

# ONIONS

Técnica • Monday, April 1, 2002

## OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

### Shame both down and across

The unforgivable has happened. Students have abused one of the most revered services that the *Técnica* so generously provides.

To hear that 187 students are suspected of cheating on the crossword puzzle is simply unimaginable. As everyone knows, the crossword puzzle is one of the most sacred time-wasting activities that exists today.

But it is meant to be enjoyed by only one person at a time *without* any peeking at the answers on the other pages. It is outright sickening to think that almost 200 students disregarded these essential rules and attempted to get answers dishonestly.

Hopefully Ms. Rosencrantz will be swift and accurate in her detection of the actual cheaters. As far as punishment goes, since drawing and quartering someone is no longer an option, anyone found guilty of this unspeakable crime should be banned from even saying the word “técnica” in any context for the rest of their lives.

### A picky situation

While nose-picking is often a necessary and, for some, even a soothing activity, you should never do it where anyone else can see you because then they will always remember you as someone that picks their nose and will never want to shake your hand.

This is why it is shocking to see that President Clough made the unfortunate mistake of picking his nose in front of a large crowd of people. For someone so highly regarded to do something so gross in public is disheartening, to say the least.

And what does this say to students? This says that it is OK to do crude things in public. If this becomes an accepted activity, what's next? Armpit sniffing? Toenail clipping? Butt scratching? Where will it end?

When we're out in public places, let's all remember that others can see what we do and save the really gross stuff for when we're at home with people who have to like us no matter how gross we are anyway.

### Scary, scary squirrels

In a week of such shocking news perhaps the most shocking is the attack of the terrorist squirrels. The atmosphere on Skiles Walkway must have been a frightening one the entire time that the squirrels controlled Hightower.

With all of the precautions that Tech has taken to ensure safety from human terrorists we neglected to consider a possible attack by those dastardly terrorist squirrels. Though they are never the first terrorist group thought of, they are quite possibly the most violent and bloodthirsty group of terrorists in existence today.

It is, of course, unfortunate that this attack happened. But the best that we can do now is learn from it and work to prevent such devastating attacks in the future.

Skilled professionals must work to create detailed and deadly squirrel traps. Poisoned acorns also need to be developed and placed on the outskirts of campus. Faulty tree branches should also be planted in certain trees. If plans such as these are put into action there is a good chance that Tech can avoid another such horrifying incident.

*Consensus editorials reflect the majority opinion of the Editorial Board of the Técnica, but not necessarily the opinions of individual editors. And it's all just one big joke, folks.*

#### Quote of the week:

*“Just kidding.” —Somebody funny*

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GRATUITOUS F-REEK

## Crack dealers should be allowed to recruit

People nowadays make such a big deal about the dangers of smoking nicotine cigarettes and how addictive it is. I am, like many people, adamantly opposed to the idea of anyone getting into the habit of smoking nicotine cigarettes. They turn your teeth yellow, make your breath smell bad and they can even kill you. All of these things are very bad, and I would never support anyone that promoted the sale and use of smoking regular cigarettes.

I am, however, completely supportive of people smoking crack. In fact, I celebrate it. It is one of those rare pleasures in life that is completely unmatched and unparalleled.

If you've never smoked crack, you probably don't know what I'm talking about. No one could ever know the true essence of smoking crack without actually smoking it, but once you do, you'll quickly see just how great it is. Because smoking crack is such a great thing to do, you'll understand my disappointment at the lack of crack dealers at this year's career fairs.

