

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, February 22, 2008



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Quote of the week:
"The books that the world calls immoral are the books that show the world its own shame."
—Oscar Wilde

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Library renovation

The library has begun the process of renovating the second floor group study areas. Following the successful remodeling of the first floor commons they have decided to include extensive student feedback in the design process. Students have been invited to participate in small focus groups already, and the library will host a larger forum next week during which all of campus is invited to aid in the design process.

After the renovation plans for Tech Rec were released last fall to widespread criticism, it is admirable to see campus planners include student input from the inception of a redesign project, rather than seeking it at a later time in the process.

The library is one of the most consistently used areas of campus, and the studying that happens there is central to a student's time at Tech. Allowing students input in the environment where they learn is an exceptional idea that will hopefully create positive results both in the design and in the study habits of students who use the space.

Worthwhile keynote

Editor and Senior Vice president of USA Today and *usatoday.com* Ken Paulson visited campus on Wednesday as a part of the Finding Common Ground speaker series. Students from both Student Publications and Student Government Association were given the opportunity to meet Mr. Paulson during smaller sessions.

The motivational speech delivered by Mr. Paulson, one of the leaders in both journalism and first amendment advocacy for freedom of speech, focused on the relevance of the media in modern culture, politics and opinion. As information media evolves from print to the internet, a medium in which everyone's opinion is heard, yet very few are listened to, Mr. Paulson's message of free speech and civil discourse is becoming increasingly relevant. In an age where entertainment and shock appeal have replaced accuracy and content in many people's definition of "news", the indispensable nature of an uncensored yet professional press corps cannot be lost.

Visits from industry leaders such as Mr. Paulson are an invaluable addition to campus discourse and contemporary cultural education, as the relationship between students and the working world is extensive and growing. Mr. Paulson's student-oriented visit was a credit to the Finding Common Ground series. Mr. Paulson could relate to students, due to both his subject matter and his obvious research. We can only hope the series will continue to bring such passionate and informative speakers to campus.

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Wednesday evening



By Blake Israel / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Actions have unequal reactions

About two years ago, I had to read a paper called "The Tragedy of the Commons." The subject of the paper was the distribution of all the earth's resources amongst the earth's population.

In medieval Europe and colonial America, every town or village used to have a commons, or a large green space at the center of the town. The commons was open for anyone to use; frequently, shepherds would bring their sheep or cattle to graze there. The proposition of the paper was that the commons system worked great so long as everyone limited their use of it to the grazing of just a few sheep or cattle.

Eventually, however, someone would realize that if they brought one more sheep than all of their neighbors, they could make extra money off of that one extra sheep at the expense of everyone else that used the commons. Being a good businessman, this person would bring his extra sheep. Then other shepherds would see what he was doing and start bringing extra sheep of their own, so they wouldn't get cut out of business.

Eventually, there would be too many sheep for the commons to support, so all of the sheep would starve and all of the people would be left bickering with one another when they had nothing left. And that's the tragedy of the commons.

In many ways, we can see this tragedy playing out here and now. The problem with the commons is that the miniscule amount of land taken by a single extra sheep seems really small in comparison with the rest of the commons. A few extra tons of pollution dumped into the water don't seem like they will hurt anybody; only after all of it accumulates over time do we see the problem.

The chemicals that we produce to make stuff cheaper are really harming the world around us, and in turn are



"It is not worth holding back from everyone just because the few, or even the majority, are trying to deceive you."

Will Morgan
Copy Editor

harming ourselves. These chemicals are elevating cancer rates and health-care costs well beyond what they should be if all of the "safe" products that we release into the environment were actually benign.

Still, the physical losses we suffer as a result of the greed that makes people dump pollutants or graze extra sheep at the commons pale in comparison to the social losses that result. Whether or not the shepherd sees the results of his actions, his profiting from a minor loss to everyone else destroys the community that was in the system before.

As soon as everyone else realizes what is going on, they begin to look after their own self-interest and protect what they already have. Home-security systems go up, children aren't allowed to play outside anymore, and people become much less willing to talk to each other. In short, we lose all of the intangible relationships that bring value to our everyday existence. Admittedly, the solution to this problem is probably very complex, but it seems like a few simple changes would greatly help the situation.

