



THE GAMECOCK

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IN OUR OPINION

Breaking news: Clemson sucks

After much deliberation, The Gamecock editorial board has decided to take a stance on the Carolina-Clemson issue. Our conclusion: Clemson sucks.

It's a sad testimony of the educational level of South Carolina when the second-largest research university in the state can't even pronounce its name. Clemson prides itself on originality, with its orange overalls and its policy allowing fans on the field after the game.

But the only thing distinctive about Clemson is that god-awful orange its fans insist on wearing. Countless high school,

Orange is good for '80s pop music and not much else. college and pro teams share the tiger mascot, and at least two schools — Auburn and LSU — use Tiger Rag as its fight song. If

Tiger Rag is the "song that shakes the Southland," it's shaking at least two other Southern schools as well. You'll also hear a lot about "the most exciting 25 seconds in college football" that Brent Musberger said about Clemson rubbing a rock and stumbling down a hill. There's no drama — fans don't even know what's going on until the team is already on the field.

Then there's 1980 and Clemson's fraudulent national championship under the questionable recruiting practices of Danny Ford. Much like South Carolina's 1984 season, Clemson fans point to the holy year of 1981 as they went 12-0 and defeated Nebraska in the Orange Bowl to win the national championship. Ford was fired in 1989 to avoid an NCAA investigation. Ever since then, Clemson fans have really showed their loyalty to the program by staying away from Death Valley when times got tough. In 1993, Clemson averaged nearly 10,000 fewer fans than the previous season and rejoiced when coach Ken Hatfield was fired. The reason? Clemson lost three games and Hatfield's .770 winning percentage just wasn't good enough.

We could have done the politically correct editorial for rivalry week, touting the benefits of both schools, wishing a safe game and enjoyable time for fans — but all we really want to do is beat the crap out of Clemson. It's rivalry week. Talk as much trash as possible. We recommend the classic "cow college" jokes as well as the timely Duke slam. And don't worry — no matter how much we talk trash about Clemson, they always stoop lower, with drunk students in Death Valley two years ago passing around a giant inflatable penis while standing on a grassy hill.

As you can tell, we've given this issue careful thought. Go CoCks, and long live rivalry.

GAMECOCK CORRECTIONS

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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Senators working hard for change

Student Government requires input in order to be truly effective

I have two homes on campus. One is my suite in West Quad. The other is the Student Government office. Most people come to the Russell House to eat, get their mail and attend meetings. I do this and more, spending much of my free time around the SG junkies who too often go unnoticed.

It never ceases to amaze me how uncaring much of our student body is about Student Government issues. In the last election, only 10 percent of the student body voted for the individuals who hold sway over hundreds of thousands of dollars in student activity fees and represent the student body before the administration, Board of Trustees and state legislature.

Since taking office in March, I've served in a Senate that has discussed dozens of pieces of legislation, most of which directly impact students. We've debated legislation to encourage the establishment of a student advocate program, condemn hazing, create a way to report hate crimes on campus, encourage efficiency in the USC post office, establish a student to serve as a liaison with the local government, add three seats to the Student Senate and encourage parking services to list a student's number of parking tickets online.

But do students care? It's hard to know.



RYAN HOLT

SECOND-YEAR POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENT

Fortunately, The Gamecock has taken a new approach at covering SG. A reporter is frequently in the office and the chambers. Legislation that was never addressed in previous volumes of The Gamecock is now featured on the front page.

When it comes to getting the word out, the communicators are doing what needs to be done. And so, the onus lies with you to let us know what you think. With the Student Senate especially, we operate (at least in theory) on the idea that we are voting because 25,000 students can't be assembled to comment on every issue. I represent more than 6,000 people in the Senate and since taking office have hardly heard from six.

The members of the Senate are well-connected on campus, yet still there is a lack of input on the part of individual students. Senators are as diverse as the student body, making it likely that you have at least one thing in common with at least one senator.

