OPINIONS

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Numbers raise questions

Once again the College of Computing's Cheatfinder has found another group of potential cheaters in the CS 1321 and 1322 classes. A total of 187 students who took those classes this past semester have been accused of cheating. This number is more than a little discouraging when taking into account the fact that for the entire 2000-2001 academic year only 191 students school-wide in all colleges and classes were accused of cheating.

From the onset, the numbers seem flawed. When compared to the number of students accused of cheating in past semesters, 187 CS students alone appear to be incredibly high. There are a number of factors that could account for this discrepancy, for example, the Cheatfinder has been reprogrammed to be more accurate in its detection of cheaters, and that is why such a large number of people have been named. But what if this number isn't really too big at all? In reality perhaps it is much smaller than the actual number of cheaters in these CS classes.

Many students who have been accused claim that they did not cheat in these classes, but there also exist many students who did cheat in one form or another and were not caught by the Cheatfinder. This then begs the question, 'What actually constitutes cheating?' Most students who have taken these classes will probably agree that the CS department seems to consider any type of group work to be a form of cheating. But very few could actually give a formal and constant definition of what CS professors actually consider cheating to be and how the Cheatfinder is programmed to look for violations.

Are previous numbers more representative, or is 187 closer to the number of actual cheaters in CS classes? Are there far more cheaters that go uncaught, or is the College of Computing's definition of cheating too broad to begin with? Student input on this matter is essential. If you have anything to add concerning this issue about your own experience or the experience of someone that you know, please email **editor@technique.gatech.edu.**

UJC process helpful, imperfect

A student accused of sexual misconduct has questioned the UJC's policy for handling cases. He claims that he did not receive the due process rights through UJC that he would have recieved had he gone through a government-run legal system. He is now challenging this system and its proponents in court.

While it may not be flawless, Tech's process for dealing with misconduct such as this does benefit students in many ways. By not involving outside authorities, the Dean's office tries to keep these instances within the boundaries of Tech so that the foolish decisions that students sometimes make do not come back to haunt them once they leave the Institute. But students cannot receive benefits such as this without forgoing some rights that the regular legal system might make available.

Although Tech's system is designed to help students, in this case, however, due to all of the appeals, the process has been slowed, and justice has not yet been completely served.

If nothing else, perhaps this issue can help to create a better and more agreeable balance between Tech's judicial system and standard legal procedure.