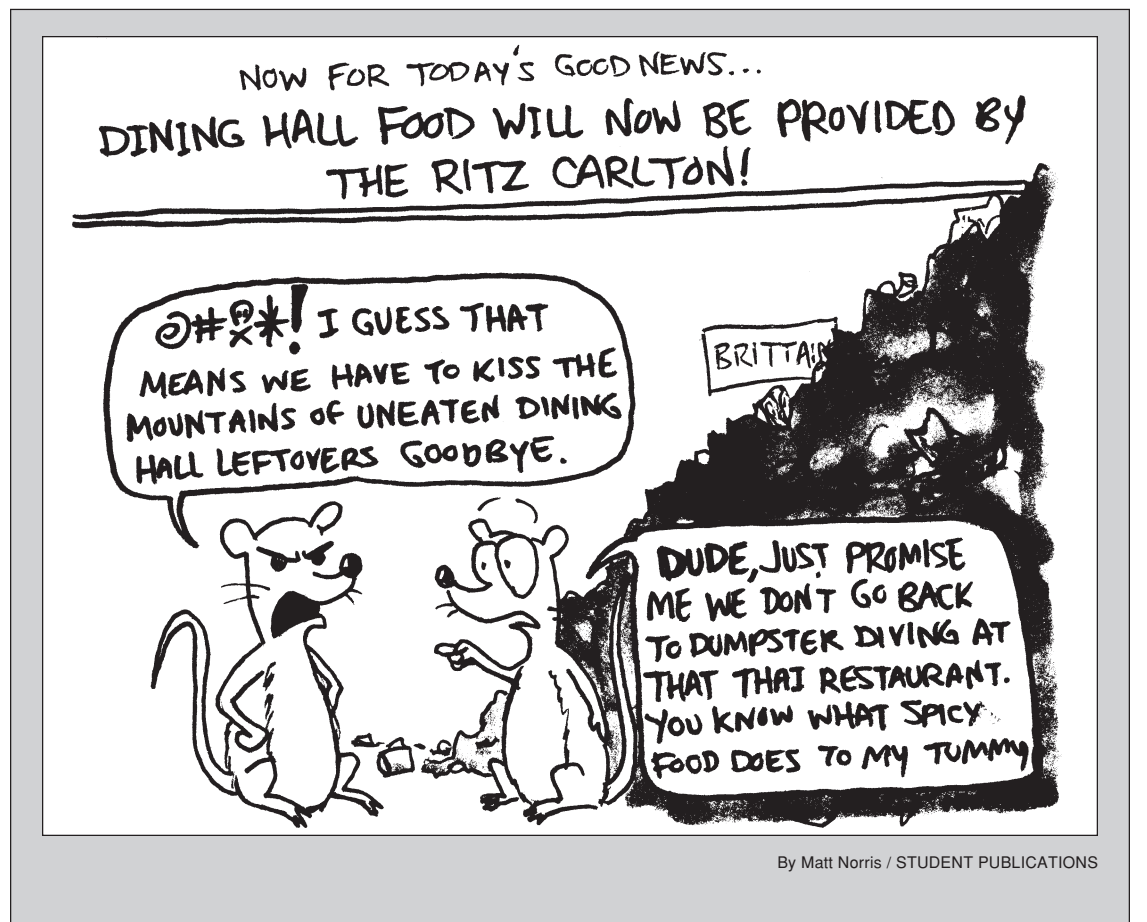
I have gone to every career fair that Tech has hosted this past year, and not one crack dealer was present at any of them. Talk about leaving out a golden little niche.

If Tech wants students to be enterprising and to capitalize on their

talents, they should encourage us to go where the money is. And the money is definitely in the crack business. Have you seen the cars that these guys drive? I want a piece of that action. Why, then, is Tech not encouraging us to go for that big piece of the pie?

Everyone always talks about how cigarettes are so bad for people, and everyone agrees that it is a habit that is not worth taking up. There are anti-smoking advertisements on billboards and television every time you turn around. However, cigarette companies are allowed to attend

See Crack, page 8



By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

# Seclusion in an apartment brings about new revelations

Survivor, The Mole, Big Brother. Forget realistic TV, I'm doing realistic journalism. So I locked myself in my apartment for a month and am now bringing you my coverage of the grueling month I spent isolated in my apartment:

**Week I, day i:** Purchased non-perishable foodstuffs. Locked myself into apartment. Vowed not to leave for a month. Realized I didn't have any reading material or cable. It's gonna be a long month.

