

OPINIONS

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OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Stop cheating

Tech's current honor code relies on the integrity and honesty of students to not only refrain from cheating themselves but to turn in other students who violate the code. The use of computer programs is a necessary supplement to the code in order to reduce cheating.

The University of Virginia is a good example of how an honor code cannot stand alone. They have the longest student-run honor code, yet a program designed by a Physics professor found 122 plagiarized papers. UVA is evidence that no matter how long Tech works on the honor code, it will never be without fault nor eliminate cheating altogether.

The honor code teaches students not to cheat because it is morally wrong. However, something more tangible should be put in place to reach the students who do not see inherent value in academic integrity. The new computer programs designed to find cheaters, which some schools at Tech are looking to implement, will be an effective way to catch cheaters who fall through the cracks of the honor system. The programs will be a good way to support the honor code framework already in place.

While the use of computer programs will be a good addition to the honor code, it should not replace the code or become as prominent. The honor code should still be taught to students and taken seriously as an important ideal of the Tech community, while the computers work quietly in the background.

Student Life Fellow

Student Life Fellow should continue even after Chris Young's departure. The current position has potential and, if given more structure, could become an important and beneficial part of Student Affairs.

The Student Life Fellow has the unique viewpoint of a recently-graduated student. For example, Chris coordinated "When the Whistle Blows," a program that honored members

of the Tech community who had died in the past year. In addition, there is potential for the Fellow to become more involved with students by guiding organizations and helping new groups get started.

However, the position needs more structure before it can achieve its goals. It needs to be given set responsibility, as well as accountability to the Vice President of Student Affairs. With a clearly defined focus and set of goals, the Fellow, as a student-administrator, could become an integral liaison between students and faculty.

This year was a rocky start to a good idea. If the position is given the framework it needs and can obtain permanent funding, it could have great potential.

Quote of the week:

"I'm not obsessing. I'm just curious."
— Ricky Fitts, American Beauty

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ACCORDING TO OUR COMPUTER, YOU CHEATED ON YOUR LAST PAPER, BUT PERSONALLY, I WAS MORE DISAPPOINTED WITH YOUR LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR WHAT I'M TRYING TO TEACH YOU. SO REREAD THE TEXT, AND SEE IF YOU CAN BRING YOUR APPRECIATION FOR COMMUNISM UP A NOTCH...



By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

'T'-nappers have school spirit; diner should stay

I was pretty amused when I found out about the 'T'-napping at Walksideways.com, but I do realize that it is really dangerous. I have done some reading in the old Web articles of the 'Nique, and I found out that the woman who died [climbing the Coliseum], wasn't a Tech student (July 23, 1999 Technique Article). Although I think their [the administration's] concern about a Tech student climbing up the Tower and stealing the 'T' is understandable.

Furthermore, I remember when I had difficulty using a Mac computer at my high school because someone messed up the computers. The perpetrators were expelled. I feel sorry for those guys [who stole the 'T'] because I know it was a prank, and I know one of the 'T'-nappers from SGA. Unfortunately, I can't argue with the administration if they get expelled.

I wish that school spirit at Georgia Ech(sic) would be more expressed by other students. The stealing of the 'T' symbolizes a student's love

for Ech. However, if more students cared about what goes on at Ech, nobody would need to steal the 'T':.

In regards to the West Side Diner, I hate the idea that the diner may become a coffeehouse! If it wasn't for the fact that the diner had food like Philly steak sandwiches at midnight, I might have passed out due to my academics and my activities! No, I'm not kidding. Especially during the latter half of the Spring Semester, I rarely ate any more than one meal a day, and that was usually late at night. I don't know if I could have done that with food from a coffeehouse. Maybe I didn't pay attention to the atmosphere at the diner, but it doesn't matter when you're hungry and looking for food to satisfy you.

Bottom line: I believe that the diner should have a facelift, but its menu is good enough to satisfy someone on dead week who is trying to do the best they can!

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Was Timothy McVeigh a monster or a martyr?

Six years after his truck bomb destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people and wounding hundreds more, Timothy McVeigh was executed.

