



THE GAMECOCK

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IN OUR OPINION

A vote for Cockey is a vote for USC

Cockey is competing to hold on to his title of CapitalOne National Mascot of the Year, after winning out over Brutus Buckeye last year. The competition, run by the CapitalOne Bowl, is between a dozen mascots from across the country.

This year, instead of one Internet poll being held over several months, the mascot challenge will pit the mascots in one-on-one match-ups every week.

Though the visibility was high on campus for the challenge last year, Cockey only came in third in the Internet voting. Thanks to a good campaign, though, Cockey managed to wow the judges and grabbed the victory out of the hands of Ohio State's nut, who took first place in the Internet poll.

Everyone in the Gamecock Nation needs to go to the CapitalOne Bowl Web site every day and vote for Cockey.

Every time something from USC has a national audience — usually sports teams or the infamous “Cocks” merchandise — we have the chance to raise the profile of USC and attract quality students that wouldn't otherwise look at Carolina as a possibility.

Also, we can't count on the good will of the CapitalOne Bowl Mascot Challenge judges, as they might not want to bestow the hallowed title to the same mascot in consecutive years. Therefore, Carolina students, faculty members, staff and everyone else in the Gamecock Nation needs to go to www.capitalonebowl.com every day and vote for your favorite rooster.

Last week, Cockey beat out Western Kentucky's Big Red but is losing to Duke Dog from James Madison University in Virginia. In the next nine weeks, Cockey's popularity will be put to the test, including match-ups with SEC foes Aubie (Auburn), Hairy Dawg (Georgia) and Scratch (Kentucky). We can't allow these other mascots, especially the ones in our own conference, to beat out the rightful champion.

Vote early, vote often, vote Cockey.

IT'S YOUR RIGHT

Exercise your right to voice your opinion. Create message boards at www.dailygamecock.com or send letters to the editor to gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu



GAMECOCK CORRECTIONS

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

ABOUT THE GAMECOCK

EDITOR
Adam Beam

DESIGN DIRECTOR
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COPY DESK CHIEF
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NEWS EDITOR
Michael LaForgia

ASST. NEWS EDITOR
Jon Turner

VIEWPOINTS EDITOR
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THE MIX EDITOR
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PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Jane Fielden, Katie Miles

CONTACT INFORMATION

Offices on third floor of the Russell House. The Editor's office hours are Monday and Wednesday from 3-5 p.m.
Editor: gamecockeditor@gwm.sc.edu
News: gamecocknews@gwm.sc.edu
Viewpoints: gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu
The Mix: gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu
Sports: gamecocksports@gwm.sc.edu
Public Affairs: gamecockPR@yahoo.com
Online: www.dailygamecock.com
Newsroom: 777-7726; Sports: 777-7182
Editor's Office: 777-3914

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The Gamecock
1400 Greene St.
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Advertising: 777-3888
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BEELER by KRT CAMPUS



CARTOON COURTESY OF KRT CAMPUS

Ladder theory reveals scheming

A badly-timed leap to the “Good” ladder may be dangerous for guys

Do you remember how funny all of those sex-ed books were back in middle school? No, not the ones about funny parts, the ones about all of those awkward feelings and emotions we are doomed to face. I can't decide which is more disturbing — the entirely ridiculous manner in which they were presented or the slight truths they held.

As a single, disease-free and debit-card carrying member of the male species, I probably bat a .200 in the dating game. Today, we are going to focus on that missing .800.

Thanks to the wonders of the Internet and intellectualwhores.com, I have been exposed to “The Ladder Theory” of male-female interaction. Conceived by some of the most brilliant anonymous minds ever, the awkwardness and confusion every male loathes has been bottled up into a nice, neat little metaphor.

“The Ladder Theory” is simple. When a man (Frank) meets a girl (Susie), Frank quickly assesses Susie and places her somewhere on his ladder — a lone multi-tiered structure that ranks women based on how attractive Frank finds them. All women fall somewhere on this ladder. Susie, however, deals with Frank in a very different way. Whereas men have one ladder, women have two: the “Good” ladder and the dreaded “Friends” ladder. Susie quickly



CHASE STOUDENMIRE

FIRST-YEAR POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT

assesses Frank and places him in one of these ladders. Unfortunately, Susie will never let Frank know which ladder he is on.

