

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, June 17, 2005



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TECHNIQUE

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Quote of the week:

"Don't waste yourself in rejection, nor bark against the bad, but chant the beauty of the good."
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Getting on the bus

The recently installed GPS technology in Stingers (as well as those already in Trolleys) certainly has a lot of potential. While the information is updated every 25 seconds, relaying the information online to students is not entirely efficient. Considering the size of our campus and the relative ease of walking, it is important to have convenient and reliable, yet quick transportation options. Looking online in a dorm room to track transportation options might not be the best answer.

The GPS technology will help evaluate the routes' efficiency and reliability, and if a flaw is found, hopefully a quick solution can be produced. In addition, the Parking and Transportation department plans to add countdown timers to some of the bus stops by fall. This should be more effective than the website since it is on-site and requires less effort than the tracking. The department also should reach its goal of a Stinger and Trolley at their respective stops every six minutes with the help of GPS.

Physics in motion

The announcement by the School of Physics to change the format of its Physics I tests is a welcome response to students' complaints. By adding free response to the previous multiple choice format, students will have a better chance to accurately reflect their knowledge. This change should parallel Physics II in that students can receive partial credit for their work.

While it is true that minor errors in calculations can cause huge problems in real life, the majority of times, people work in teams where errors can be caught by other teammates and calculations can be checked using calculators and computers. Considering this, it is fair to offer students an opportunity to receive partial credit.

It is important that Physics I tests effectively evaluate a student's knowledge. After implementing required attendance, GPA's for the class were still low. Tech students are intelligent, so when a large percentage of students miss a question or questions, it is time to reconsider how instructors can better tailor what they teach to reflect what is being tested, regardless of format.

In other Physics news, the self-paced Physics I course, which was popular among students taking it, was removed from Oscar halfway through fall registration. The School of Physics states that it is evaluating the performance of the course and bringing it back. Hopefully it will return by spring and not be put on the back burner.

The School of Physics has undergone a lot of changes and its willingness to address issues and adapt to students' needs is essential to success in the much-maligned department.

Consensus editorials reflect the majority opinion of the Editorial Board of the Technique, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors.

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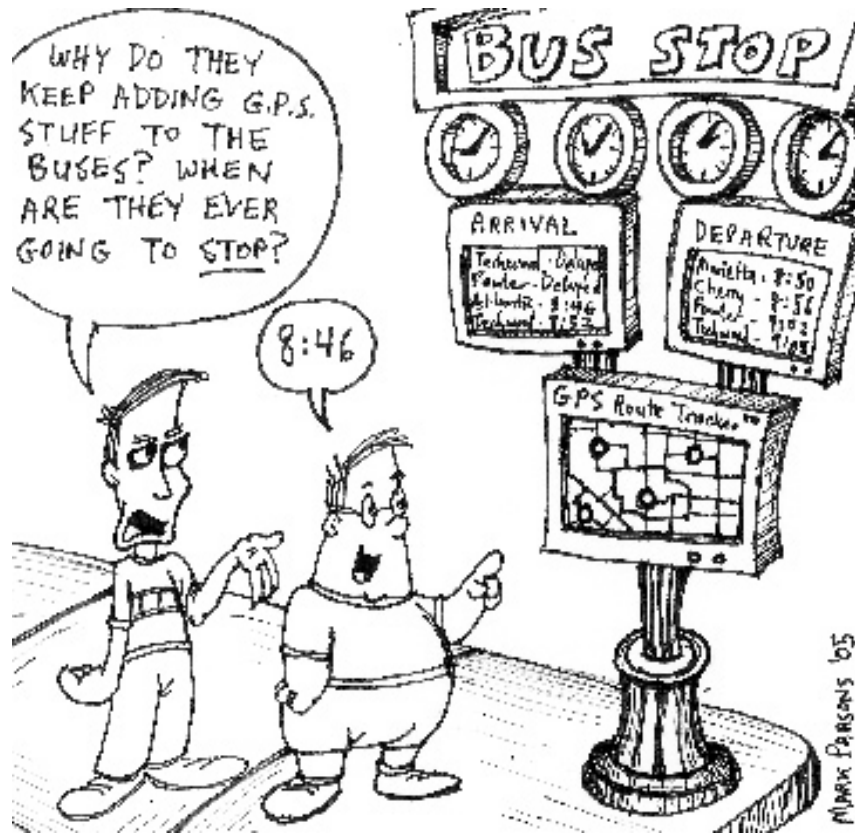
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By Mark Parsons / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Telemarketers serve as alarms

