

# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, December 2, 2005



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## Quote of the week:

"Education is what remains when we have forgotten all that we have been taught."  
 —George Savile

## OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

# Sharp sanctions

The sanctions handed down from the NCAA for Tech's academic eligibility violations from 1998 to 2004 were not unduly harsh, but came down harder than expected. Little credit was given to Tech for self-reporting the violations and self-imposing stringent sanctions. The punishments Tech imposed upon itself seem fair in light of the nature of the violations.

The order to vacate records of competitions in which ineligible players participated is not unusual, and it will ultimately have little effect on Tech's athletic programs. However, the NCAA sanctions place the Institution in a negative light and mar our previously untarnished NCAA record. Tech is a school that has always placed high academic standards on its athletes, placing emphasis on the student in the student-athlete. As long as this concept prevails within the athletic programs, the Institute will easily overcome this blemish on its record.

The sanctions that will be felt the most, however, will be the forced reduction in scholarships Tech can offer its athletes. The reduction in the number of scholarships available hurts football, and it is a particularly large blow to the track and field team, as they have fewer resources to begin with.

It is admirable and should not be forgotten that Tech reported itself and self-imposed penalties for its wrongdoings. While the Institution did break the rules, it did not deserve the punishment that the NCAA imposed.

# Ghost of dead week

Dead week is one of those traditional times during which all Tech students come together to complain about the shaft.

There are many versions of the week's policies floating around. To clarify, the Faculty Handbook says, "Quizzes and tests may not be given during the week preceding final exams. No final exam will be given earlier than final exam week under any circumstances. All quizzes and tests must be graded and returned on or before the last day of class preceding final exam week."

Unfortunately for many students, these guidelines are not strictly enforced. However, there are established avenues of redress for students to report professors who refuse to comply with dead week policies. The SGA suggests that students first speak with the professor, then the head of the department and finally with the Dean of Students, if their concerns are not properly addressed. While this may seem like a lot to go through just to get a test removed, it is necessary for students to realize that all talk and no action will not bring about change.

*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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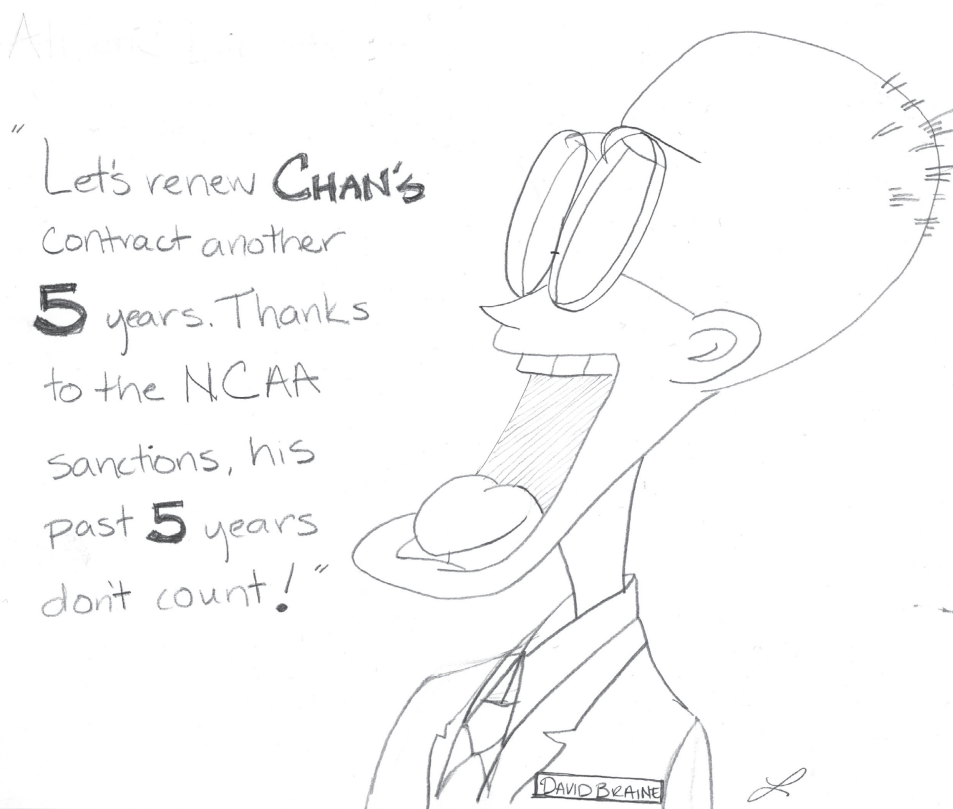
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By Lynn Deaton / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

# Coffee chains growing out of control

"That'll be a \$1.61."

"Thanks, have a great day!"

Such a short conversation, but one that is vital to my day: I reach to take a small cup of steaming hot coffee from the cashier, adding just the right amount of creamer and some sugar as I craft the perfect beverage.

I love coffee; I am hooked and enjoy sipping my addiction in the Student Center in between my morning classes.

But my daily coffee requirement over the semester is beginning to add up: carless on campus, my complaint involves not rising gas prices but the price tag on a small cup of regular, plain black coffee.