When Jesus was walking around, He taught people to care more about each other than about what they owned. Jesus said, "If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also." His point was that loving the person that was suing you was more important than the stuff that you had, even if it essentially meant letting him rob

you. He also said, "Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you."

That's hard. Especially downtown, that can be really hard. Venturing out into the city practically invites being asked for money, yet in reality, no matter who asks you for money and no matter what they end up doing with it, 99 times out of 100 it is in fact better to just go ahead and give it.

I know there are any number of potentially horrible things that people could do with money in their hands, but having compassion on someone is more important than withholding it, especially when our only motivation for not giving is simply that we don't want to. It is not worth holding back from everyone just because a few, or even because a majority, are trying to deceive you. Loving one another is worth more than that.

It is only by trusting people that the commons can ever be rebuilt. Even if the person who is robbing you blind doesn't understand why you are giving what you have freely to them, they may understand the second time. And even if they never understand, someone else may understand and cut back on the number of extra sheep they send out to the commons so that everyone else can raise their sheep. I don't know how much being nice to people will help, but it seems like a good way to start. And the sheep will thank you, too.

Celebrity gossip an unworthy addiction

Every time I wait in line at the grocery store I find myself surrounded by tabloids. Supposedly these so-called “magazines” (if they can so be called) are located there so that people will decide to buy them while the cashier is ringing up their groceries.

I always try not to look, but I feel drawn to their garish covers the way people find themselves drawn to car crashes and train wrecks. “Britney Spears hospitalized for mental breakdown.” “Lindsay Lohan gets arrested right out of rehab.” “Angelina Jolie separates from Brad and adopts five kids.”

And every time I catch myself staring at these rags I wonder the same thing: who cares? People today know more about celebrities than politics, the economy or world events—a lot more. Doesn't this strike anyone else as a bad thing?

We live in a world where magazines, newspapers and websites are willing to pay paparazzi large amounts of money to follow famous people around all the time and take pictures of them going about their daily lives. Why is this? I have absolutely no interest in seeing pictures of Cameron Diaz at the airport or Orlando Bloom walking his dog. Why does anyone want to see such things? I don't even know Cameron Diaz or Orlando



“It is not easy to separate yourself from the barrage of celebrity information... but be strong.”

Mallory Velten
Assistant Entertainment Editor

Bloom. And how does it affect me if Angelina Jolie changes brands of toothpaste?

But obviously there are people who do care, because the whole practice of celebrity stalking and the publication of pictures and gossip and the like has become a multi-billion-dollar industry.

It's really scary to think that we live in a nation where people know more about celebrity gossip and entertainment crap than about what's going on in the world. Most people probably know more about Brad Pitt than the politicians representing them in Congress. Even if you have little to no interest in what Jessica Alba ate for dinner last night, it's hard to escape the tidal wave of tabloid fodder.

Celebrity information is constantly stuffed down our throats—tabloids in the supermarket, headlines in newspapers and magazines and segments on what are supposed to be hard

news television programs.

I don't see anything wrong with having a mild interest in celebrity affairs. I mean, I guess it could be interesting to see how people who make more money in a year than I will in my life spend their fortunes—interesting or depressing. But I just don't understand how or why celebrity stalking has become such a huge part of our culture.

All this celebrity overdosing can't be good for us. For one thing, it's probably not a good idea to care more about Heath Ledger's death than the war in Iraq or the situations in Kenya or Sudan.

Let's not forget the kind of examples these people are setting for us. Nowadays it's completely common for single actresses or singers to have babies. Maybe the single motherhood thing isn't so difficult when you can afford a few full time nannies and you don't have to go to work all day

every day.

And what about drugs and alcohol? All celebrities caught getting high or drinking underage have to do is pop into a resort-style rehab facility for a few weeks (or days, or hours). Then once they get out, they go right back to raking in the millions making movies or recording singles. I doubt it would be quite so easy for any of the rest of us.

I know celebrities aren't the best role models, and in theory they shouldn't have to be. They are just people like you or me, with a job that earns them a (very comfortable) living; they didn't ask to be put in the spotlight (well, they didn't all ask to be put in the spotlight). But whether they like it or not—whether we like it or not—our society has made them idols, people to look up to.