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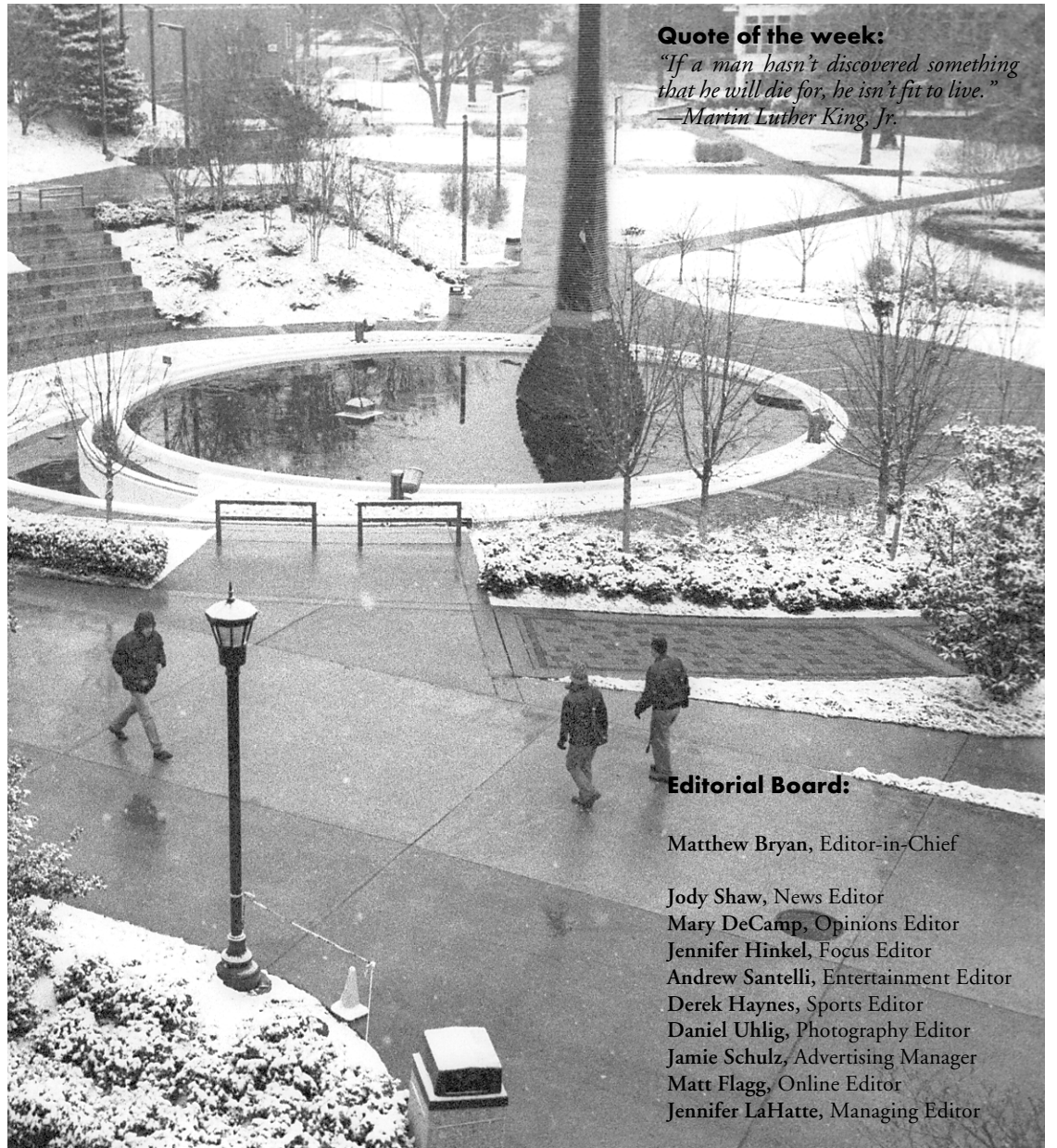
ROBERT HILL

Campus vendors not open to competition

Ever wonder why the bookstore service doesn't seem to change? Ever wonder why the dining hall food quality and service doesn't seem to change? Well, its simple. Campus vendors possess a monopoly.

Not only are they monopolies in the physical sense that they are located on campus, but also in the advertisement and marketing senses as well.