**Week I, day iv:** Parents call, leaving message on answering machine. They ask about graduation.

**Week I, day v:** Parents call again, wondering why I haven't called back. Cannot talk to them, as it would spoil my mission. My roommate thinks I'm a total freak. I'm starting to hate ramen.

**Week II, day iii:** My roommate has moved out, thinking I have lost all signs of sanity. As I have no contact with the outside world, I have decided to construct a makeshift friend. Having no volleyball, I turn to the next best thing—a Frisbee that is lying in my room. Whammy seems to be a boon friend from the start, as he is a great listener. He seems a little one-sided, though.

**Week II, day iv:** Lacking any kind of outside exposure, I plug MarioKart 64 into my Nintendo and select the Koopa Beach race. I figure the video game sun and ocean sound effects will be a good alternative to the real thing. Whammy thinks so.

**Later:** The scenery begins to aggravate me. Those seagulls are just annoying. Plus, I'm way out in last place. I decide to make some ra-

"I have decided to construct a makeshift friend. Having no volleyball, I turn to the next best thing—a Frisbee"

**Wang Hyung Leou**  
The Ads Bitch



men.

**Later:** I play a game of charades with Whammy. He has a limited array of items to choose from for me to guess: dinner plate, record, Frisbee, CD. Plus, he didn't guess any of my clues: *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (movie), *Yesterday, When I Was Mad* (song), or *Gimme, Gimme, Gimme* (book). I blame myself for Whammy's lack of culture. I only decided to anthropomorphize a Frisbee a day earlier.

**Week II, day vi:** It's raining. A thunderstorm carries on outside. Whammy decides to inquire about my love life. As I have been enclosed in my apartment for almost three weeks now, I am easily angered. I tell him that it's none of his business. He questions the fact that she never calls. I tell him to mind his own damned business. He lashes out, striking me in the forehead like some poorly thrown Frisbee on the beach. Furious, I hurl Whammy out the door, immediately regretting the action. In a flash of lightning, I see Whammy's life end tragically as a dog runs out of the shadows and snatches Whammy as he drifts through the downpour. I scream out Whammy's name over and over, I cry my apologies. I col-

lapse exhausted.

**Week II, day vii:** I wake, red-eyed and with a sore throat. The sun is out, mocking my depression with a day that is bright and sunny. I fix a bowl of rice. The lights go off. In my failure to plan ahead, I forget that I have not stepped out of my apartment to gather the mail, nor have I mailed off any bills. Thus, thinking that I have failed to pay, Georgia Power has shut off my electricity. Thank god my gas bill still works.

**Later:** I search my closet and find what I was looking for: my crate of Legos. I go about finding an assortment of people: Bill, Spiff, Tammy, Alishia, Ross, Wayland, Patty, and Selma. I assemble them into a ragtag mock-up of Survivor. I play Greg Propst. Funnily enough, Patty and Selma appear to be the "token homosexuals." I thought Patty was, but I wasn't sure about Selma, given her love for MacGyver and the fact she had been married twice. I divide the people into two tribes: "Unopazgo" (Alishia, Ross, Patty, Wayland) and "GT Sossigdaddies" (Selma, Spiff, Tammy, and Bill). The first mission is to see which tribe can boil ramen faster. Unopazgo succeeds and votes Ross out.

**Week III, day ii:** Tragedy hits when the cat gets hold of Selma and Spiff. They are never to be seen again. In a crude attempt to scare away any other animals, we placed the cat's head on a pike outside the apartment. My roommate's going to be mad (the cat wasn't mine). I take the blame, as I left the tribes defenseless against the predators of which they weren't aware.

