — and yes, despite what certain vitriolic letters said, the staff did know who Dean was before writing the editorial — some students have recommended we lose our funding because of so-called poor quality.

But how much is The Gamecock costing USC or its students? I'm sure we siphon a negligible amount from the \$20 student activity fees. The staff, underfunded and understaffed, works more than 40 hours a week for minimal compensation to keep students up-to-date on campus happenings. And I think it succeeds at that. All of this so students can pick it up for free the next morning and read it, throw it on the ground, or write us and call us geniuses or idiots if they want.

Newspapers make mistakes. A student newspaper is a learning experience. Nothing excuses mediocrity, but this group of budding journalists is learning from mistakes and improving.

The Gamecock staff comes from all different majors. About 35 of our staffers and regular writers are in the journalism school. According to the School of Journalism and Mass Communications' Web site, www.jour.sc.edu, the school has 1,519 students. That means about 2.3 percent of journalism students work for The Gamecock.

Where are all the journalism students? Experience is more important than academics in this field, and The Gamecock is a good step toward an internship or job.

The Gamecock strives to be as professional a paper as possible, but it needs your help and not just your complaints. Get involved — journalism students and anyone who might want to work in journalism. It's one of the best things you can do for your career.

Thanks to those who have encouraged us with positive feedback. We might get letters calling us "garbage" not worth reading, but we've gotten more letters from those same people to show that they apparently haven't decided they're above reading our trash.

People read The Gamecock, "egregious" errors and all, and it's an indispensable part of USC life. It's the best way for students to amplify their voices around campus, and all students should involve themselves with it in some way, whether by writing stories or letters to the editor.

Tomlinson is a fourth-year print journalism student.

My life lessons of the fall semester



SARAH ROGERS GAMECOCKOPINIONS@HOTMAIL.COM

The real education didn't come from class.

As I come upon the halfway point of my third year at USC, I realize I have learned some life's most important lessons while away at college. I'd like to offer a few you should remember.

Be pre-emptive. Call your parents before they call you. While you're at it, call your grandparents. You'll make their day and you might get a nice check out of it.

Collect quarters. Along with learning about our fellow states, who knows when you will need to use a parking meter or make a trip to the local Laundromat?

The classic "dog-eat-my-homework" excuse does not work with college professors.

All-nighters are good for bragging rights only. Cramming — other than making you exhausted, cranky and ill tempered — is about as productive as the South Carolina Education Lottery.

The one and only lesson learned from cramming is that eight hours of uninterrupted sleep is its own reward. The only thing I ever received from cramming was making a fool of myself when I was violently shaken awake by my journalism professor for snoring.

Beer and/or liquor are not good thirst-quenchers.

Eating grilled-cheese sandwiches, French fries and chocolate pudding for two consecutive weeks equals a balanced meal if your goal is to inflate to the size of a medium-sized whale.

Watching MTV 24/7 will not expand your intelligence, though it might help you on pop culture quizzes. It's always wiser to write a paper that's due the next morning than to watch "Rich Girls" or "Sorority Life."

Playing PlayStation 2, Xbox and Nintendo GameCube for extensive periods of time will leave deep creases in your fingers that will make you look as though you stayed in the bathtub too long.

Reading the Harry Potter series should not take the place of the books you are required to read in your "Themes in British Literature" class, even if J.K. Rowling is from Scotland and her books are a lot more interesting than James Joyce's.

While a shopping spree ... Express can be fulfilling, it's definitely a better idea to save your money for rent and utility costs.

Celebrate your 21st birthday, but not so that you black out from excessive alcohol consumption and can't remember anything you did the night before.

Procrastination is not the answer. If you want to go to the next football game, it helps to get out of bed and wait in line to get a ticket. Otherwise, be content to spend your next Saturday inside your dorm room playing Spider Solitaire.

Swimming in the fountain outside Thomas Cooper Library might be fun, but it will probably give you some weird fungus you have never heard of before.

Betta fish make great companions. Self-sufficient, they provide hours of high-quality entertainment if you put a mirror in front of them.

