

The Daily Gamecock

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IN OUR OPINION

Security on campus offers students safety

As the dust settles on Northern Illinois University's campus, we find ourselves asking the same question that came up almost a year ago after 32 people died at Virginia Tech: are we safe on a public college campus?

The answer is a qualified yes. Campus police departments do not expect to have to deal with mass murder, nor should they, and the current security and safety measures are enough to deal with the dangers college students face, such as assault, theft and rape.

The NIU shooting doesn't do anything to shake our notions of campus security

With that said, there's always room for improvement. For instance, if someone activates an emergency call box, will the police really be there within a minute, as we were told as freshmen?

The lighting in open areas can be improved so walking from Russell House to Capstone after dark doesn't resemble a stroll down Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Atlanta.

The campus police can be directed to care more about patrolling the darker areas of campus than handing out parking tickets.

All in all, however, the NIU shooting doesn't do anything to shake our current notions of campus safety. We know that we don't want to have to pass through random checkpoints on street corners. We know that we don't want to have to pass through metal detectors to enter academic buildings.

Sometimes we fear a late-night walk home alone, but being gunned down in a lecture hall? The thought hadn't occurred to us.

CORRECTIONS

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

IT'S YOUR RIGHT

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

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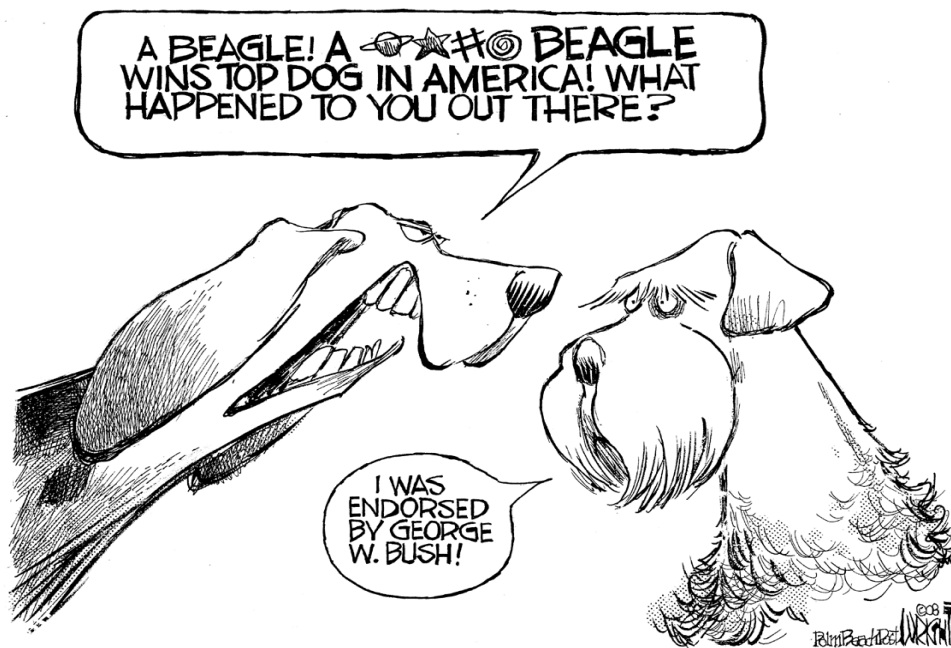
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THE PRICE IS RIGHT

Don't waste time casting your ballot

Student leaders might fail to deliver campaign promises for next year

I have a confession to make: I will not be voting in the Student Government elections this week.

It's not that I don't care about who is elected, I just feel that if SG is going to do little more than supply gossip for the school newspaper, then I don't really find it necessary to give SG the five minutes of my time it takes to vote for new executives.

Look back at this year. What has SG done for the student body? That's a hard question to answer.

Well, how about when the Senate attempted to impeach SG president Nick Payne? No, that doesn't do a whole lot for the students. How about forcing him to resign after a run-in with the law in Five Points a few months later? There is not a whole lot of benefit to the students in that, either.

So what have our elected senators and executives done for us?

The only thing I can think of is that they have given us something to talk about.

I don't claim to be an expert on Student Government, but I read the newspaper and seldom do I find an article on a new motion that will do something for students, and when I do, it's often forgotten when I hear some new story concerning SG's maligned former



DARREN PRICE
Second-year print journalism student

president or a few attention-hungry senators. All the drama leaves a bad taste in my mouth.

Honestly, you'd think that an organization that claims to be such an integral part of student life would find better things to do than point fingers at one another.

So why should I vote in this week's elections when I am fairly certain that I will just be electing a new class of drama kings and queens?

I have heard little to convince me otherwise. Some candidates promise things like "more enthusiasm" or a "better-

informed student body" amongst a plethora of other ambiguous goals. Goals like these remind me more of my middle school than they do of an actual, functioning governing body.