Say I buy three to four cups a week on average. That's around \$100 a semester: I have essentially more than paid for a fancy coffeemaker and the coffee to go with it.

And that is just my morning wake-up cup; what about those trips to Starbucks down the road to meet up with friends to talk or the chance to break away from my room to take a study break?

I feel that I must not be alone in my rant: coffee stands have popped up all over, ranging from the small cafe in our library to huge commercial chains, and they seem to always have customers willing to stand in line.

So what is my point? Why should you care that I spend so much on coffee a week? Why would I not just suck it up, buy a coffeemaker and stop complaining?

As a consumer, I am complaining about the continued rise in prices of a cup of coffee while the price of the coffee beans has been in decline over the past several years: how many distributors and middle-men are capitalizing on the chance to exploit the consumer for profit before the cup reaches my hand?

I understand a business is looking to make a profit, and I have no



"I understand a business is looking to make a profit...I do, however, have a problem with vendors who continue raising prices..."

**Halley Espy**  
 Executive Editor

problem paying for the convenience of buying a cup of coffee on the go. I do, however, have a problem with vendors who continue raising prices and attempting to shut out competition.

The coffee chain has become a marvel of our generation: the pick-me-up hot drink in a to-go cardboard cup matches our fast-paced society, resonating as a pop culture phenomenon.

My roommate tells me her hometown in Rhode Island boasts of seven coffee shops within a single mile radius. And when I studied abroad in Berlin this summer I found a scattering of Starbucks woven into the cityscape: the coffee chain craze is reaching a global scope.

With chains extending into global operations, I miss the local coffee shops with their cozy couches and friendly staff that host an acoustic guitar player each Saturday night. I miss that atmosphere that is being replaced by commercialized, fast-paced chains.

Maybe you do not find this to be a problem at all or just plain hate coffee, but the coffee chain sprawl is certainly an extension of globalization.

Aside from bringing my case to an international level, it is my newly developed need for a caffeine-fix that draws me toward the coffee stand each morning. Possibly it is just the sheer addiction that is driving the coffee chain obsession.

I am offering little to remedy the

spiraling coffee prices; rather, I'm just bringing the issue to attention. I could brew my own cup in the morning and patronize the local coffee shop; I will wrestle with the tremendous coffee tribulations on my own time.

Now I am going to completely switch gears (think of it as a coffee shop conversation): I have to comment on the UGA game.

My last editorial called for the student body and Tech fans to muster more support and spirit for college gameday; the intensity and response of the crowd for the UGA game was incredible.

In the midst of a sea of gold shakers, loud cheers, a packed stadium, and the emotion wrapped up in the bitter rivalry, Tech students helped to fuel the momentum of the game.

And even despite the loss, fans stuck around to cheer players into the locker room; Tech fans brought dynamic energy and true loyalty to the field Saturday night.

Whether you are completely heart-broken or disappointed, the match was a true defensive battle and a good game. I am proud of our season, (the Miami upset was the win of the century) and the UGA team did little to impress me as the favored team going into the match-up.

So from feeding my addiction to analyzing global relationships to Jacket football excitement, I set off to get ready for finals and see the semester to a close, all from behind a coffee cup.



# Black Friday shopping hazardous to health

Who wants an Xbox 360? Seriously, I'll sell you one. It'll cost you \$750, a kidney and your firstborn child. If you don't want to pay that much, that's fine. I know I can get at least that much for it on eBay.

Apparently Xboxes are in such high demand that some poor guy (who had the unfortunate title of being "the first" in town to get one) got mugged carrying it out of the store. Maybe being second or third in line would have been a better idea.

The madness doesn't end with Xbox shoppers either. Holiday shopping in general, especially the weekend after Thanksgiving, is by far the most dangerous time of year to buy something.

I can't prove this, but it wouldn't surprise me if certain women (probably 75 percent of the female population) were born with a gene that makes them absolutely stupid towards shopping. This gene is responsible for certain women owning a different pair of shoes for every day of



"Observing the antics of Black Friday shopping is nothing short of hilarious...almost better than a Don King fight."

**Jamie Howell**  
Photography Editor

the week. It's also the same gene that causes women to turn into fire-breathing, purse swinging crazy people on the Friday after Thanksgiving.\*

Observing the antics of Black Friday shopping is nothing short of hilarious. It's almost better than a Don King fight. Grown adults who normally wouldn't be up before 9 a.m. on a holiday are up at 4 a.m. just so they can be at Wal-Mart in time for the opening. Women who normally don't move faster than a brisk walk go sprinting down toy aisles flinging elbows, weighted purses and

insults as if their lives depended on it. Obviously their holiday well-being depends entirely on whether they get little Johnny that video game he wanted.

I don't usually succumb to the hysteria surrounding Black Friday, but I confess that this year I did. I was home over Thanksgiving and I decided on a whim I would go down to the local Office Depot early that Friday to buy a couple of packs of blank DVDs for a good price. Now, home for me is a little town in south Georgia with about 35,000 people, so I didn't figure weathering the

crowd at Office Depot would be a big deal. The store opened at 6 a.m., so I figured it was safe to wake up at 6:00 and get to the store at around 6:15. Well, I get to the store at 6:15 and the entire parking lot is packed (the parking lot alone makes up a measurable percentage of the entire population of the town). Sure enough, I get into the store and find the DVDs I want already sold out. They were gone in 15 minutes. I couldn't believe I woke up at 6:00—which equates to four hours of sleep—just for that.

