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### IN OUR OPINION

## Every USC player merits fan support

Carolina fans have long been known for their loyalty to our athletic program through thick and thin. After all, what other university could sell the vast majority of its football season tickets during a 0-21 stretch? Even when our team is doing poorly, Williams-Brice is a sea of 80,000 screaming fans clad in garnet and black. It is no doubt wonderful motivation for the players to know that even when things are going poorly, they have the undivided attention and support of a legion.

Football is not the only sport that needs or should have the support of throngs of Gamecock fans. Our basketball team works just as hard for less public recognition at a school that often seems to forget we have sports in the spring. With an almost-new

**There's no good reason that we can't pack the Colonial Center every home game.**

venue that offers the latest in fan amenities, there is no good reason that we can't pack the Colonial Center for every home game. It's within walking distance from campus and tickets are free, and in most cases can be picked up by students the night of the game from the ticket office. USC coach Dave Odom has asked repeatedly for more attendance at games, and rightly so. There's no fun putting in all that work when there's no one in attendance to appreciate a hard-fought game between our Gamecocks and a big SEC rival.

Indeed, what makes the SEC so much better than all the other athletic conferences is the focus on quality in nearly every varsity sport. Gamecock athletes deserve to be cheered on regardless of the sport they play, and in a sense our standing in the SEC depends on our ability to motivate our athletes to succeed. We need look no further than Florida for an example of how to support the basketball team. Their student section had obviously done research on our players, and had inventive catcalls for each one at a recent game in Gainesville. Do we really want to be outdone by Florida? Go to games and support your team loudly — it's your Gamecock duty.



### IT'S YOUR RIGHT

Exercise your right to voice your opinion. Create message boards at [www.dailygamecock.com](http://www.dailygamecock.com) or send letters to the editor to [gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu)

### GAMECOCK CORRECTIONS

In Wednesday's "Winners and Sinners," Donnie Fowler Jr. was misidentified.

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](mailto:gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu).

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## Don't let V-Day ruin a bad thing

### Some people always set themselves up for St. Valentine's Massacre

Valentine's Day is looming, and there's this guy and this girl. He's got this girl sealed up from the inside.



STEVEN VAN HAREN

THIRD-YEAR MECHANICAL ENGINEERING STUDENT

She's great because she's quiet and never gets clingy and rarely whines. She's pretty, sure as can be. They've been dating for six months, since August. At first, he wasn't real sure about her. During a few dates and a few weeks he started to like her and

started to test her, like testing a bungee cord. He liked her but couldn't stop testing her.

So he forced her to love him. It was easy. Her mind made the connection as he slipped her the L-bomb while slipping her some tongue and slipping her fingers into his. That L-word is the ultimate weapon. He almost believed it too.

They talked for hours all the time. She talked more back then and seemed to like talking, so he had her call him

whenever she was leaving her apartment. And he liked her well enough.

He really hated it when she went to the Tennessee game without him even though he didn't want to go to that stupid game anyway. They fought. He's always been a peacekeeper, and he had to end the fight ASAP so he screamed at her a good bit, right in her ear, and asked her who had the bigger mouth between them. They said they loved each other and then he took his hands off her neck.

The next day she got up at 8, went to breakfast, went to the gym, went to her first class, sat in the Horseshoe for awhile, went to her second class, ate lunch, went home until 3:20 and then left at 3:20 to go to work. He wondered about that Horseshoe business and yelled at her more for it every day.

Then she seemed a little mechanical and gained some weight. He told her she seemed more detached and that the gym wasn't working. He told her that maybe if she would spend less time on the Horseshoe after her first class doing God knows what and spend more time at the gym that she'd look better. He kind of pushed her a bit and bumped her head.

You know, she used to care about her words. She'd always had some words for him in a fight before he had to play peacekeeper, but they went away. Their fights are efficient clockwork now. He knows exactly when to grab the tissues and when to enforce their love. He pushes her down

sometimes.