On the other hand, ambiguous promises are easier to keep than real, defined ones.

Maybe I am just jaded by all of this year's scandals. I happen to know a few candidates and they are all very friendly and dedicated people, but I thought the same of many of the candidates last year, and well, everyone saw the mess that they became.

I really do hope that whoever is eventually elected will do something beneficial to the students.

After reading what seemed like tabloid stories about our elected leaders this year, however, I'm not holding my breath.

Hopefully last year was just an aberration, but until I know for sure that Student Government is going to make an effort for me, I'm not going to make an effort in electing them.

Wal-Mart looks wrong, feels so right

Corporate America may ruin small business, still appeals to cheap buyers

I am one among the army of die-hard Wal-Mart haters. I am adamantly against their exploitation of small business, their absurd control over a large number of markets and most of all, that they are the number one music retailer in the nation and they won't sell albums with Parental Advisory stickers on them. I hate walking through the dimly lit corridors of the warehouse-like superstores where countless Americans go to die. I hate it all.

But when I need to go grocery shopping, I find myself filling a shopping cart with every article of food and gadgetry I can pull off the shelves.

At this point, I understand that there are plenty of readers who would love to point their fingers and label me as no more than a hypocrite. But how can I be blamed for shopping there? I don't have a lot of money. I can get everything I need at a price that I at least feel justified in paying. Wal-Marts are everywhere and many of them are open 24 hours. It's convenient,

cheap and reliable.

The combination of all these facets of the store make it a very appealing place to shop. Also, it makes it much harder for me to hate Wal-Mart, even though I believe its hideous edifices and looming presence throughout nearly every county in our nation are leaving our land pockmarked and scarred. Imagine if Wal-Mart, or a store of equal magnitude, did not exist. What would all of the families living under the poverty line do to feed not only themselves, but their children as well?

The kind of economic pressure that capitalism places on people to provide for themselves leads people to doing scores of things, legal and otherwise for cash. Why do you think so many people become drug dealers? It's fast money that goes untaxed and is much more profitable than working an honest job. Do not think that I am

implying that Wal-Mart's existence is curtailing the quantity of hustlers in our nation. I am simply stating that the affordability of Wal-Mart's products, ranging from car parts to food to clothing to movies, allow families to get by in a much more manageable fashion than if they all had to shop at the Food Lion.

Also, about two years ago I remember reading a headline that explained that 0.5 percent of all Americans work at Wal-Mart. The monster company has around 1.9 million employees. That's more than three times the population of Columbia. Though their employees are known for being treated terribly, they are still getting paid for labor. Wal-Mart even assists the elderly poor by offering them jobs as "greeters," even if those who hold these posts often depress customers more than cheer them up.

In the end, I still hate Wal-Mart. They are the paragon of evil corporate America. But I can't help believing that, from a microeconomic viewpoint at least, Wal-Mart offers Americans many advantages.

Argument on abortion may be old, not decided

Tired topic means one court's decision not final judgment on subject

"What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1: 9)

The topic of abortion

has been criticized by many as being an old and outdated topic of discussion. What many fail to realize is that just because an issue seems old, outdated or over-debated does not mean that the issue

has been settled.

Admittedly, abortion is an old issue. In fact, it's practically ancient, dating back to at least 4 B.C. (possibly much further). Great philosophers such as Aristotle and Hippocrates have differed on the issue of abortion. The classic Hippocratic Oath states, "I will not give to a woman an abortive remedy." Civil rights issues have never been solved overnight; many of our history's finest victories in civil rights took generations to bring about.

Some might argue that Roe v. Wade decided the abortion issue long ago and there is no reason to keep talking about it. On the contrary, a court decision is never final, despite what we all might think. Many court decisions were made during civil rights movements, which have since been overturned because, finally, someone in charge saw it was wrong.

Take for example the Dred Scott decision. Scott was a slave who tried to sue for his freedom; his case was dismissed with the explanation that because Scott was a slave, he was not a U.S. citizen and was the property of his owner. Imagine if that court decision would have been final.

Similarly, Roe v. Wade decided a fetus could be aborted by a woman under any circumstance until the "point at which the fetus becomes 'viable,' that is, potentially able to live outside the mother's womb, albeit with artificial aid. Viability is usually placed at about 28 weeks but may occur earlier, even at 24 weeks." The fetus is seen as being in full ownership of the mother (what about the father?) and therefore until it "exists" the owner (mother?) may do with it as she pleases.

Abortion isn't the only "outdated" topic in politics: equality for all persons regardless of race or gender, taxes and immigration are all issues that mankind has struggled with for years. Laws have been placed in order to regulate or reform in any of these areas. But these laws are still never settled because, though the court system may have settled them, they were never settled in the minds of citizens.

Discussions like these were taking place long before we got here, and they will continue to take place long after us. In the meantime, we talk about them, disagree on them and take action.



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