After several hours of class, I climb into bed for a mid-afternoon nap. On occasions like these, I have drifted off into slumber amidst the sounds of mowers muffled through my closed window (sometimes sacrificing a cool breeze), the humming of a vacuum or even the random shout of a hallmate. All this I could overcome to play catch-up on a couple hours of sleep or grab an infamous "power nap" to make it through the rest of the day.

I see a nap as a blissful escape from the day's realities: the test I've just taken that I feel like I failed, a project/homework that I still haven't finished, the drama that seems to encompass my life and so many other various things that I stress over. While I may lose sleep over these worries at night and be awoken oh-too-soon by the oh-so-painful buzzer of my alarm clock in the morning, the days have a funny way of becoming overwhelming after just a few hours of consciousness and I find myself in dire need to forget it all.

So I nap, searching for serenity and ignoring the dull roar of my surroundings, but then my recurring living nightmare is all I find. It starts off in my dreams as distorted bells ringing or some other noise until it becomes so prevalent and persistent that I realize in reality that the phone's ringing. Is it a friend? A family member? I'm compelled to pick up the phone; the call might be important.

"Hello?" I would say, groggy and rubbing my eyes.

"Hello, is Su-sanne there?"

Oh, no! It's a telemarketer. I know because all my friends call me Suzie, and anybody I know who doesn't at least says "Suzanne" right instead of this terrible cross of Suzanne and Susan.

The first time, I politely reply, "Yes, this is she," and the telemarketer proceeds to try and sell me a



"'Hello?' I would say, groggy and rubbing my eyes. 'Hello, is Su-sanne there?' Oh, no! It's a telemarketer."

Suzie Holmes
Opinions Editor

credit card.

"No thank you, I'm not interested. Please take me off your calling list." She replies, "Thank you for your time," or some other polite formality.

I climb back into bed and think nothing of it. However, a few days later I'm napping again when the phone rings.

"Hello, is Su-sanne there?"

Am I dreaming? Unfortunately, no, and this time I'm a little more upset at being woken from my peaceful slumber; I skip straight to telling her I'm not interested and to take me off the list. The calls continued on like this to the point where the woman would just hang up on me when I asked her not to call back.

Sometimes the woman would try and convince me I needed a credit card. She asked me if I was a student at Georgia Tech (how did she know?); it wasn't enough for her to know my name. As if the repeated calls weren't enough to bother me, I think I truly started to lose my sanity after coming back to my dorm one day and listening to my answering machine.

"Hello, is Su-sanne there?" Click.

I wish I could say that it was some cruel joke that my friends played on me, but no, the same woman who called me every day left a message on my answering machine like she was talking to me. There are two reasons why she would have gotten the answering machine: I was either

1.) screening my phone calls because a telemarketer keeps calling me, in which case I'm not going to magically change my mind and want a credit card, or 2.) actually not there, in which case I actually could not pick up the phone in the event the message did magically change my mind and I wanted a credit card.

After several weeks, I was losing sleep and turning paranoid and delusional. One night, the phone rang at 4 a.m. and I was convinced it was the telemarketer (If she and her kind could call on a Saturday, why not in the middle of the night?). Seriously though, what was the point of her wasting my time and hers?