So Valentine's Day is looming. It's one of those holidays that puts girls' emotions on a fulcrum, teetering over happiness or regret. He can't really do anything about what her friends say, but all their talking reflects onto her. She sponges everything up, like their break-ups and engagements. Can you believe she's talking about a ring? She's being really stupid as usual, so he sort of entertains it and dances around it.

He sees these guys around campus who just don't know how to enforce love, and it makes him cringe. They seem happy with their girlfriends, hand in hand, walking in step, but he's sure those girls aren't happy. They need an aggressor in their lives. They get mouthy.

V-Day inspires more madness than he'd prefer. Girls start going batty and want to let go, and good guys like him get caught with a sore throat and a clenched fist.

But this girl, his girl, is great. She submits.

Yesterday, she got up at 8, went to breakfast alone at 8:45, went to the gym at 9:15, went to her first class at 10:10, went back to the gym at 11, went to her second class at 12:20, ate lunch with Greg and Lucy, went home until 3:20 and then left at 3:20 to go to work. She got back from work at 10.

He's not scared of Valentine's Day. She's not going anywhere. She knows this is as good as it can get, and V-Day can't get any better.

### IN YOUR OPINION

#### Bopp's letter shows race awareness gap

In response to Stefanie Bopp's letter ("Blacks, whites must accept one another," Wednesday) I would first like to agree that the black guy on the bus should not have made whether he would be a gentlemen an issue of race. But I disagree with everything else in her letter.

In Bopp's four years at USC, I am sure she has taken at least two history classes. She, as well as everyone else, probably noticed that not much is said about black history except when studying the times of slavery and reconstruction. So it is absolutely necessary that there is an African-American studies department here on campus to teach any student willing to learn about black history. Students of all races have benefited from this department, and have been amazed at the differences between black and white history.

I have to say that Bopp must be completely confused if she thinks that blacks and whites will integrate fraternities and sororities. Before blacks were accepted into white universities, both black and white schools had their own separate fraternities and sororities. When schools were integrated, nothing changed with regard to Greek organizations. Blacks and whites have become more accepting of one another, but some things stay the same. It is not that everyone on campus is racist, but history repeats itself, and in order for change to come it will take a group effort.

**SHAWNEQUA THOMPSON**  
Second-year African-American studies and psychology student

#### V-Day helps make positive difference

I was surprised to see that Preston Grisham chose to launch a baseless

attack at the V-Day events that are soon to commence on campus ("Vaginas have joined left-wing conspiracy," Wednesday). I have always known Student Government candidates to be even-handed and understanding about the diverse viewpoints that can be found at the university. Grisham clearly doesn't fall under that description. Instead of approaching the V-Day organizers regarding clarification of the events, he chose to jump to conclusions and attack them ignorantly. I wonder how he suggests that people become more comfortable with their bodies and sexuality within a climate of repression.

The purpose of V-Day (which happens to stand for "Valentine" and "victory," as well as "vagina") is to help adult members of the Carolina community reflect on their own beliefs about sexuality and gender-based violence. Unfortunately, Grisham appears to be threatened by women who will not be silenced into submission. He, as well as the other members of College Republicans (who recently sent a news release condemning the event) should know that V-Day is an international movement that has raised millions of dollars. Attentive students on campus should hesitate to elect this man as a leader when he fails to get his facts straight and attacks hard-working groups of students for their attempts to educate others and raise money for charity.

**ELYN BLACKMAN**  
Graduate student in the College of Arts and Sciences and College of Mass Communications and Information Studies

#### Both races should find middle ground

I commend Stefanie Bopp for recounting her experience with

prejudice ("Blacks, whites must accept one another," Wednesday). While I am disappointed that prejudice remains so prevalent in our lives, I can't say I feel sorry for her, as minorities have endured far worse troubles with no sympathy.