In the event that Susie stands fairly high on Frank's ladder, he may choose to ask her out on a date. Allow me

to formally introduce you to “The Grab.” Assuming that Frank is on Susie's “Good” ladder, all is well, and the courting process has begun. But what if Frank attempts to make “The Grab” and he is unknowingly on the “Friends” ladder? One of two things will happen: One, Frank will successfully jump to the other ladder, Susie allows him to grab on, and all is well; Or two — Frank will pounce towards the “Good” ladder, attempt to grab on to it, and Susie will kick Frank in the face, sending him plummeting into the infinite abyss below. A place full of humiliation, self-loathing and unreturned phone calls. Make note that number one has never happened. Ever.

I have recently fallen victim to the kick in the face, leaving me confused, disappointed and physically disfigured. How does one recover from such a resounding defeat? Can one recover at

all? Now that I have fallen into the abyss, my instant messages fall on blind eyes, my phone calls fall on deaf ears and the presence of estrogen has been far less frequent in my love nest others call a dorm room. Of course, any attempts to rekindle friendship will now be seen as attempts to grab on to the “Good” ladder again, because I have violated the rules of behavior for boys on the “Friends” ladder. I am essentially screwed. It is a terrible fate.

Unfortunately for women, we have now figured out how you work. This leaves me with one sound conclusion: The dating game is biased in favor of the female. Much to my (and almost every other guy's, even though they won't admit it) regret, females don't help us out when it comes to finding out what the boundaries of any given relationship are. Consequently, females get to sit perched atop their ladders and laugh as the males clamor for their affection. They do not have to be afraid of falling into the abyss and casually pull from each supply of “Good” and “Friend” boys depending on what mood they are in.

The saddest part of this whole situation is the fact that it will continue to happen for years and years, because girls are pretty and they make boys do crazy things. In the meantime, while I am a little worm in the big mud pile of the abyss, I guess I can rely on one of life's wisest statements. The early bird gets the worm, but the late worm survives. Good thing I don't look tasty to any chicks right now.

Nester shares Nintendo nostalgia

A free online source provides new access to classic NES games

We all know what Napster is, but have you heard of Nester? I met Nester by accident recently, and ever since then my fiancée and I have had our hair blown back by a whirlwind of nostalgia.

It started with playing Pac-Man on my 5-year-old niece's Game Boy one weekend.

While taking turns running away from ghosts named Inky, Pinky and Blinky, we were reminded of other classic video games from our childhood, mostly from the original Nintendo Entertainment System. Neither of us had played it since we were kids, and the more we reminisced about theme music and warp zones, the more we thirsted to get our hands on one of those little gray controllers.

We decided it would be great to find an old NES system and a few games from our childhood. I had no idea that I was about to stumble onto something a million times better. While Google-searching for information about the Brothers Mario, a funny little guy with a bright yellow face introduced himself to me. It was Nester.

Nester is a computer program best described as an emulator. In Nester's case, it emulates the classic NES that many of us were so obsessed with when we were younger. It's available for free on the Internet and so are the games. From the most common titles



AARON KIDD

THIRD-YEAR ADVERTISING STUDENT

like Super Mario and Tetris to obscure titles that were once only available in Japan, dozens of Web sites devoted to distributing and sharing these long forgotten games are in existence.

When I was a kid, Nickelodeon sponsored a contest for a free shopping spree at Toys“R”Us. The lucky winner would have a limited amount of time to grab as many toys as possible, and I always daydreamed about my strategy just in case I was given the opportunity. Filling an entire shopping cart with Nintendo cartridges was always part of my plan. Thanks to Nester, that part of my dream has come true.

My fiancée, who grew up in Japan, can play all of the Japanese games she loved so much as a child. Now that she lives in the United States, there would be little chance for her to get her hands on any of these titles without emulators like Nester. It bridges the international gap and makes it all possible.

Is Nester legal? Yes, but there is a catch. The games, called roms in the emulation world, can only be legally downloaded and kept if you already physically possess the actual game cartridge. If not, you can still

download games, but you are only allowed to keep them for a 24-hour trial period. After that you are supposed to delete them.

