

THE GAMECOCK

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IN OUR OPINION

Facebook group fuels Southern stereotypes

If students are going to create a presence on the popular Web site thefacebook.com, we suggest that they do so with a little taste and discretion.

"2001" is the Best Intro in College Football" is a fine name for a Facebook group. So are "People Who Love the Boom Box Man" and "4-runners at Carolina."

A group declaring "Northerners Dress Like the Negroes Do," however, doesn't just push the bounds of good taste. It's offensive. Does that make the guy who came up with the title a racist? No, not necessarily. He just used poor judgment in naming a space in an online public forum.

Regardless of intent, the group's creators should have thought twice when people started getting angry over it.

It would be one thing if the title were a free-speech stand, or it represented some type of social commentary.

If you ask us, students spend too much time on thefacebook.com to begin with. But, as far as we can tell, it's just a misguided shot at humor that's left more people upset than laughing.

If you ask us, students spend too much time on thefacebook.com to begin with, without perpetuating racial tensions.

It has been argued that the group in question has more to do with Southern pride than race relations. But Southern pride has nothing to do with racial epithets. Why even use them, especially in a context in which they might prove incendiary?

Be proud of Southern hospitality, gentility and kindness — not that the South has a longstanding history of bigotry and deep-rooted racial tensions.

South Carolina — and USC, in particular — already has enough problems stemming from race issues. We don't need folks running around on the Internet, creating groups with inflammatory titles, stirring up more trouble.

So take up a sport, instead. Preferably one played outside. Power down the computer, open the shades and go out on the Horseshoe.

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



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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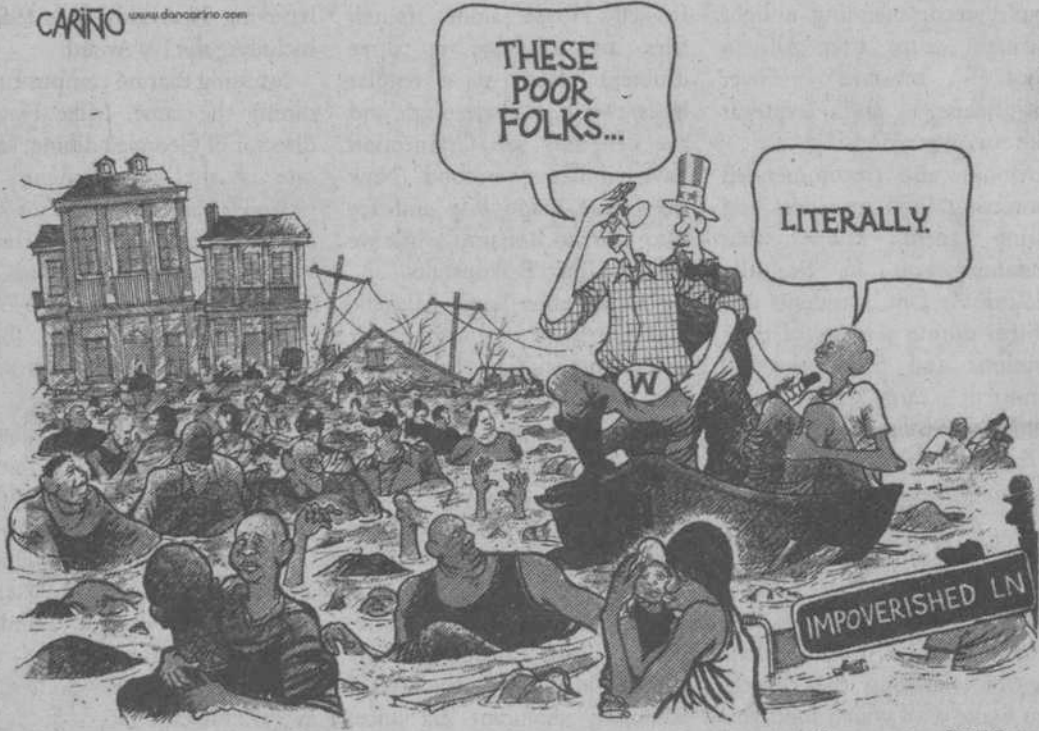
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THE GAMECOCK is the editorially independent student newspaper of the University of South Carolina. It is published Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the fall and spring semesters and nine times during the summer, with the exception of university 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.

CARINO www.dancocarino.com



Cartoon courtesy of KRT Campus

Welcome to Innovista Amusement Park

Before anybody else, I've got the skinny on USC's research utopia

Innovista, Columbia's new USC theme park, is set to open in a few years, and I personally can't wait for its gates to swing open.

I'm already dreaming about the roller-coasters, the elephant ears, the music, the fun — it's almost too much to handle.

The new name for the park is just too clever. Combining the "inno" of innovation with the Vista was designed to get people talking. And it has. People are wondering what sort of rides are planned.

Will there be a "Dunk Spurrier" booth? After the announcement of Innovista, I did some research.

On condition of anonymity, USC administrators agreed to give me some classified details.

My, what a park they have in mind! "This is going to rival the greats," said a source close to the president. "Forget about Disney and Universal. People are going to be coming to Columbia for their entertainment from now on." You might be skeptical right now — I was too, at first — but listen to what they have planned.