**Week III, day iv:** GT Sossigdaddies wins the latest challenge in preparing roast cat. The cat's a bit tough, but edible. Forget my roommate, PETA's going to be mad. But it's survival of the fittest, and I don't think I'm going to resort to eating grubs.

**Week III, day vi:** With Survivor: Apartment in its last phases, it appears that the voting has narrowed down to two contestants: Patty and Bill. In a surprise turn of events, they vote me out of the apartment. Their reasoning was that I was a big dork and they don't know how I could be a host of anything (saying that a dead body had more character than me).

**Week IV:** As my self-induced alienation from the world draws to a close, I take time to reflect on the happenings of the past weeks. I have lost a friend and several people have lost their lives due to my carelessness. But I have learned a few things too. One is to never doubt what some people are saying, even if it angers you. Another thing is that I shouldn't lash out in anger because of the consequences. A third is that even inanimate objects hate me. Maybe I'll lock myself in my apartment for another month.

# Lorentzian Distribution Underutilized, Underappreciated

I was innocently sitting in class the other day.

Well, not really so much sitting as sleeping.

And not really in class either—I hadn't gotten out of bed yet.

But meanwhile, in the class I should've been attending, the professor uttered the most preposterously bigoted sentence I've ever heard.

"Assume," he barked, "that the noise is Gaussian whitenoise."

What? I repeat—what? This is the year 2002, and we still have to deal with this subversive oppression?

There are other labels we could use. We have to ask ourselves, "Do all distributions have to be Gaussian?"

The answer is—no! Believe it or not, there are other symmetrical, unimodal continuous probability density distributions out there.

You and I know about the variety of distributions the world has to offer, but unfortunately not everyone does.

I spoke with some fellow students about this very issue. EE senior Matthew Bryan was asked why he uses Gaussian distributions so much.

"I don't," Bryan retorted. "No, wait, I do."

I asked him to elaborate.

"I really don't know. You innocently start with one [Gaussian distribution] and then another, then another. Pretty soon, you're assuming that noise is Gaussian even before you see it...I'm sure there are other distributions, I just don't know what they are."

"Hi, mom, I'm in the newspa-

"In conclusion, sometimes it's good not to be normal."

**Biggie Smalls**  
Copy Editor



per!" Bryan added. But it's just an editorial.

Other students are more confused about the concept. Freshman architecture major Emily Kennedy, when interviewed, could only articulate, "Wha?"

After scratching her head for a few minutes, she continued, "Oh, that's math, isn't it?"

But ignorance isn't an excuse. So we ought to take a moment to explore the diversity of distribution functions.

Let's first clarify these probability functions.

A probability density distribution function (often  $P(x)$ ) is the derivative with respect to  $x$  (when it exists) of the probability distribution function.

The probability distribuion function (generally  $D(x)$ ) describes the probability that the outcome of an experimental trial has a value less than or equal to the function argument  $x$ .

This function can therefore be depicted in two-dimensional Cartesian space.

Similarly, the density function can also be plotted in the traditional manner. These are the graphs we're used to seeing when we think

of a probability distribution.

Now on to the variety of distributions and their characteristics.

Consider Student's  $t$ -distribution. It has a slim waist, broad shoulders—almost everything we could want it a distribution, first articulated in 1908 by William Gosset, an employee of Guinness Breweries (who required him to use a pseudonym).

Which begs another question: Why in the heck did Guinness force Gosset to use a nom de plume? Are they trying to hide the fact that beer may lead to intellectual development? WTF?

But, I digress. Back to the  $t$ -distribution.

Alas!—it's actually based upon the dreaded Gaussian through a simple statistical transform.

Laplace's distribution, also called the "double exponential," is another alternative, creatively constructed from a one-sided exponential curve and its mirror image. It also has a narrow waist.

But its head is a little too sharp, with a kurtosis of 3. And nobody likes sharp head.

Which is exactly why the triangular distribution isn't even in the runnings.