As far as I know there has not yet been any legal action taken on the behalf of Nintendo or any other game system (emulators exist for Atari, Sega and PlayStation, too) concerning the copyrights of their older games.

It's hard to imagine the Xbox generation having any interest in the 8-bit graphics technology offered more than 20 years earlier, but it's happening.

The other day I overheard a few guys talking before class about staying up all night playing Pitfall on an old Atari system they found in their parents' basement. I just had to laugh, because my fiancée and I had spent almost the entire previous day attached to the first Super Mario Bros. game.

So, what's next? There will always be a little interest for nostalgia reasons, of course, but I can't imagine video game emulators like Nester becoming the next Napster. And I doubt the copyright holders will press many buttons to start legal action when it comes to the old games.

As for my fiancée and I, our romance with Nester is already beginning to run its course. We haven't been playing it as much lately, but it's still comforting to know that it's there. Kind of like an old friend.

It's nice to know that we can get a part of our childhood back so easily. No coins needed — just the click of a button.

Halloween allows God and Satan equal time

Divine comedic timing makes Devil's day fall on a Sunday this year

“And on the third day, God mischievously decided that Halloween 2004 would land on a Sunday. And He created ‘the Halloween prank’ by

flooding the earth. And it was good, for He soaked lots and lots of people.”

That's how I remember the Bible, giving devout believers and jolly pranksters fair warning about the Oct. 31,

2004, debacle: Halloween is on the Sabbath this year, proving God has a sense

of humor.

Here's the sweet end of the deal: Because God's day and Satan's day will overlap, we can be spiritual and deviant at the same time, and the effects will cancel out. It's a free day — kicking back with God and Satan on the couch, watching a football game; worshipping, soaping windows; praying, throwing eggs; singing a hymn, singing Rob Zombie's cover of “Boogie Man.”

God and Halloween have been mixing for years. The latest Party City ad features nun and preacher outfits juxtaposed with pimp and ho get-ups. Preachers all have a little pimp in them just urging to get out and belittle prostitutes, and Halloween allows them this fantasy without all the guilt. Conversely, pimps can feel shame after pistol-whipping a cheap john, and sometimes they need to steal some Holy Communion wine in a brown paper bag.

I'd like to think that I could strut into church come Halloween with some sissy outfit and not be hassled by the Man (aka Jesus). We should get a little dress-code leniency on Halloween. If you walk in wearing your bedtime smoking jacket and bunny slippers, just say you're Hugh Hefner looking for repentance after years of “sinful” living. All the men in attendance will snicker quietly, but can the elders really boot you from God's house because you're dressed like a playboy, or a Power Ranger, or Gumby? Sweet Lord, no.

It's all in good fun. Imagine taking communion at a Catholic church on Halloween. You eat the wafer, look up at the preacher and see a smirk on his face. He's trying to avoid eye contact. Then you realize the joke and jump up. “Wait a minute, this bread's leavened! You joker, you! Happy Halloween, Father!” It would add a little levity to Leviticus.

A lot of “concerned citizens” might see this as sacrilegious. In a recent CNN story, some Southerners raised their pitchforks in surly objection.

“You just don't do it on Sunday,” said Sandra Hulsey of Greenville, Ga. “That's Christ's day. You go to church on Sunday, you don't go out and celebrate the devil. That'll confuse a child.”

She then bit the head off a live chicken and asked the CNN reporter about his “horseless buggy.”

Ms. Hulsey, are you right with Jesus or just wrong with fun? People don't “celebrate the devil” on Halloween. This holy day is merely an excuse to eat your weight in candy corn and feel no shame when wearing underwear on the outside of your pants (this was part of my last Halloween costume — and I wasn't going as a superhero).

Southerners should lighten up and embrace God's great sense of comedic timing. Ms. Hulsey should be more concerned about whether her kids are vandalizing cars on Halloween rather than worshipping the devil.

Go to church Sunday morning, have some fun Sunday night. You can have your wafer and eat it, too.

ONLINE POLL

What should USC do about its admissions standards?

What admissions standards?	44%
Move to a more holistic approach.	34%
Leave them as they are.	22%

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