

THE GAMECOCK

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IN OUR OPINION

Foolish online posters deserve discrimination

Be careful what you put on your Facebook profile or in your next belligerent blog entry: Employers and administrators are digging for dirt online, and careless posters could pay a high price for showing their rambunctious side on the Web.

According to a USA Today story published last week, college students have been kicked out of school or censured for online violations of their school's standards of principles — particularly at religious schools. Not to be outdone, a 16-year-old boy was arrested after flashing pictures of himself holding guns on his MySpace page.

One careless post could be the tipping point between you and another candidate.

Serves them right. Stupidity should be punished.

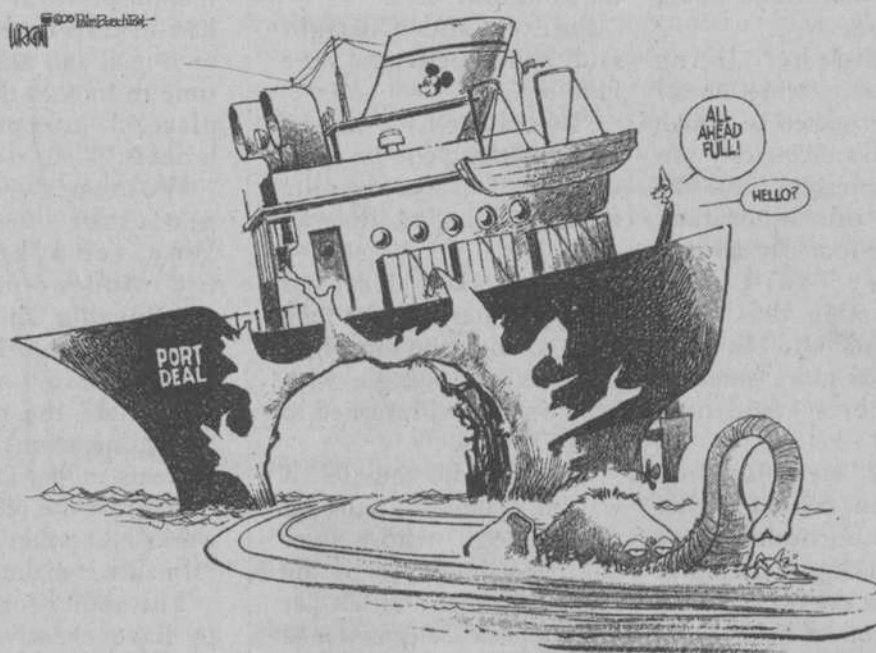
We don't think employers and learning institutions have switched to valuing a spot-free personal life over job qualifications, extracurricular activities or intelligence. If someone is the best candidate, they'll get the job.

But people are nosy. Apparently, students think higher-ups are above such informal investigation.

Not so. One careless post could be the tipping point between you and another candidate. As long as institutions do not base their decision on a candidate's gender, race or religion, a Google scavenger hunt is fair game in today's information-heavy society.

But there are drawbacks. The slippery slope has already begun. Twenty middle schoolers in California were suspended for looking at a classmate's anti-Semitic Web page. That goes too far, but logical steps to ensure you're not hiring or admitting a pothead or racist are perfectly reasonable. You may say that what you do after 5 p.m. is your own business, but a mom-and-pop store has every right not to hire you after seeing you passed out in a pool of vomit in your spring break pictures.

If you don't want your personal life stopping you from getting a job or getting into law school, don't air out your dirty laundry online, or protect it accordingly.



Courtesy KRT Campus

Don't let rocks ruin rush of going over falls

Relationships run into rough waters — risk is most exhilarating

I went to Niagara Falls with my boyfriend, and while we stood, like all tourists, entranced by the power and fear of the natural wonder, I started thinking about relationships because, as a columnist, it's what I do.

While I stared into the mist, I came to the conclusion that relationships are like rivers. Yeah, it sounds cliché or like a shallow person trying to be deep, but it's true.

When we start off with our newest partners, it's smooth sailing. You find a guy you can stand to be around for a couple of days, and before you know it, you're driving 12 hours to another country.

The water begins to flow faster and faster until you reach that plunge where only 10 of the 15 daredevils have survived. Do you take the leap over the falls and hope the mythical Lelawala saves you, or do you cling to rocks as you pass with hope to do anything but go over?



LIZ WHITE
Second-year print journalism student

You're bound to hit the rough patches, the beds of rocks creating rapids — in Niagara's case treacherous whirlpools.

You have the guys that spend too much time with their obsessions, like the video gamers, the guys who attach to you, or the all around jerks who were nicknamed heartbreaker for a reason. Even if you've found that perfect guy, the silly arguments are more than likely going to bite at your heels, and someone screams, "I just want to give you some Prozac and knock you out."

But you can't swim ashore just because the water gets a little rough. Part of committing to a goal is learning to stick through those difficult times.

You'll never reach the big fall if you don't keep swimming. And any girl that's seen a Drew Barrymore movie knows that falling in love is the best part of relationships, even if they have other

perks, too.