It makes them so mad they puff out their cheeks to inordinate sizes, which reminds me of some of the Clemson football fans I've encountered.

Finally, the biggest lesson I have learned in college is to experience it. Mistakes and all, you're young only once.

Rogers is a third-year advertising student.

IN YOUR OPINION

passion — ironic when he appears to take the role of defender on the rights of homosexuals. He accuses any who use their religious background in the Bible of "intellectual cheating."

Let's get one thing straight; marriage is an institution established primarily for religious purposes. To accuse Mobley of intellectual cheating is just plain inflammatory. Mobley speaks from a Christian standpoint on the religious institution of marriage and the moral question of homosexuality. What better source for a Christian to quote but the Bible when dealing with such an issue?

I understand that taking a Christian stance on a controversial issue cannot be accepted by the world. Jesus even said that to believe in him and his teachings would be to go against the ways of the world. I believe Lee should take a class on Biblical history and literature. Because he seems interested in the advancement of his own intellect, I suggest he read some of C.S. Lewis' material. Lewis is another man who focused on knowledge only to find that the pursuit of it will just lead a man until he is face to face with the one who created him.

CHAD DRAYTON THIRD-YEAR HISTORY STUDENT

Gay marriage has long-range effects So far, no one writing about same-sex marriage seems to be aware of what I suspect are the long-range issues. They don't have to do with justice for gays or social acceptance of gay relationships — both of which our society is moving rapidly toward anyway — but rather with the numerous privileges

marriage brings with it. Whole research papers could be written on these privileges; here I will briefly deal with just two.

The income-tax break called "married, filing joint return" applies to couples in which one person does not have an outside job or has a low-paying job compared with the spouse. The best a widowed parent can get is "single, head of household," which doesn't give such a big break. The same applies to singles living with siblings or aging parents who can no longer work.

Where is the justice in these people's status compared with those in same-sex marriages, were they to be legally recognized? What we are seeing behind court decisions such as the one in Massachusetts is the exercise of political power by people who are largely silent on issues such as this, while playing on the sympathies of the public. Foreigners marrying U.S. citizens can relatively easily obtain the coveted status of Permanent Resident Alien, while even close blood relatives of citizens have a much harder time.

Perhaps same-sex marriage will result in a huge increase in the number of "marriages of convenience," with people becoming legally married just to be able to immigrate to the United States. After all, in most parts of the world even today, it is far easier for an American to become close friends with a person of the same sex than it is to befriend someone of the opposite sex.

PETER NYIKOS MATHEMATICS PROFESSOR

Christians must do more than judge

Why do Christians write to this newspaper calling homosexuality a sin or anything a sin, for that matter? In addition, why do Christians try to make non-Christians believe everything they believe? Brothers, that is not our call.

We were told to love one another, as Jesus loves us. We were told to obey his commandments, but how can we expect people who do not follow Christ to do so? We are always pouncing on people if they think homosexuality is OK, but are we quick to pounce on the unfairness of homelessness? Are we quick to fight for the underdog and the forgotten, or are we still jostling for a political position? Jesus fought for the poor, the unloved and the lost. Yet Christians today resemble the Pat Robertsons and Jerry Falwells of the world who call everyone sinners and themselves chosen. That doesn't reflect Christ. To quote Switchfoot: "Have we lost ourselves?"

We want everyone to follow Christ, and that's good. However, do not expect this to happen if all we do is judge. We should love and forgive, as God loves each and everyone on this earth and forgives any who accepts such a wonderful gift.

JOEL DODSEN THIRD-YEAR FINANCE STUDENT

Letter shows lack of compassion Tyler Lee's letter Wednesday, responding to a letter by Jeff Mobley, left me rather disheartened.

Lee showed a lack of com-

passion — ironic when he appears to take the role of defender on the rights of homosexuals. He accuses any who use their religious background in the Bible of "intellectual cheating."

marriage brings with it. Whole research papers could be written on these privileges; here I will briefly deal with just two.