



VIEWPOINTS

"If wars are expensive, peace can be even more expensive."
JEAN-BERTRAND ARISTIDE
PRESIDENT OF HAITI ON THE COST OF PRESERVING ORDER AFTER OPPOSITION GROUPS REBELLED AND SEIZED CONTROL OF SEVERAL TOWNS

In Our Opinion

House should ink tattoo bill

The South Carolina House of Representatives failed to give a yes or no vote to a bill that would legalize tattooing. South Carolina is one of two states that prohibits tattooing, and the state senate has already passed a bill that would change that, after Sen. Jake Knotts, R-Lexington, removed his opposition. All the bill needed was a vote in the House, but instead it was narrowly referred back to committee, basically ensuring it will not be passed this year.

The legislature fails to do its duty by not voting on the bill, and shows once again why South Carolina struggles to keep pace with the rest of the nation. Once the provenance of social misfits, tattooing no longer carries a stigma, judging from its prevalence among average college students.

The failure of the state Legislature to vote on the bill legalizing tattooing only hurts the state's attempts to modernize. Opposing it on the grounds that tattoo parlors will attract unsavory characters is pure speculation not supported by fact. Furthermore, legalizing tattooing will allow it to be regulated, and will help the state's tourism industry.

Cities afraid of the customers such businesses will bring can simply regulate their location through special exception permits for zoning.

South Carolina established a lottery because the state was losing money to Georgia as people went over the border to buy Powerball tickets. The same can be said for tattooing, as state citizens must cross into North Carolina and Georgia to get inked.

South Carolina cannot hope to compete with the rest of the nation and continue to promulgate backward laws.



CARTOON COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

America should drop the rat race

Two Americas — if you are like me (and some of you are no doubt praying that you aren't), you have heard these words become a theme for John Edwards in the recent Democratic primaries. Republicans and Democrats alike have watched the primaries with great interest and, at times, great amusement. The candidates' visions are as differing as their personalities. And yet, John Edwards' theme of two America's seems to resonate

with me, just as I am sure it does with many Americans. To Edwards, and to many Americans, I am sure, two Americas do exist. One America is for the rich and privileged. It is an America that offers up its fruit to the wealthy — a healthy life, a comfortable lifestyle and luxurious amusement. It is an America that rewards the wealthy with no regard for how that wealth was earned, if it was earned at all. It is an America that opens its door of opportunity to only a chosen few, with the correlation between wealth and being part of the chosen few ever increasing.

To the rest of us there is the workingman's America. Like Adam looking back into the garden from which he had been expelled, America's working class presses its face to the glass wall preventing it from accessing America's economic Eden. Do I believe that there are two Americas, one for the rich, and one for everyone else? I most certainly do. The question is, so what?

I think it's time for America to ask itself what is so greener about the grass on the other side? What is it about wealth that we think will make us happy? Oh, of course it will get us lots of stuff. But since when has stuff ever made someone happy? John Edwards, and just about every other politician for that matter, would have us believe that all we have to do is level the economic playing field and happiness will descend like manna from above. It's that easy. All we have to do is become a little more prosperous economically, and all of our problems will disappear. Well, I don't buy it. Wealth is more of the problem in America than the answer. As a nation, we have too easily bought into the idea that wealth leads to happiness.

If anyone has a gripe about there being two different Americas, it is my father. Alex Rodriguez gets paid much more for one game of throwing around a baseball than my father gets paid for one year of fighting fires. It's not fair, but that's life in a capitalist society. I have never heard my father, or any other fireman, policeman or soldier for that matter, complain about getting the short end of the stick. This is something for which we should all be thankful, because what if we all decided to strive to become part of "rich America" — who would fight fires?

What if there weren't men and women who value their contribution to society more than their paycheck? We might all be wealthier, but would we be happier? I severely doubt it. Despite what popular opinion tells us, neither America's happiness nor any nation's happiness is tied to its wealth. If it were, the rich would have bought up all the happiness, and there would be no celebrities to make us all feel better about our lives, rich or poor.

Justin Simmons, Third-year political science student

Diagrams make it all better

Debate and question have furthered human knowledge ever since the beginning of time. Aristotle. Achilles. E! Entertainment Television. These are just some of the names associated with the higher quality of thinking that has led us to ask important questions, such as, "Why is the sky blue?" and "Are Britney Spears' boobs real?"



DAVID STAGG
Third-year media arts student

I've decided it's time we honor some of the most important debates and questions that have plagued the human mind at one point or another, and I will give my take on the situation. ANTIQUATED QUESTION: Is the world flat?

COMMENTARY: Christopher Columbus, noteworthy for being the first person in history whose name utilizes alliteration, once sailed west from the Iberian Peninsula in hopes of finding a way around the world. He told the Spanish government that the world was, indeed, "round-ish," and that he could, by going "that way" (pointing to show Ferdinand

and Isabella), find a faster route to Yankee Stadium on game day.

MY RESPONSE: Although the idea of the world being flat is now widely regarded as "wrong," imagine what that must have been like at the time.