McVeigh did not speak before the execution, opting instead to issue a written statement quoted from the poem "Invictus," which read, "I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul." An appropriate statement from the man who claimed to have single-handedly committed the worst act of domestic terrorism in U.S. history.

I find myself envying McVeigh. Not to dilute the horror of his actions, but Timothy McVeigh possessed what so many of us today lack, namely, conviction, commitment, fervor, passion, dedication and, most importantly, the unmitigated discipline, control and patience to plan and carry out an objective.

McVeigh was in allegiance to an idea. He made a statement about that idea and quietly accepted the consequences that came with it. There was no drama involved; McVeigh never pleaded for his life; he never apologized for his convictions.

This is certainly not the case for most individuals today. Society is stagnated by apathy. People are always looking for the answer that will impress the overtly watchful boss, or quell the nagging mother or quiet the bleeding conscience. If that doesn't work, we point fingers, place blame and justify. Do we ever just look for the right answer?

Most individuals live their lives reactively instead of engaging in proactive quests. What concerns me

"As human beings capable of premeditated, conscious thought, we owe it to humanity to draw a line in the sand."

Emily Cavender
Campus Life Editor



even more, though, is that fewer and fewer people are making conscious decisions about the course of their existence. Why are people afraid to take action, or to have an opinion, or to make a decision on their own anymore?

People tend to float from one experience to the next, expecting to succeed both in an economic sense and as human beings. Yet in the face of adversity, these same individuals have the gall to ask the question, "Why me?"

Ethics and morals are not objective. As human beings who are capable of premeditated, conscious thought, we owe it to humanity to draw a line in the sand.

What I am getting at is the concept of conscientious thought. This is the notion that people can have a deliberation with themselves about an idea that is important to them. People can debate and research and make intelligent, well-informed decisions.

They can form an opinion that is not influenceable by others and that is not dependent on the majority. But most importantly, they can choose to use their lives as a testimonial to those principles.

This is not to suggest that everyone should run out and become an

activist, but it does bring to light that society as a whole tends to go with the flow because it is easier than fighting against the current. And this is simply not acceptable.

Fortuitously, human beings are not at the mercy of their instincts. They have the capability to control their actions. The fact that humans are cognizant beings means that they have the opportunity to navigate their course through life. They can set a stage for future acts.

What this means is that individuals must first make a concerted effort to construct their own ethical and moral foundations before they are challenged. For example, students who are more comfortable and confident in their own beliefs are less defensive and more likely to hear out opposing arguments.

In addition, people who have more well-defined, thoughtful concepts of their own code of ethics live representatively. Their lifestyle becomes their testimonial.

So, more specifically, how should individuals accomplish these things for themselves? How does one teach self-improvement?

To begin, accountability guidelines for behavior must be devised. Motivational perks that push individuals to meet their goals should

be implemented with built-in feedback and benchmarking systems.

People must analyze their progress, reevaluate their methods and be flexible with themselves. Like any program of action there will be mistakes, but the ultimate goal is improvement and direction, not perfection.

So, I am a "To Do List" kinda-person. Composing these lists mentally or writing them down on a sheet of paper (Palm VII) serves a very important function—it increases the awareness of the goal. Composing reference lists of goals channels vision and directs it towards a positive source.

Seeking out all forms of information, avoiding the use of stereotypes, and constantly questioning sources are all good techniques to ensure justifiable beliefs.

As an example, I view Adolf Hitler and Martin Luther King, Jr. as similar leaders in that they were both inspirational people who motivated hundreds of thousands of people.

They were both visionaries who were capable of illustrating their dreams to their constituents.

Engaging in conscientious thought means that if ever you were presented with these two charismatic individuals, you would be able to take your own stance despite the persuasiveness of the speaker.

In the end, it is about actively charting a course for your personal betterment and the idea that your choices belong to you. Why then would you choose not to use them? They are the most powerful tool any individual will ever have at his or her disposal.