A dozen are Greek, a dozen are minorities, five are graduate students, and almost 20 are women; the body includes the chief executives of AAAS, BGLSA, Fraternity Council and the

Carolina/Clemson Blood Drive as well as members of SCSL, Dance Marathon, FCA, Young Democrats and College Republicans. My point? We're no different than you, so come talk to us.

Some students may go the SG route to embellish their resume, but they are the easiest to expose. Members of SG who push initiatives in the president's cabinet or sponsor resolutions in the Student Senate are the people who truly care about the betterment of the student body. These individuals are easy to find and are willing to explore the issues important to you.

This year saw the advent of "Get Our the Vote" that drives that championed the individual freedoms we have to make decisions for ourselves. Let me drive it home further: Don't sacrifice your individual right to make decisions in something even so simple as your college student government.

I'm pleased with the caliber of individuals elected this February, but don't let 10 percent make that decision for you, and don't let an even smaller number of people make the decisions that affect your student activity fees or the money your student organization receives.

I have never once been jaded by my experiences in SG, realizing that a lot of good can be achieved through this organization. However, I only hope that what I realize to be important will ring true to 25,000 of my schoolmates, so together we can achieve good things for the benefit of our university.

IN YOUR OPINION

Wolfe wrong about gay marriage debate

I read Wes Wolfe's column ("Christian conservatives peddle ignorance after election," Thursday) and I've got to say, this guy needs a serious reality check. He's deluded himself into thinking that the 53 million people who voted for George W. Bush are all Bible-thumping, foot-washing, proselytizing idiots.

Other than the gay marriage debate, which Wolfe has dutifully accepted (any good liberal must) as the only reason for Sen. John Kerry's loss, he can find no other possible scenario where "normal" people would vote conservative. For the moment, I'll set aside the variety of other issues that contributed to the overwhelming failure of the Democratic Party on Nov. 2 and try to make some sense out of this gay marriage problem.

The majority of moderate conservatives aren't quite sure what they think of gay marriage. They don't hate gay people; they don't hate the gay lifestyle either. Had they been given the opportunity to choose between the current status quo and say, a civil union option, I believe you would have seen a different result. But that wasn't the case. That's a big step for any careful citizen, regardless of how you want the government to act.

Personally I don't think it's any of the government's business to define marriage for its citizens, which includes a constitutional amendment to ban gays from the practice. I believe that marriage, as an institution of the church, should be left solely at the discretion of the church. But once again, voters weren't given that choice, and when forced to decide between the norm and a radical change, people will inevitably choose the norm.

Just as important is the simple truth that no one, Wolfe included,

likes being told by the government what they must accept as morally correct. This aversion to government intervention is just as evident in liberal opposition to the strengthening pro-life movement as it is the gay marriage debate. That same aversion is especially strong when people in South Carolina realize the government agents responsible for this coercion are the Massachusetts Supreme Court and the mayor of San Francisco.

Wondering why the backlash against gay marriage was so powerful? Wondering why every single state asked to choose on the issue chose not to allow it? The simple answer is this: liberals tried to force it down Americans' throats. They went for an all-or-nothing approach and got nothing. Wolfe complains about the Christian Right's involvement in the last election, but it was the prominent position of the far left that had the biggest effect on voters.

The irrational anger that consumed leftists wasn't and isn't shared by normal Americans. It doesn't take a Ph.D. to realize that both parties should work towards the middle of the political spectrum if they want to seriously vie for independent voters.

I'll close with some advice for Wolfe: If you want to help the Democratic Party regain its footing, then stop trying to justify the liberal loss through vain and silly attempts to associate all Republican voters, and for that matter all Christians, with the extreme Religious Right. Stop calling everyone who disagrees with you ignorant. You might even try dropping that conceited assumption that you're smarter and more sophisticated than everybody else. You're not.

CHRISTOPHER SPEAKS
Fourth-year religious studies and political science student

Elevator prank not fodder for legal battle

I must say, I heartily disagreed with Josh DeWinter's letter to the editor ("Dorm residents are adults, have rights," Wednesday). Maybe in Washington the Bates West incident is acceptable adult behavior, but I assure you I have never been taught that defecating in a public elevator is even remotely mature. And until college students cease to act like children, they will incur the penalties.