It's important to note that I'm not saying that there's something wrong with seeing movies or concerts, or watching television, or whatever. Watching people act in films and on television is different from greedily taking pictures of them just walking down the street. Usually when a person follows another person around and takes pictures of him or her and records his or her every move, we call it stalking. With famous people we just call it part

See **Celebrity**, page 8

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT or NOT



Lunar Eclipse

The last lunar eclipse until 2010 was visible over Atlanta today, turning the moon red and turning students across campus out of their dorms at 10 P.M. to view the rare and beautiful spectacle. The eclipse could be viewed by the naked eye without any risk, but there were still many students with telescopes and binoculars out on the Campanile to aid the viewing pleasure of the general public.



Weather warning

The new weather warning system debuted, notifying campus members of the dangerous tornado and storm conditions downtown. Unfortunately, the system is sent out from a provider on the west coast, and the time stamps were never switched over to east coast time. While a minor problem, this could leave the more tech-savvy reader confused, eliminating some of the benefit of the warning system.



Wikipedia winners

Tech received unexpected press this week when the article on the Tech Tower ran as the featured article on **wikipedia.com**. The article, written in part by Tech students featured Tech lore and photos from around campus and was chosen for the honor based on its quality and accuracy.



String of losses

Tech varsity sports survived a disappointing week of losses, with softball, men's tennis, and men's and women's basketball all coming up short against their various opponents. While all of the teams preformed well, we can only hope that next week's match-ups will be more successful for the Jackets.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Poor response time

Sunday evening I witnessed a situation that I believe should be brought to the attention of the Georgia Tech community to hopefully encourage some sort of action to be taken. At an intramural basketball game at the CRC on Sunday, a player sustained a major fracture to his lower leg. Trained CRC personnel rushed to attend to him while several people dialed 911 and the campus police. His injury was so severe that an ambulance was definitely needed to transport him to the hospital.

About five minutes after a call had been placed, a GTPD officer arrived, and walked at a speed that did not seem rushed to the far side of the gym where the player was. A half-hour after the officer arrived, an ambulance arrived preceded by another GTPD officer, neither with lights flashing or a siren on and both minding the speed limit. It took the EMS a while to stabilize the

injured player, and forty-five minutes to an hour after the injury occurred, he was being wheeled off the court on a stretcher.

The amount of time that it took for the ambulance to arrive was a concern to many there. When we asked an officer on the scene about their response policy he said: when 911 or the Georgia Tech police are contacted, both an ambulance and a Georgia Tech police officer are dispatched. When the initial officer arrives they assess the situation and determine whether an ambulance is really needed. They then contact the ambulance in route and let them know whether to continue coming or not. When the ambulance arrives to campus, an officer must meet them and escort them onto campus to the scene.

As close as Georgia Tech is to Grady and Crawford Long, I find

See **Response**, page 8

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 Matthew Winkler, 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 7 p.m. Tuesday 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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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

How has SGA helped you?



Nathan Klein
Third-year CompE

“By setting up dead-week rules so my professors can ignore them.”



Shana Fraser
First-year CE

“I'm going to have to think long and hard about that.”



Andrea Finnegan
Third-year Mgt

“They represent the student body as a whole.”



Rob Poppell
Third-year CM

“I'm grateful for the funds SGA provided the Veritas forum.”

Photos by Ben Keyserling

Electoral college an outdated institution

Greg Pivarnik
UConn Daily Campus

UWIRE—The Electoral College has been around for over 200 years and it is safe to say that it has outlived its purpose. Its inherent disenfranchisement has led to some despicable voter turnouts, even in the most important elections. Despite the fact that Republicans and Democrats would not change the electoral procedure because of the risk of diminishing their own powers, there are potential voting alternatives. However, there are those that staunchly defend the current electoral process.

The aspect of presidential elections that needs to change is the separation of the electorate by states. Candidates try to win states instead of appealing to the nation as a whole. The minority party in some states, such as Democrats in Texas or Republicans in Connecticut, end up of having no say in the election process because most states are all-or-nothing with regards to distributing delegates.

Instead of competing on a state-by-state basis, candidates should be forced to compete on a national scale. This means instead of electing the president by the Electoral College, it should be done by the popular vote. In this system all votes would count evenly. If a candidate obtained more votes than another in a state, they would not win all the delegates, or even the sole support of that state. Instead they would win the number of votes that they accumulated. This would make the presidential election a truly national election.