The von Mises distribution is an odd one. It's based on the Bessel function, which of course wins it points, but at the same time, that makes it impossible to express in closed-form.

And do you want to have to calculate values of a Bessel function of the first kind in the middle of a test? I didn't think so.

Penultimately, there's the logistic distribution, which is a close runner-up, only its kurtosis ("peakedness") is a little too large, resulting in the problem of sharp head as before.

So, in the end, the winner is the Lorentzian (or Cauchy) distribution.

Best probability density distribution ever.

Its figure is just right with perfect hips and a nicely rounded head.

Moreover—and here's the coolest part—it is the Fourier transform of itself!

Who would've thought a single distribution could be so mind-shatteringly awesome?

You'd think that with as nifty as the Lorentzian is, everyone would be using it all the time.

But, no, all everyone ever cares about is that godforsaken Gaussian distribution, leaving the poor Lorentzian underutilized and underappreciated.

In conclusion, sometimes it's good not to be normal.

*Please explore the website [mathworld.wolfram.com](http://mathworld.wolfram.com) for more information about the wonderful world of mathematics.*

# TECHNIQUE

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Crack from page 6

career fairs and be a general part of society. Crack dealers, on the other hand, are granted none of these benefits. Crack dealers should have their day, and students should be allowed to consider selling crack to be a viable career option.

Smoking crack is one of life's

“Just ask anyone who’s ever smoked crack; once they start most people never stop. It’s that wonderful an experience.”

sweetest pleasures. As a child runs to greet the ice cream man when his truck comes around, so I break into a sprint that rivals the speed of light when my roommate comes home with a new fix. Just ask anyone who’s ever smoked crack; once they start most people never stop. It’s that wonderful an experience.

Smoking crack should be an option for all people, and Tech students should have the opportunity to get into the business of selling it to everyone that is hooked on it. In closing I’d just like to say that every man, woman and child should smoke crack at every possible opportunity.

Mark Sonmyarms  
highasakite@hotmail.com

Techs and the City: Everyone can have a good Techs Life

By Tantric Hero  
Hocus-Focus Editor

Often, in the midst of the academic conundrum that comprises Tech, students have little time for activities outside of class, or what I would call a “Techs Life.” While some students have an exciting Techs Life, their grades suffer as a result. How can we, as students, continue to earn our degrees while incorporating aspects of a thrilling Techs Life into the mix?

First of all, I’ve heard some complain that Atlanta and this campus lack Techs support. I’ve tried phone Techs support myself, but the experience just seemed to take forever. Plus, your phone call may be monitored for customer service and quality control purposes. Who wants that? The only real answer to this is more on-campus Techs support from organizations promoting social behavior. I also stress the importance of education in the whole Techs Life issue. Without education, no one can enjoy a safe Techs Life free from the headaches that arise from spreading oneself too thin.

However, such social involvement is not a possibility for everyone. Another issue that plagues our campus, unfortunately, is dirty Techs. I firmly believe that those who have problems taking a shower and washing their clothes really deserve no Techs Life at all.

Some students manage to have a wild Techs Life while maintain-

Although I’ve been getting the shaft quite a bit lately, such experiences haven’t disturbed my Techs Life very much.

Tantric Hero  
Hocus-Focus Editor



ing good study habits as well. Others manage to have only good to mediocre Techs Lives.

Fortunately, my time management skills have allowed me the great fortune of enjoying organizational involvement, academic achievement, and one of the best damn Techs Lives anyone can find on campus. Every night, whether I’m in the *Technique* office, participating in activities at my church, or just hanging out with all of my roommates in the ULC, I have to confess that my Techs Life is great.

Although I’ve been getting the shaft quite a bit lately, such experiences haven’t disturbed my Techs Life very much. I’m in my third year at Tech, and I’ve grown to accept that no matter how great things get, everyone gets the shaft once in a while. I find that when I pay more attention in classes and try not to be distracted by my Techs Life while I study, I get shafted a bit less. Protecting oneself from the shaft while preserving a healthy Techs Life is one of the great lessons the Institute can teach.