Before entering the venue, you will park your car in one of the spacious lots Parking Services plans to build. With their long record of providing



ANDREW BENTZ

Fourth-year international studies and music student

parking, I'm sure they'll do a great job with a theme park.

A f t e r passing under the giant, polka-dotted, bow-tie entrance, you will soon spot Cocky. Be sure to stop by to get

his autograph and maybe a hug or two.

Then comes the tough part where you have to choose which of Innovista's four lands you're going to visit first: Housing, Dining, Classes or Five Points.

In Housing Land you'll delight in such rides as "Towers Terror" where you brave the hallways of the ominous bee hive-inspired Towers to find your way out — if there is one. The center of Housing Land will be the awe-inspiring "Capstone Castle." Enter the 15-story castle to journey through USC's history.

From the quaintness of the Horseshoe to the modernness of West Quad, you will experience it all in this multi-sensory adventure.

In Dining Land, it's always "Chicken Finger Wednesday."

While you are there, don't miss the "Food Service Employee-of-the-Day Show." Every hour it's an amalgam of all your favorite food workers

from Chick-fil-A to Bates Cafeteria in a show which rivals Broadway.

The revue will feature songs such as "Don't Tell Anyone the Pizza's from Last Night" and "We Ain't Got No More Lettuce for Your Salad." You'll be humming long after you leave.

Classes Land is the place for a break. Desks are scattered through dark, cool rooms and animatronics deliver monotone lectures. It will offer that much-needed chance to relax.

Last but not least is Five Points Land, offering some great traditions such as SpeakEasy and Rafter's. But it will also integrate new "experiences" inspired by the real Five Points.

"Traffic Dodge" is an exciting new race around construction workers and orange cones as you strive to be the first one to the bar. "The Stumble and Stutter Show" is where you convince your friends to join the performers on stage to see who can get wasted the quickest.

I know waiting for Innovista's gates to open, the fireworks to explode and the rides to start up is nerve-racking, but I hope you will join me on opening day to shake Sorensen's hand and hug Cocky.

Until then, I guess we'll have to settle for The State Fair.

IN YOUR OPINION

used a racial slur that made me question his integrity.

When hanging out with him, making fun of people is a way of life. It's just how we operate.

Why else would I start a group on Facebook making fun of Southern people when all my good friends at this school are, in fact, Southern?

Whether we are at the gym making fun of the steroid-using frat guys or at Good Times commenting on the massive amounts of popped collars and croakies, we always poke fun at those who amuse us. It isn't about their race, religion, etc.

I have hours of stories I could tell about Kevin's odd behavior, but not one of them

involves anything hurtful or racist.

So please don't crucify Mr. Ekman for his words. Just do what I always do — shake your head, take a sip of your beer and apologize for him before things get ugly. Because deep down you know he didn't mean anything by it.

PHIL GENTILE

Third-year sport and entertainment management 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.

Online Poll

Do you think Facebook groups using racial slurs in any context are racist?

Be careful going from soul cookin' to fast food

Students might suffer weight change without home-cooked dinners

"If I cut the mold off of this, can I still eat it?" These words came out of the mouth



VALENE SIMS

Third-year print journalism student

of my roommate a few days ago. I know you are all thinking "ew," but I am willing to bet that you've done it before and if not, you will before your college career is

over. We are college students, too poor to waste food because of a little bit of mold.

Mothers would be appalled. If you were at home, the moldy food would be gone and re-stocked before you ever noticed. This is just an example of how much changes when you get to college.

Freshmen will more than likely gain weight. There is just no getting around it. You can't cook in the dorms, except for things you can cook in the microwave. Believe me, that gets old fast.

So, it gets too tempting to eat Chik-fil-A everyday for lunch and Taco Bell for dinner. No one is around to make sure you are eating right, and once you get to college there is so much going on that the last thing on your mind is how many vegetables you are eating. Of course there are exceptions to that dreaded "freshman 15" but not many.

However, those older students with apartments will probably lose weight. The meal plan is gone, and your very own kitchen is staring you right in the face. The problem is you have no money for groceries.

Ramen Noodles become an everyday dinner. It's not the meat and side items you would have if you were at home. Because of college and by default, I am a vegetarian. Along with just about everyone else, I don't have the money to buy meat.

There is also no time to cook a full-fledged meal. Wouldn't it be nice if mom was here and had dinner ready when you got home?

One thing all college students have in common is how much they miss mom's cooking. Being away really makes you appreciate mom's ability (or inability) to cook. There is nothing like home-cooked food.

It makes me sad, and a little hungry, to think of how we go from eating steak and potatoes to Ramen Noodles. And it grosses me out to think of how we go from eating fresh food to cutting off the mold first.

I wish I could give everyone advice about how to eat better or how to avoid the weight gain and loss. I wish I could give advice on managing money to buy proper groceries or at least provide some quick, easy recipes, but I can't.

I'm still searching for that balance myself, but maybe some of us will have it figured out by the time we graduate.

But for now if you excuse me, all this talk about food has made me hungry.