Neglecting the fact that campus vendors have special access to campus mailing lists, did you know that the Auxiliary Services administration does not allow companies or groups to schedule booths or tables on campus if they compete directly or indirectly with campus vendors? This rule even encompasses not allowing groups or companies to give away food, beverages or anything else if it competes with a campus vendor.
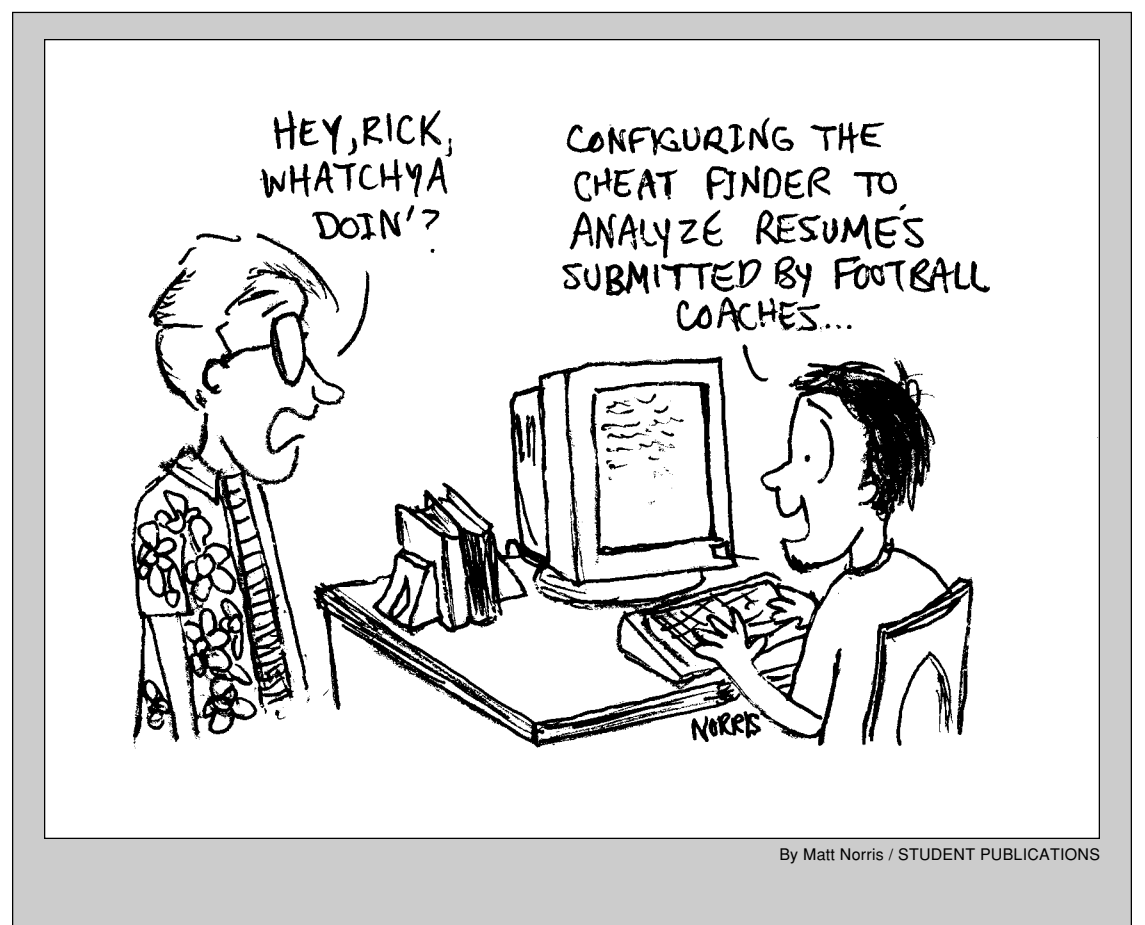
Well, this pill was hard to swallow when several friends and I came onto campus to promote our new online student auction website, which shall remain nameless to retain Freedom of Speech rights. You read it correctly. We were so bold as to start a dot com in the post dot com demise. However, we were shocked when we were asked to stop handing out our promotional materials upon the grounds that we were competing with the bookstore.

What? We had registered for our table weeks in advance. No one told us about a non-competition rule. We had fully explained our company, its profit status and what our website was designed to do. Yet, the very campus that fostered our endeavor on one front was compelling us to cease and desist promoting our company on another. That's correct.

Our entrepreneurial skills were

HEY, RICK, WHATCHYA DOIN'?

CONFIGURING THE CHEAT FINDER TO ANALYZE RESUMÉS SUBMITTED BY FOOTBALL COACHES...

NORRIS

By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Oldest living *Technique* writer tells all (at long last)

I think this is the first time since I've been at Georgia Tech that a *Technique* staff member who isn't on the Editorial Board has been allowed to do a piece like this. When people write "swan song" editorials, they're expected to talk about what they've learned in their time here—but I don't feel like doing that today.

Instead, I'm going to tell you two stories, or one story in two parts if you like. At the center of them/it is an illiterate fool engineering student who got in way over his head and ended up learning to swim before he even realized it.