I agree with Bopp that all humans are biologically of one race; if this is true, then even the term "reverse racism" is racist. Used to describe racism directed toward whites, the term implies that white people are somehow above "real" racism. As quick as Bopp was to tell black students to stop complaining about racism and integrate further into the greater school community, she was just as quick to cry reverse racism.

Black people don't make much effort to assimilate because we shouldn't have to make that effort alone. Bopp said this school's racial separation is our fault, but why should we seek your favor when our efforts aren't reciprocated?

Sadly, it's a standoff — as long as each side waits for the other to take the first step, together we will go nowhere.

We are all, black and white, ignorant of the potential this school could realize if we would live not as black or white students but as Carolina students aimed at common goals.

That ignorance also blinds people to the truth that color does matter. Our goal as a student body should be to bridge the gap and bring this school to a place where it doesn't.

**TERENCE WASHINGTON**  
Second-year English student

## 'V' word deserves a little bit of respect

### V-Day Campaign working to break taboo for people worldwide

During the next week there will be more than a few people saying the word vagina. Some will be saying it with horror, others with relief. And while I know these three syllables might not sit well, my hope is that this word, which has so long exasperated and confused, will, in the near future, be said without disgust, disdain or terror, and instead with acceptance and respect.

I remember being afraid of the word, which is, in case you forgot: vagina. I was a freshman and had convinced myself I didn't have one, that if I ever got married maybe my unsuspecting husband and I just wouldn't discuss it, for fear of an awkward conversation. I decided that if I just ignored it, maybe it would go away.

But sometimes the only way to get over your fears is to face them. As organizer of the fourth annual production of "The Vagina Monologues," which is playing during Valentine's Day weekend at Gambrell Auditorium, I think I've said "vagina" about 46 billion times, and I've made a daily habit of awkward conversations. "Vagina" has become one of the cornerstones of my vocabulary.

Along with the phenomenal men and women on the cast and crew, I've been working with the Women Student's Association at USC and the worldwide V-Day campaign, which has exploded into something of a fervent battle cry, with 711 college campuses and 398 worldwide groups participating, including a community performance in Columbia. The V-Day campaign and the play are complex and wonderful things, much like people. Hell, much like vaginas. The play contemplates not only the body and the worldwide epidemic of self-perpetuating violence, but also the every day miracles of birth, the ability to laugh at oneself and the opportunity, at long last, to speak. To talk. To stop holding back. The production is a beautiful, powerful, hilarious and profoundly important experience. To learn more about the campaign, visit [www.vday.org](http://www.vday.org). All the proceeds from the performances go to benefit women, and beginning at the teach-in about USC's sexual assault policy tonight at 6 at Gambrell Auditorium, there will be events every day up until the performances.

I'm also terrified of pissing people off, which is quite unfortunate because I'm so good at it. But I feel like it's worth taking the risk of people not liking me if I can help someone to see that being grossed out by the word vagina and all the other words we've come up with for our "down there" is what leads people to think there is something wrong with this particular female body part. When we don't talk about sexuality or our bodies, women are the ones who suffer. And when we think of the vagina as a place where dark, dirty and sinister things occur, things we must never speak or think about, and when we designate the vagina a vortex, a vacuum, a hole, something to ignore, something to block out of your mind as a hideous thing between your legs, between your sister's legs, between your mother's legs, it only serves to maintain a stigma of morbid and nasty silence. South Carolina isn't first in the nation for spousal murders for nothing. And it's no accident that Columbia rules when it comes to STDs.

If the word "vagina" written on a poster makes you ill, if the sight of varying shades of pink fabric and lace terrifies you, or if you feel outrage over a play in which women talk about their lives, their sexuality and their strength, I ask you to take a moment to ask yourself why you feel that way. Is it because the vagina, something the majority of mankind has, is so awful? Being a woman is not immoral. Having a vagina is not wrong. There is no need to be afraid of it. We should not be afraid of who we are.

### ONLINE POLL

Who do you think will win the Super Bowl?

Patriots	63%
Eagles	37%