I started telling everybody about how the telemarketers stopped calling at dinner and called during my naptime instead. One day, though, an end was in sight. The telemarketer called and I requested as always to be removed from the calling list. To my amazement, she said she would take me off the list. I was free! I could barely contain my excitement. An hour or so later after sharing the news with those familiar with my telemarketer situation, the phone rang; it was the telemarketer asking for my roommate. I just couldn't win.

For those who share in my misery, go to www.donotcall.gov and register your phone number. I found out too late for myself, but if a telemarketer calls a number that is registered, the company he or she is working for may be fined.

Death brings challenging times for all

Normally, I'm a pretty upbeat writer. I believe there are too many rants and not enough raves in the press, and I try to balance things out where I can. So when the Opinions editor asked me to write for this week's issue, I started tossing around all sorts of wonderful ideas to talk about.

All that changed when I arrived home Saturday to learn that there had been a death in the family. It wasn't a great shock. His health had been failing for months. His legs were weak, he had trouble standing up, and he wasn't eating. He had finally lost all control of his bowels, and I had received the call Thursday evening that it would all be over by the weekend. But that didn't make the grief of my own family any less difficult.

I know that some of you reading this will know exactly what I'm talking about. I also know that most Tech students don't spend a lot of time contemplating death. Given the rate of medical technology and our own standards of health, most of us will still be here in 60 or 70 years, leading happy, productive, fulfilling lives, so death is a fact of life that we usually brush to the side to concentrate on more important or immediate matters.

Now, I'm not condemning anybody for anything. But one



"...I never really understood death until it came knocking at my door."

Joshua Cuneo
Online Editor

of the lessons I've learned in my time here at Tech is that there are a lot of things you never really understand until you've experienced them firsthand. I don't understand romantic relationships all that well because I've never been in one. I don't get foreign cultures as well as I should because I've never traveled abroad. I often fail to grasp why parents act the way they do because I have no children of my own.

And I never really understood death until it came knocking at my door.

It has helped me realize the extent of the grief others go through when they face similar tragedies. It has given me a basis of experience to share and connect with friends and family. And it has reinforced the notion that I ought never to take anything for granted, a principle I try to live by every day. While at Tech, I've also learned that,

despite the diversity of religious and philosophical beliefs among the student body, at a fundamental level, those beliefs have more in common than we realize. We all know, somehow, intuitively, that death is not the end but the next step in life, something that a friend had to remind me of this past weekend, and I say this even though I'm not a very religious man. We cry because we know they're very much alive, but we won't get to see them again for a long time.

I think most of us would also agree that there are greater forces at work in the world than we understand, forces that influence our lives and help us out when we need it the most. I have to wonder if it was a mere coincidence that I was asked to write for this issue two days before I received that phone call.

I've also found myself thinking a lot about love. The human race is a remarkably passionate

species, and we can form the strongest bonds imaginable with others, bonds so powerful that they transcend gender and race and culture and even species.

And that's okay, but the ultimate test of our own personal strength comes in how we carry on with our lives after the one we love is gone. I think I finally understand what it means when people say that we keep others alive in our hearts and in our thoughts. I spent a great deal of time thinking about how he first came into our family, how we grew up together, and how he was an important part of my life, and in a way, I found it to be a source of comfort.

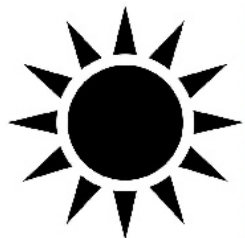
So now I'm faced with the challenge of carrying on with my own life. I'll have to deal with a routine and a household that feels different and a little emptier because he's not there. It will take some getting used to. There's a part of me that's still grieving as I write this, and I'll never, ever forget about him.

I wish he didn't have to go, but he was very old, and he had lived a good, long, happy life surrounded by the people he loved. I know that he's being well-cared for now, and that he's being well-cared for now, and that he's waiting quietly, patiently, obediently for the rest of us to come home.

What a good dog.