When I started writing in 1993 during my second quarter on campus, I never expected to keep at it for so long. I'd been talking with a friend of mine in the Concert Band before rehearsal one day, and she mentioned that she was on the News staff. Somewhere in my brain a synapse misfired—and the next thing I knew, I was asking if she knew whether they needed any more help. She said yes; News was pretty badly short-handed and could use some more reporters.

Then another batch of brain cells went bad on me and I ended up at a staff meeting. The section editor, a crusty guy by the name of Peter Hart, signed me up right away and put me to work covering—of all things—a puzzle exhibit set to open that weekend.

So that Friday night, I hopped a MARTA train heading downtown and quickly got myself hopelessly disoriented in that maze of streets. I can say with full certainty that be-

> "Experience taught me where I belonged: out on the street, chasing down stories....I was a trench rat and proud of it."
>
> **Alan Back**
> Senior Staff Writer Emeritus

ing lost in downtown Atlanta at night is an experience I wouldn't wish on my worst enemy. It's bad enough when you know where you're going!

But I did make it to the exhibit in one piece, and I got to talk to a couple of big-league guests: Will Shortz (editor of *Games* magazine at the time) and Martin Gardner (logic puzzle master extraordinaire). That was what got me thinking, "Maybe I can do this." And I did. I was all over campus, interviewing everybody from students all the way up to then-Vice President Michael Thomas. I even made a few trips to the Fulton County Courthouse to get details on lawsuits against Tech when nobody would go on the record.

And all this started when the boss decided to send me downtown on a Friday night. Thanks, Pete.

I worked in News through most of my undergraduate days, dabbling in Campus Life and the occasional CD or movie review. That's ancient history, except for those few who were just starting here around the time of the Olympics. (Remember the chain-link fences and 30-foot posts everywhere?) Not long after I started graduate school, I fig-

ured I wanted to try something new, so I dug up a lead or two for Entertainment and started chasing all over again in early 1998.

I went after two big stories—Sarah McLachlan and the Dave Matthews Band—and promptly had both blow up in my face thanks to publicists who preferred to stonewall or flat-out lie to me. I was ready to chuck the whole idea when I caught wind of a talent search at the Variety Playhouse. The Lilith Fair people were looking for local bands to open in several cities, Atlanta being one of them. I figured I had nothing to lose, grabbed my notebook, and set out.

I ended up talking to the night's winners, a duo called Christian/Durand (now based in Nashville), and lost control of the interview within the first minute. And I was glad to lose it. Those 10 or 15 minutes were one of the most chaotic, jumbled, and fun conversations of my life—and again I thought, "Maybe I can do this." Now I have dozens of interviews on tape, with everyone from emerging local artists to national and international stars. Autographs, backstage passes, spots on guest lists, even a few

chances to sit in—you name it, I've probably done it.

And all *this* started after I got thrown out of the saddle and trampled by the horse for good measure. Thanks, ladies.

Over the past nine years, I've had something of an insider's perspective of events, and I've seen things change—not always for the better. Tech gets sued…Junior's Grill moves onto campus…the campanile goes up and the Student Center lawn goes bye-bye…construction, renovation, demolition…the Olympics turn the place upside down…the semester switch finally happens…you get the picture. And that's just on our own patch.

Since I first wrote about that puzzle exhibit, I've worked for two dozen section editors and editors-in-chief. (I was doing this job while some of them were still in junior high school.) Things have changed within the walls of Student Services 137. Computers and furniture get shuffled and replaced. The storage room in back becomes the *Blueprint* office. Our old copy camera is retired. We start using scanners for our photos. The ratty old couches in the outer office are replaced by these big suckers that put people to sleep in no time flat. And so on.