Columbus: All right guys. We're going WEST this time.

Guys: What!? You are crazy, Chris!

Columbus: For the last time, don't call me Chris. I'm trying to get a national holiday out of this.

Guys: But Christopher Columbus, the world ENDS if you go west. We'd drop off into oblivion!

Columbus: Don't ruin this for me! MODERN DEBATE: Dr Pepper or Mr. Pibb?

COMMENTARY: Strictly by factual evidence, I have found that Dr Pepper outperforms Mr. Pibb in sales, market share and the triple schalch in the third movement on the ice.

MY RESPONSE: Let's speak metaphorically. Here we have Dr. Pepper in terms of an ice skating spin:

As you can see, the revolutions overlay previous tracings. Nice work. Effective.

And here we have Mr. Pibb:

SOUND OFF
Create message boards at www.dailygamecock.com or send letters to the editor to gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu

Gamecock Corrections

In Wednesday's news article, "RHA passes resolution to limit hall spending," Bates House was misidentified. In the same story, Patrick Walsh should have been identified as Preston moderator. In the same story, Adam Hark should have been quoted "Once we've rooted out the problem we'll look into reparations."

In a photo caption in Monday's paper, Doc Somers Band was misidentified.

In a photo caption in last Friday's paper, I Nine was misidentified.

In last Friday's Sports, Brad Senkiw should have been listed as a fourth-year print journalism student.

The Gamecock regrets the error.

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

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In Your Opinion

Web site provides USC a vital service

Upon reading the front-page story on the shutting down of Teacherreviews.com ("Web site shuts down," Feb. 9), I was a little disconcerted by the situation in which founder Dylan Greene now finds himself.

His Web site is used by hundreds of students here at USC, not to mention at other colleges and universities nationwide. Although he gives his explanation of bending to the opposition as lack of money, what he might not have considered is its effects in the big picture.

His Web site is one of free speech, and for someone to sue him would clearly mark that professor as a violator of our First Amendment right.

As a freshman, I have used his site in registering for both of my semesters. The result? Only one bad teacher.

Mr. Greene, your site has been helpful, and we look forward to again accessing valuable information once its unnecessary reconstruction is complete.

ADDIE DILLER
FIRST-YEAR PUBLIC RELATIONS STUDENT

Wolfe should stick to sports reporting

Last week's column by Wes

Wolfe ("Unifying to get an idiot out of office," Feb. 11) was an ad hominem political tirade, presented no valid arguments, and through its utter disregard for fact, was a desecration to the very paper on which it was printed.

Wolfe asserts, "Poll after poll shows that the public doesn't trust Bush to deal with the economy or successfully handle the rebuilding of Iraq, or anything else, and for good reason." I would like to know exactly what poll shows that the American people do not trust George W. with the economy. The Harvard M.B.A. president inherited a recessionary economy from the Clinton-Gore years and has turned it around in the face of global terror and led America into a period of vast economic growth. The unemployment rate is down to 5.4 percent, the lowest it has been in two years.

Wolfe continues his pioneering voyage into the arena of politics by asserting, "... We should've known (Bush would) act like the ... village idiot crowned king. He has been a complete failure for the entirety of his life, succeeding only because of family connections." Beside the glaring contradiction in the previous sentence, this assertion is not at all tenable. The "village idiot" Wolfe speaks of was elected President

of the United States. He won the position, because he is a qualified candidate, highly educated, personable and an experienced executive in the world of business and politics.

If Bush is a village idiot, I would hate to know what that makes Mr. Wolfe. Bush is a man who is loyal to his loving wife, father to two adoring daughters, leader of the free world and successful entrepreneur. Because Wolfe is unable to present any evidence that Bush is a failure, one would have to assume that his hatred of our president is wrought of jealousy and can be dismissed just as quickly.

None of Wolfe's political "facts" can be backed up but are rather emotional jabs Wolfe wishes to be fact. I don't know if this supposed "journalist" was too lazy to actually research his points or just decided to spill his personal frustration into a manifested political column. For now, I offer a little advice to Wolfe — stick to sports, because you obviously know nothing about politics.

ANDREW FADALE
FIRST-YEAR BUSINESS STUDENT

Submission Policy

Letters to the editor should be less than 300 words and include name, phone number, professional title or year and major, if a student. E-mail letters to gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu. Letters will be edited for space, possible libel and style. Anonymous letters will not be published. Call the newsroom at 777-7726 for more information.

Online.Poll Should there be a Constitutional ban on gay marriage?

Yes 51%

No 43%

I don't care 5%



"Yes, I'm a Christian and I believe (gay marriage is) morally wrong."

ROBBY WIGGER
FIRST-YEAR BIOLOGY STUDENT



"No, everyone should have the choice to be with who they want."

ZATCH POUCHPROM
THIRD-YEAR HISTORY STUDENT



"No, nobody can tell you what you can and can't do."

JAMIE DOWNS
FIRST-YEAR ELECTRONIC JOURNALISM STUDENT