Who knows? Maybe you'll get someone who will drive 30 minutes in the middle of the night to help you break into your apartment because you locked your keys inside.

Sometimes you're going to get frustrated, hurt and pretty angry at your co-pilot, but holding on and slipping over the side is much better than just going home.

No matter what our preconceptions are about something — I'll fall and get hurt or he'll break my heart like the last jerk — sometimes you just have to grab the barrel and go with the stream.

You can't let the fear of possibilities hold you back. Maybe you'll be crushed under the pressure of the falls, maybe you'll make it downstream a few miles or maybe you'll reach the horizon still intact. You could be that lucky little kid who rode the falls in a lifejacket and survived. Don't just stand on the riverside watching the water pass you by.

Leaping off those falls has to be extraordinary. After all, if it weren't, people would stop trying. Anyone got a barrel?

McClellan makes Mr. President look better

Press secretary keeps our leader's lies alive, demonstrates idiocy

Bud Light runs a series of commercials called "Real Men of Genius." Aside from selling nasty beer, these commercials honored unsung heroes who make America great, such as "Mr. Kiss Me, I'm Irish, Pin Wearer."

White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan, or rather Mr. Make the Bush Administration Look More Better, would be a superb choice for said commercials.

Several times a week, he goes into a room of reporters and is expected to justify inexcusable behavior that he had nothing to do with.

This is especially difficult under the Bush Administration — what with the miserable failure of dealing with Hurricane Katrina, the lack of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, the prisoner abuse at Abu



TIM MCMANUS
Fifth-year print journalism student

Graib, the prisoner abuse at Guantanamo Bay, the release of a CIA operative's name, etc.

He justified the refusal to let U.N. inspectors interview Guantanamo Bay detainees by saying the detainees were "trained to give false information."

The Associated Press obtained video of a meeting with Bush, members of FEMA and hurricane experts. National Hurricane Center director Max Mayfield warns that no one can say with any confidence that the levees will hold.

This contradicts what Bush said a few days later, "I don't think anybody could have anticipated the breach of the levees."

But who goes into that room of reporters and explains Bush's failure?

McClellan of course. And how does he justify it? By saying that the president was there for "moral support."

McClellan has to know how stupid this sounds, saying the leader of the free world isn't a leader at all, but rather the proverbial friend who holds your hand while you get your nipples pierced.

And when it's all said and done, an incompetent, ineffective leader botching the response to a natural disaster that killed off 1,300 people is better than a strong, competent leader doing the same.

And while McClellan's excuse may still show that the president said something untrue, it's more of his incompetence shining through, as usual.

So crack open a cold Bud Light, Mr. Make the Bush Administration Look More Better, you make the leader of the free world look like a buffoon, but that's better than showing us the true face of the man we elected.

Answer to U.S. oil addiction sprouts from our backyards

E85 fuel could be cure Americans looked for, save diseased planet

They say that what goes around comes around, and no I'm not talking about STDs. I'm referring to some

fascinating karma that has struck the U.S. of A — America's newest fuel source, E85.

E85 is a fuel consisting of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. The ethanol in E85 comes from fermented corn. About 6 million cars on the road today are E85 compatible, and when I say compatible I mean they can run on E85 and traditional gasoline.

You can get E85 in most states. Believe it or not, the Exxon on Gervais Street is already selling E85, and it's priced competitively with normal gas. Chrysler, Ford, GM, Isuzu, Mazda, Mercedes, Mercury and Nissan are currently producing E85-compatible cars. Most of the E85-compatible vehicles being produced are trucks, but a number of smaller cars are being produced as well.

In general, E85 produces more horsepower than normal gas because of a higher octane but reduces fuel economy just slightly. And considering it's coming from corn, it will be cheap as hell one day.

It is quite probable that E85 will replace traditional gas and drastically lower our nation's dependency upon oil. E85 burns cleaner, making it better for your engine, better for the environment and certainly better for America.

You might ask, "What the hell does this have to do with karma?" It has everything to do with karma.

Isn't it fitting that after years of destroying America's beautiful farmlands, we'll soon need as many as we can get. Somewhere the old members of the Populist Party rolling in their graves.

I find it humorous that all this time we've been burning oil like crazy and we could have been filling our tanks with corn. I love it. The planet's atmosphere is nearly destroyed thanks to us lighting up gas for the last 100 years, and the whole time the answer was in our own backyard. Finally, Willie Nelson can cancel Farm Aid, al-Qaida can keep destroying Middle Eastern oil mines, and the fruited plain will return to where it belongs.

If you ask me, E85 can change a lot and I'm hoping it does. Maybe the geniuses at GM will create a hybrid that runs on E85. That would be even better.

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.

IT'S YOUR RIGHT

Voice your opinion on message boards at www.dailygamecock.com or send letters to the editor at gamecockopinions@gwm.sc.edu



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The prostitutes of Daytona Beach, Fla., are arming themselves as they conduct their own search for a local serial killer.



Kentucky convict Byron Perkins fled the country after convincing a judge he would donate a kidney to his son, who is still on dialysis.

Winners & Sinners