Regardless of what's happened out there or in here, the reporters on this staff have had one primary goal: to tell the stories as accurately and honestly as they can. There's no course credit offered for this work, and the pay ranges from laughable

Football will struggle, parking woes continue in new year

I was watching *Meet the Press* the Sunday before the new year, when host Tim Russert asked his guest reporters and columnists to make predictions about what will occur in 2002. I thought, heck, I am a member of the media too. I can do that. So here is my disclaimer.

I am merely the News Editor of the *Technique*. I am a hard-working student, a good son and brother, a loyal friend, and a clean roommate. I am not, however, a priest, prophet, phone-in psychic or any other such prognosticator. Nonetheless, I will attempt to predict what 2002 holds for Georgia Tech in a cynical 700 words. Here goes.

In the exciting realm of academics affairs, I predict a slow year. Even if something exciting happens, students will probably never hear about it. We never really know what is going on in the basement of the Carnegie building or the conference rooms of Skiles, but in most instances, we probably would not care.

In my mind, faculty meetings, director's meetings, and other such events that require the taking of minutes usually consist of a group of grey-haired white men debating inconsequential topics around a table. So what do we look for in 2002?

Turnover will continue in the School of Literature, Communication, and Culture, as Chair Robert Kolker guides the young program through a shaky era. Other programs in the Ivan Allen College will experience similar growing pains. Most of the College of Engineering programs will be at or near the top of the *U.S. News* rankings; Industrial Engineering will, of course, earn

> "Even if something exciting happens, students will probably never hear about it....So what do we look for in 2002?"
>
> **Jody Shaw**
> News Editor

another year at number one.

President G. Wayne Clough will continue to call Stanford Tech's peer institution, even though we know Tech is more comparable to Purdue in its academic offerings. Classes will remain the same—overcrowded and difficult. Students will still pull at least two all-nighters each semester, which will usually involve Java. Renewed student-faculty interaction will continue, as we have seen under the leadership of Provost Jean-Lou Chameau.

Speaking of Chameau, a year ago the *Technique* said he was the wrong pick for the job of Provost, even though we knew it was a "fore-Jean" conclusion he was the choice. Boy, were we wrong. He's turned out to be a great leader and a real friend of students. Clough made a good hire there, as did Athletic Director Dave Braine last week, which brings me to sports.

The Yellow Jacket football team will not become immediate ACC Champions under new coach Chan Gailey. It has some holes to fills. If running back Joe Burns turns pro or leaves Tech, Gailey will struggle to find someone to step into his shoes in the backfield.

Filling quarterback George God-

sey's helmet, however, will be the most difficult. None of the possible replacements understand Bill O'Brien's system like Godsey did. The Jackets will win six or seven regular season games and play in the Tangerine Bowl.

The Georgia Bulldogs will fair better, but will not go 10-1 as predicted by *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* writer Mark Bradley. The Dogs will win a lot, but they will lose at least twice: once to Florida and another time—as occurs annually—to a team they should beat. Last year Auburn shocked Georgia, this fall the Jackets could pull the upset.

Other Tech sports will fair well. The women's swimming and diving team will continue to turn heads, and the planned swimming facility in SAC II will turn the eyes of possible recruits. Similarly, though, this year's cagers will make the NIT at best, Paul Hewitt's freshmen basketball recruits will make some noise early in the 2002-3 season.

On to predictions of student affairs. The powers that be will spend most of the year waffling around as they attempt to develop a student leadership program to match a pre-created slogan: "Leadership is for everyone." Yea! Creating programs that students don't really want or

need always works: just look at the "success" of GT Smart.

Senior Associate Dean of Students Karen Boyd and Georgia Tech Legal Advisor Randy Nordin will work to change the student discipline process. Tech's undergraduate judicial process has been challenged in court based on the due process rights it provides—or fails to provide.

In auxiliary services news, it will be business as usual for the department under leader Roz Meyers. The north parking deck will open this semester, but students will keep complaining about tickets and prices. Despite what Student Government members think, there will not be a meal plan option in the student center or Junior's this year (or probably ever) but thanks for trying, Stephen Popick.