Neighbors, roommates and friends have been given the choice to share the fine or turn in the perp. We all know that rumors spread in a dorm, and frankly, the pooper isn't the only one guilty. If the violator can't admit his own guilt, you would think someone else would turn him in the perp in the interest of saving himself \$20.

But let's face it — we are college students, and who wants to share an apartment with a bitter traitor? However, if you don't want to risk a friendship or a roommate relationship, then your choice is clear to share the fine.

The university must come up with a source of revenue to sanitize the elevator. They don't build poop scooping in to the annual budget, and the job is expensive. The few willing to commit themselves to this work can charge what they want, because the residents of Bates West aren't going to do it themselves.

On a last note, the last time I checked, the right to poop in elevators was enumerated in neither the Constitution nor the Bill of Rights.

LIZ GARBY
Third-year management and marketing 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. Anonymous letters will not be published. Call the newsroom at 777-7726 for more information.

Majorism corrupts students' mind-sets

Academic prejudices divide student body and prevent relationships

Ophelia Black, fourth-year art student: "Mechanical engineers? They're illiterate, uncouth primates who pound their chests for no reason, treat girls like crap and occasionally tinker with something mechanical. They have no interest in fine arts, except the fine art of being really stupid."

Billy O'Dell, second-year mechanical engineering student: "Art students? They're unimportant, noodle-armed pansies. They'll never have a real job, and they're all women or gay men. Their typical day consists of sipping cappuccino, sculpting something out of trash and feeding pigeons. They have math skills tantamount to Mr. Ed's."

Ms. Black and Mr. O'Dell are guilty of majorism. What's majorism? It's like racism or sexism. I know, I know, I've been blind to this phenomenon for a long time, too. It never occurred to me until recently how much peoples' perceptions are skewed by certain majors.

My buddies and I were down at 300 Main St. (aka Bastard Junction to many people) studying thermodynamics. Brian interrupted the finer points of a heat exchanger problem to tell us that he was on thin ice with his girlfriend. I asked him what the problem was.

"I'm a mechanical engineer."

"What does that have to do with anything?" I asked.

He explained how many students, mostly of the female variety, thought we were all tools. Inadequate boyfriend fodder. Victoria, that rare female engineering student, chimed in. She completely agreed and said she would never date a mechanical.

I was pissed. I saw the reasoning (many mechanicals fit snugly into that stereotype), but I was still pissed. Brian ended the discussion with a pearl of wisdom.

"All women suffer from the same mental illness — some more than others." Yeah, let's break that "insensitive" stereotype.

Some students certainly fit the stereotypes that others gleefully criticize. I don't know squat about business or education, and I'd be the first to admit it. Stocks? Pick the ones with funny names. Kids? Beat that senseless joy out of 'em. Any BA dweller can call me out on that.

But some students thumb their noses at anything not resembling their respective majors. I remember a classmate flipping through The Gamecock on Nov. 3, sneering at the art, English and music students' quotes about the election. "Get a real major," he muttered.

Screw that guy. He's content to remove all traces of his humanity and sum force equations until he dies. Maybe he doesn't realize there's an X factor in the world that can't be quantified, the one that makes "Catcher in the Rye" so moving, the one that chills my spine every time "The Sound of Silence" creeps out of a stereo; the one that makes the Afghan refugee picture on the front of National Geographic in 1985 so powerful; and yes, the one that gives me satisfaction when I triumphantly smite a thermo problem.

I value renaissance, not blind rigidity. I like being able to run at night, do linear algebra, write a song, copy edit at The Gamecock, give blood, pound drums, party, read "Slaughterhouse Five" and fail circuits tests. Oh yeah, I also like treating girls with respect and being a gentleman — just a quick "get bent" to all perpetrators of the mechanicals-are-all-dogs myth.

No one likes being pinned with a scarlet letter. We all picked our majors, and they all deserve respect.

ONLINE POLL

Will the football team beat Clemson on Saturday?

Yes **48%**

No **52%**

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