There are some problems people have with this type of voting method. The first is tradition and the fact that the Founding Fathers instituted a system that has withstood the test of time.

Tradition is no excuse to keep a broken system. The elimination of a state-by-state electoral process also violates what some believe to be the United States' federalist principles. In a sense, an election by popular vote impedes on states' rights to institute their own election procedures. The United States was founded on a principle of federalism, a nation of loosely aligned states in national government, as a way to prevent the consolidation of power into a central government. However, federalist principles do not ensure a fair and just election procedure, especially for those of the minority party in a single state.

In a national elections, states will still have the rights to elect senators and representatives to serve their interests. A truly national election will not impede states' rights to make their own laws and govern their people as they see fit in certain circumstances. Instead it will combat disenfranchisement by ensuring all citizens that their votes are actually counted.

The United States is also not solely a federalist nation. There are government agencies which have jurisdiction over all states. These include the FDA, CIA, FBI, DEA and even the IRS. The federal government taxes people in all states. Even the education system has become federally regulated. The No Child Left Behind Act, though

controversial, is a piece of legislation that governs all states and ensures guidelines as to how to implement certain requirements in the public education system. The most anti-federalist organizations are the armed forces. Most states do not have a militia for times of unrest to protect themselves against a central government. Instead the country rallies behind a national army. Why is it then not appropriate for the citizens to rally behind a nationally-elected president?

One of the more convincing arguments to keep the Electoral College in place is that it requires that a candidate gain a broad range of popular support throughout the country. According to uselectionatlas.org, "it is principally because of the Electoral College that presidential nominees are inclined to select vice presidential running mates from a region other than their own."

As things stand now, no one region contains the absolute majority (270) of electoral votes required to elect a president. Thus, there is an incentive for presidential candidates to pull together coalitions of states and regions rather than to exacerbate regional differences.

Such a unifying mechanism seems especially prudent in view of the severe regional problems that have typically plagued geographically large nations.

This view contributes to the notion that the president, because of a broad support base, is the citizens' choice even if they lost the popular vote because the person who won the popular vote could have garnered their

votes only from a certain portion of the country.

However, just because a region is more populated does not mean its say should be diminished by limiting the number of electoral votes. A vote in a more populated region, such as the northeast, can still be offset by the many votes garnered thorough out a more sparsely populated but larger region such as the Midwest. Second, when instituted, the Electoral College did not account for the vast changes in technology that has occurred to the present day.

The Electoral College ensured that candidates, in a time where there were not even light bulbs, crisscrossed the country and delivered their message to a wider audience than those in just the most populated area. However, with the advent of TV, the internet, YouTube and 24-hour media coverage, campaigning is already done on a national scale. Even the poorest people in this country usually have access to a TV. Candidates are constantly under spotlight and scrutiny and are always campaigning to a national audience. Whether a candidate visits a certain state may be an issue for some voters, but in the end it is the issues that should matter.

A change in the election process would end some disenfranchisement, minus the absurd ballot access laws in some states that prevent third parties from joining the tickets. More people would feel like their votes counted and in turn voter turnout would increase substantially resulting in a truly nationally elected president.

Celebrity from page 8

of being a celebrity.

I know it isn't easy just to separate yourself from the barrage of celebrity information that has become such an integral part of our culture these days. Still, maybe we should try a little harder to care more about the things that really matter. So the next time you're tempted to pick up that tabloid with Hannah Montana on the cover—be strong, put it down and pick up The New York Times instead.

Response from page 7

it hard to believe that the ambulance took as long as it did if they left when the initial call was made.

If an ambulance is dispatched and then called and told to turn around, money is lost. My thought is that the ambulance never left until the officer arrived and told them to come, in which case, he did not seem to be moving quickly enough to the scene as he strolled across the courts.

The CRC personnel did an excellent job tending to the injured player. They acted professionally and were obviously trained well. The response time was not near fast enough. I believe that the policy involving the dispatch of an ambulance to campus needs to be reviewed. If this was a matter of life or death, I could only hope things would happen at a faster pace to ensure the best outcome.

Sarah Eubanks
Fourth-Year Management

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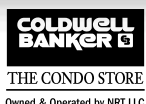
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