Ripken's retirement—end of the franchise player

Last Tuesday Cal Ripken Jr. announced his retirement from Major League Baseball. As baseball fans say goodbye to Ripken at the end of the 2001 baseball season, they will not only be saying farewell to a player, but to a type of player. Ripken, who spent 21 years with the Baltimore Orioles, is the last of baseball's franchise players.

Ripken is best known for what has come to be called simply, "The Streak." From the beginning of the 1982 season to September 20, 1998, Cal Ripken played 2,632 consecutive games—every game played by the Orioles.

But the often overlooked fact in this amazing achievement is not that it happened, but that it happened while playing for one team. Ripken never threatened free agency to boost his salary. He was content playing the game he loved, and playing it among the Baltimore fans that had come to love him.

Today's players and owners seem to have lost this loyalty. It seems as soon as fans are able to love a player, he is swept up by a large market team. Maybe it's because of the opportunity for free agency, or maybe the uneven market of teams. Whatever the reason, baseball just isn't the same without this loyalty.

A year ago, Johnny Damon was lighting up the scoreboard for the Kansas City Royals, raking in 214 hits, 46 stolen bases, and a .327 batting average. He was dubbed the new "Mr. Royal", slated to take the mantle from former Royal great

"As baseball fans say goodbye to Ripken...they will not only be saying farewell to a player, but to a type of player."

Robert Cunningham
Sports Editor



George Brett. This year, Damon won't be found on the Royals roster. Instead, he resides in Oakland, another victim of the market trade.

Even players that we once thought would never leave their teams have now begun to wear different uniforms. One example is Cub's...excuse me, Diamondback's first baseman Mark Grace.

Since 1988, Grace has been the starting first baseman for the Chicago Cubs. Only in the strike-shortened 1994 season did he play fewer than 130 games. He was a fan favorite, and one of the most consistent players the game has ever seen. As a kid I even remember having a poster of Grace in a Cubs uniform that said, "Grace under Pressure," and had him stretching for a throw to first. Grace has hit over .300 nine times in his career and has never hit below .273. Yet after 13 seasons of service to the Cubs, Grace was shipped off to Arizona, making room in the budget for the salary raise that was necessary to keep Sammy Sosa.

Although I hate to do this, no rant about exuberant salaries would

be complete without some mention of Alex Rodriguez's \$252 million deal with the Texas Rangers. While the money itself draws enough attention, the real problem is that the Rangers already have a star, catcher Ivan Rodriguez.

However, trade rumors have begun to circulate regarding Pudge, who is in his eleventh season as a Ranger. If he is traded, Texas will not only be losing one of the greatest catchers ever, but the heart of the Rangers.

While the loyalty between teams and players is important, the game is still about the fans. As the All-Star break approaches, stars such as Roger Clemens say they may not play in the All-Star Game, and use the All-Star break to have a rest. While Clemens has not yet made his decision, Ripken would not even consider such an option.

At the 1996 All-Star Game, Ripken's nose was accidentally broken during the team picture before the game. Instead of sitting out the game due to injury, Ripken played. Even though the game did not matter, and would have no effect on his

streak, Ripken played. The distinguishing quality of his career has always been that no matter what, Ripken played.

Although there are a lot of players that seem to be controlled by greed, there is hope among the field of today's stars. There are still players like Darin Erstad, who in the midst of a 240 hit season said that if his uniform isn't dirty at the end of the day, he hasn't played hard enough.

Another example of the old style of play is Nomar Garciaparra, who always takes infield practice with a Little League glove to prevent him from becoming lazy. In this day and age, these players are the new standard bearers of the way the game used to be played.

When Cal finally broke Lou Gehrig's record of 2,130 games, he said, "I know if Lou Gehrig is looking down on tonight's activities, he isn't concerned with someone playing one more consecutive game than he did. Instead, he's viewing tonight as just another example of what is good and right about the great American game." As Cal Ripken Jr. draws his final season to a close, he reminds us what is good and right about the great American game.

Bert likes baseball. He played at Brooks County High School. Often times at the office, he misses his favorite pastime and asks, "Where's my baseball?" Someone please get him a baseball. That would make him very happy.

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