I only wish that everyone could

enjoy the Techs Life that I have. Although I can share in the joy of Techs Life with a select few—my boyfriend, my friends, my roommates, the rest of the *Technique* staff, the marching band, my professors, etc.—so many members of the Tech community are left out. If only they, too, could enjoy a fun and exciting Techs Life, campus could be a much happier place.

When freshmen come to campus, they often complain that Techs Life is a little rough. That’s true—you can have a rough Techs Life to start, but after plenty of practice juggling academics and activities, things tend to just slide into place with no trouble at all. Most upperclassmen have mastered this ability.

One thing that can keep a person from having a fulfilling Techs Life is having simply a cyber Techs Life. LAN parties and endless hours playing games like Quake have to go if men at Tech want to enjoy themselves. Although many find something akin to companionship in their computers, spending so much time on-line blunts the spirit. The only way to really seize upon

an excellent Techs Life is to make new friends, meet new people, and try new things. College is all about experimenting, and if you can’t experiment with your Techs Life, where can you experiment?

Lastly, the organizations one chooses can have a vastly influential effect on one’s Techs Life. The best organizations are ones where people can work, have fun, and enjoy a great Techs Life together. The *Technique* is one example of such an organization; the marching band is another. These organizations are just two places where people join together in having a fun, exciting, group Techs Life. A group Techs Life is so much better than trying to have a solo Techs Life. You can’t get much done when you’re all alone. Therefore, campus groups offer great opportunities for participating in the group Techs Life culture.

As a last caution, I would advise anyone against becoming too dependent on a drunken Techs Life. While alcohol may have a place in the refrigerators of students over 21, you can enjoy a fantastic Techs Life without ever drinking Goldschlager or 151. While students think drinking improves their Techs Life at first, after too many drinks, one’s Techs Life can take a serious dive. No one wants to be stuck in that situation.

If they try hard enough, students of all ages can find a Techs Life that satisfies their needs, preferences, and desires.

# No rights for women

Over the past couple of weeks conflicting views on the subject of what women should expect from society have been presented in this newspaper. While their ideas were different, all of the women who wrote in agreed that women do deserve at least some rights.

I am a woman with yet another opinion: women should be completely detached from society and have absolutely no rights whatsoever.

People can't believe that I would think this way. But with most women today feeling empowered and believing in their rights to have it all I feel that the other extreme needs representation. I have never been one to go with the crowd.

If I had my way all women everywhere would live in dark holes deep underground with nothing but a deck of cards to sustain them. I have lived like that for five years now, and I find it to be a very comfortable life. I have become quite the solitaire wizard. And I thoroughly enjoy the comfort of my hole.

This is all that women need. No rights need to be granted to us. We do not need careers or families. Ladies, start digging your way into a new life, a life without the burden of "rights" and "privileges," a life where we are given nothing. It's just the way it should be.

Ima Stupid  
inahole@aol.com

**Question** of the week

“What did you lie about on your résumé to get your job?”



## Buzz Around Campus



Feature and photos by  
Somebody Special



**Jean-Lou Chameau**  
Provost

*“I said that English was my first language.”*



**Nate Watson**  
Undergraduate Vice-President

*“I said I would not abuse the privilege of holding the gavel.”*



**G. Wayne Clough**  
President

*“I told them I had good hygiene habits.”*



**Karen Boyd**  
Associate Dean of Students

*“I told them that I looked good in pictures.”*



**Rod Weis**  
Director of Parking

*“I said that I could build the perfect parking deck.”*



**Buzz**  
Our Favorite Mascot

*“I said I can do 20 pushups before my legs touch the board.”*

Editor's Note: Do not, under any circumstances, believe any of the above quotes. If you do, you're a moron.