The Student Government Association elections will be more tainted and messy than usual. Armed with new fodder from the Voter Accountability Act, candidates will tear into each other like never before, but at least the mud they sling will be relevant to the issues. Who will win? It depends on the candidates. There is no internal SGA front-runner, so I put my money on a dark horse from the outside, possibly someone from the Greek community.

Well that's it for now, and I promised some cynicism. If you don't like my opinions or disagree with my predictions, write Mary a letter. Just remember, advice is usually worth whatever you pay for it, and, just like a psychic hotline, all my predictions are intended for amusement only.

Question of the week

"What would you do if you got $100?"

Buzz Around Campus

Feature and Photos by
John Jewell

Kim Cantor
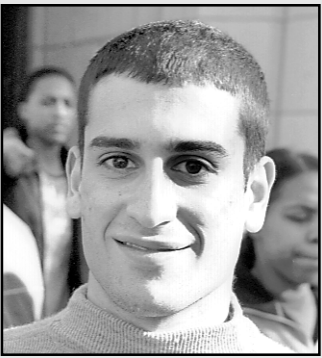IE Sophomore

*"Buy a TV so I could
watch 'Ally McBeal'."*

Brian Etheridge
NRE Freshman

"Give it to charity."

Angela Muhlberger
ID Freshman

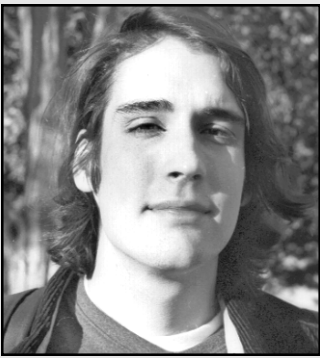*"Buy a cellular
phone."*

Al Halabi
EE Junior

"Take out my girl."

Angel Broach
MGT Junior

*"Take my friends out
to eat."*

Pierce MacMillan
INTA Freshman

*"Buy a parking
space."*

Vendors

encouraged, reinforced and embraced, as they should be, through several programs and workshops designed for campus startups. The idea was simple. Take what you learn from the classroom and make something from it.

Well, we did just that and watched in awe as our months of coding, thorough testing, intense planning and anticipation for our launch date

> "This pill was hard to swallow when several friends and I came onto campus to promote our new online student auction website."

vanished before our eyes.

So the lesson we all took from this experience is quite simple. We should all take all of our dreams, talents and classroom knowledge out into the real world and reach for the sky, but the sky should not involve competition with campus vendors. After all, why would the State or the Institute want to promote economic competition to allow students access to the best service, quality, and prices?

Adam Coker
gte124j@prism.gatech.edu

Alan

to ridiculous, so what motivation is left? The easy, simple, stupid one— they do it because they enjoy it. They strap on their cameras, tape recorders, and notebooks and go after the facts as best they know how.

Getting at the truth, whether it has to do with a change in campus policy or the history of a promising band, isn't an easy job at all. Just sorting out the different accounts of an event can be tricky; working through or around secretaries, managers, publicists, and so on can send a reporter to the nuthouse. But it's got to be done, and if the person doing it doesn't get some satisfaction, then the whole exercise is a colossal waste of time.

I did a couple of hitches as an editor, and I probably could have made a good run at just about any Ed-Board position I chose. But the experience taught me where I belonged: out on the street, chasing down stories. If you go too far up the chain of command, you can become so insulated from the "real world" that you forget how it works. I was a trench rat and proud of it.

I used to have this vision of myself at commencement, typing furiously away with my laptop balanced on my knees. It was a race against time: could I finish one last story before my name was called and it was my turn to walk across the stage? That's how much a part of me this newspaper has become.

I've had some healthy arguments with various editors, and I've probably been shouted at or cussed out more times than any other reporter in recent history. A few times I got so frustrated that I thought about quitting, but I couldn't ever bring myself to go through with it. With the end of graduate school approaching, though, I have to keep the roof from caving in, so the press card is finally out of my wallet.