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT or NOT



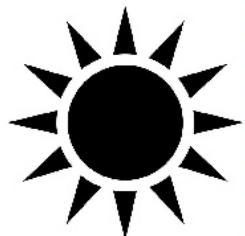
Summer blockbuster

The first installment of Flicks on Fifth was a huge success. Several hundred students, faculty and friends gathered to watch the romantic comedy, *Hitch*. Some also chose to have dinner in one of Tech Square's many restaurants. People even brought blankets and chairs to relax and take advantage of the new event. With such strong attendance, Flicks on Fifth is sure to become a tradition.



Closing time

While it is understandable that the length of hours have to be cut back during the summer due to fewer customers, many places at Tech open early in the morning and close early in the afternoon. This is inconvenient for most students who have class early in the day and are done just in time to see popular restaurants and stores around campus close. How about opening later and staying open past naptime?



Back in business

After suffering some fire damage in January, the long anticipated return of Ribs N' Blues has arrived. Also, a new addition to Tech Square's dining scene is the Globe, which celebrated its grand opening a few weeks ago. Students are certainly enthusiastic about having more dining options available.



Strike out

After losing in the NCAA Super Regional for the second year in a row, baseball fans, expecting a trip to Omaha and the College World Series were sad enough. However, the thought of losing head coach Danny Hall to Texas A&M, who has contacted Tech's all-time winningest coach is another major blow.

Cells enslave users

By Dylan Bean
Daily Utah Chronicle

(U-WIRE) U. of Utah — Technology is great. New devices and networks are connecting people worldwide.

There is a paradox in this technology advancement, however: While faster connections are made possible through technology, it seems like the individual is becoming more disconnected from society.

For example, cell phones have made it possible for us to communicate with people all over the country and world. But now that we are constantly attached to our own personal network, we are naturally less inclined to face-to-face interact with the people around us.

Let's say you have a 20-minute break between classes. While walking to the next class, you instinctively pull out your cell phone to check in with a friend who is at home. While you are on the phone, you

pass dozens of people—some of whom are probably at least acquaintances. You still make contact with them by a quick nod of the head, but what would have happened had you not been talking on your cell? Perhaps you would have stopped and talked to one or more of these people.

We will never know what fate had to offer us all those times that we were distracted by our cell phones. Unfortunately, real-life contact is becoming a thing of the past. Cell phones cause us to change the way we listen and respond.

I'm not suggesting that we stop using cell phones altogether. I would like to propose, however, that when we find ourselves surrounded by people—be they friends, acquaintances or strangers—we try switching the phones off.

We should keep focused on the friends we are with and seek more meaningful conversation. We should reach out to the strangers around us.

Letter Submission Policy

The *Technique* welcomes all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters may be mailed to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Code 0290, emailed to editor@technique.gatech.edu or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Kyle Thomason, Editor-in-Chief.

All letters must be signed and must include a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by 8 a.m. Wednesday in order to be printed in the following Friday's issue. Any letters not meeting these criteria or not considered by the Editorial Board of the *Technique* to be of valid intent will not be printed. Editors reserve the right to edit for style, content and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

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Information and rate cards can be found online at www.nique.net. The deadline for reserving ad space and submitting ad copy is noon on Friday, one week prior to publication. For rate information, call our offices at (404) 894-2830, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Advertising space cannot be reserved over the phone. The *Technique* office is located in room 137 of the Student Services Building, 353 Ferst Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0290. Questions regarding advertising billing should be directed to Corey Jones at (404) 894-9187, or Rose Mary Wells at (404) 894-2830.

Coverage Requests

Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the Editor-in-Chief or to individual section editors. For more information, email editor@technique.gatech.edu.

BUZZ

Around the Campus What are you doing for Father's Day?



Katy Fick
MGT Fourth-year

"Hopefully I'm not working."



Dusty Roberts
CS Fifth-year

"I'm going tubing down a river with my dad."



Joel Gaddy
IE Fifth-year

"We'll be in Alabama at a family reunion."



Ryan Johnson
IE Fifth-year

"I'm taking my dad roller-skating in the park."

Photos by Robert Combier