I've been honored to work with the *Technique* staff in its various incarnations, and to write for almost a decade's worth of students, faculty, and staff. If my stories have made people think about something they might not have, then I've done what I set out to do.

I leave behind a newspaper that (I hope) is in slightly better shape than I found it, and my thanks to everyone who made it possible. Now it's my turn to let someone else have a go at it and try to improve things a little more.

To quote the great Edward R. Murrow, "Good night and good luck." And don't forget to wash the ink off your fingers when you're done reading.

Editor's Note: Alan has been a fixture of the Technique *office and the pages that we have produced for over nine years. Just before the winter break, Alan brought me the news of his retirement, news that shocked me. Because of his incredible accomplishments and superior professionalism he has pushed my colleagues and me to produce the best newspaper possible. While we don't live up to Alan's standards of excellence we'll sure keep trying, even if it has to be without him.*

Techs and the City: Students in need of counseling

By Jennifer Hinkel
Focus Editor

The cover of last Sunday's *New York Times'* special "Education Life" section depicted a tired looking college student sitting cross-legged, head in hands, amidst a tumult of bluish words: leaving home, fitting in, meeting expectations, academic pressure, information overload, downsizing, terrorism. Beneath him, in bold red print, it reads: "WHY STUDENTS ARE DEPRESSED," and a little smaller, "And what colleges are doing about it."

The page immediately grabbed my attention, whether because of the forlorn look on the face of this student looking like he just got shafted or because I've been wondering why so many Tech students, instead of seeming refreshed and relaxed after a break from school, instead seem stressed out and anxious. Many of us haven't taken a single test yet this semester. But where does the depression come from, and does our school do anything about it?

According to Leslie Berger's article, schools such as MIT, Columbia, and the University of Michigan have begun new research aiming to improve counseling services for students. For schools such as MIT, which has been criticized for having the highest student suicide rate in the country, an overhaul of the system certainly seems necessary. Here at Tech, the so-called MIT of the South, many of us are as stressed out as our Boston friends. Apart from the stress of a rigorously competitive academia, some of the very mechanisms of Tech academics can act as triggers to depression. Information overload in huge lectures with class averages in the forties and fifties leave students with a sense of helplessness and futility. Fierce competition where success and failure are measured in relative terms puts immense pressure on students to concentrate on beating out each other rather than mastering the material. I have no doubt that such pressure contributed to the almost 200 alleged honor code violations between two Computer Science classes last semester.

The stress of urban living also takes its toll. Tech students deal with traffic, terrorism worries, and economic recession like everyone else in the city. And we do it on five hours of sleep.

The truth is that counseling services are only remedial and only work for those who seek them out. Maybe Tech's system has changed, but when I went to the counseling center to seek guidance during my freshman year, the waiting list for an appointment was weeks long. I started Tech two months after finishing chemotherapy, and the stress I had already been dealing with was compounded exponentially by living far from home, roommate issues, and academic pressures. Looking back, I probably should have been referred to an off-campus therapist. Instead, after I finally got an appointment, I was shuffled to another therapist, missed an appointment, went home for the break with instructions to call another therapist I didn't know when I returned, and eventually lost interest. I managed to find a social support group and lower my stress level, but for someone closer to the edge, weeklong waiting lists and shuffling between counselors could have detrimental results.

Tech's suicide statistics may not be high, but hundreds of Tech students take semesters off, drop out of school entirely, or drive themselves to physical illness trying to keep up with the competitive pace. Tech needs to acknowledge that students here are expected to meet tremendous expectations, whether placed on them by parents, professors, scholarship requirements, or competing students. Support systems should be reevaluated to ensure that students seeking help have a sufficient response. Only by investigating how to meet student needs and researching ways to fix root causes of depression among students can Tech prevent students from becoming statistics.