I should have known better. Next time I'll just sleep in. Besides, when shopping for yourself it's actually a much better idea to shop on New Year's than the day after Thanksgiving. The deals might not be quite as good, but at least you won't have to worry about being hit with a purse on your way past the toy aisle.

*\*Note: In all fairness, the analogous male gene makes men equally stupid about beer, college football and fast cars.*

## Technique apologizes to West Side Story cast, crew

By Kyle Thomason  
Editor-in-Chief

At the *Technique*, it is our goal to live up to the highest possible standards of journalism and ethics. However, in the Nov. 18 issue, the story on page 13 about the DramaTech production *West Side Story* did not meet these expectations.

I must admit that I do not know much about theater, and I never did make it to see the play.

When I came across the article about the production the morning before sending it off, I was not in love with it; however, I had a personal bias that prevented me from making any changes to the opinions that were presented.

I went to high school with the lead, Ashley Case, and I know she is a great person and a terrific actress. However, since I did not see the play, interjecting my opinion would have been highly unethical.

Later, I came to find out that I was not the only one with an ethical dilemma—the writer of the story also had a potential personal bias regarding the production. This is completely unacceptable, and I promise you it has been addressed.

I also came to learn that there were many factual inaccuracies or misrepresentations of the play. For instance, the article notes the play is about "two Puerto Rican gangs." In fact, only one of the gangs is Puerto Rican.

There was also criticism of the stage that was used for the performance. This is DramaTech's stage, and it is what they use for performances as a fiscally responsible student organization, something that was not mentioned.

Moreover, the criticism of having the orchestra in one corner is certainly unwarranted. It is all too obvious in retrospect that it is impractical for any orchestra to be seated around the stage.

I thank each and every person who wrote a letter to the editor bringing the aforementioned issues and facts. Your criticisms were incredibly helpful in bringing the article's shortcomings

to light.

I sincerely apologize to the cast and crew of *West Side Story* on behalf of the entire *Technique* organization and everyone involved. I would also like to specifically apologize to Ashley Case for the comments directed toward her performance in the review. I have also removed the article from the website as a result of its many major flaws.

I'd like to end with a newreview from the *Technique's* advisor, Billie Pendleton-Parker: "I'm constantly amazed by 'my' Tech students in virtually all respects, but I'm especially agog when I witness the artistic side of many that shines so brightly—as it did in DramaTech's recent production of *West Side Story*. I was, by and large, in awe of the performers—their obvious commitment to this play, their enthusiasm for their roles, the talent displayed by all concerned. As a theatre-goer, I loved the staging in the 'black box.' I enjoy being 'part' of the play. KUDOS to 'my' students (especially graduating senior, Ashley Case) for a stellar execution of a time-honored musical. I'm proud of everyone associated with this production."

## YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Legacy of mediocrity?

Mediocrity okay? Not by this Tech fan, and I would guess not by many in the Tech community. Saturday night's victory over No. 3 Miami did nothing but emphasize the caliber of student-athletes that matriculate at Tech.

This victory only underscores the absurdity of Director of Athletics Dave Braine's comment that Tech cannot be expected to win nine or 10 games a season.

If Coach Gailey had any pride, he would be insulted by Braine's thoughtlessness! How many coaches would accept a job because they were told mediocrity was okay?

Why did Braine proclaim at the end of last season that Tech

would need to win more than seven games this year for Gailey to retain his job, then give him a five-year contract with disparaging remarks about Tech's capabilities?

Only to make his friend Gailey look better by offering the new contract?

Braine's statement about not renewing Gailey's contract based on this year's performance then rehiring him clearly demonstrates the Director of Athletics's confusion, poor leadership and lack of resolve.

Consider Tech's opponents at the beginning of this season. If one had said Tech would be 7-3 at this point in the schedule,

See Letters, page 8

# BUZZ

## Around the Campus

### How do you prepare for finals?



**Amanda Bryson**  
First-year NRE

*"Rework homework and tell myself it will be over soon."*



**David Ward**  
Third-year CmpE

*"Grabbing free food from Midnight Madness in between massive studying."*



**Heather Hubble**  
NRE Graduate Student

*"I dance wildly around bonfires praying to the gods of engineering that I will pass."*

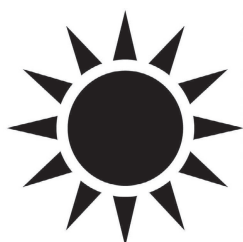


**Teja Kadire**  
Third-year IE

*"Claim a cubicle on the third floor and rot there."*

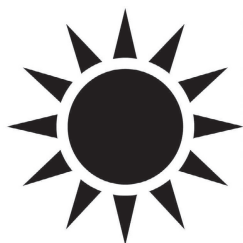
Photos by Lauren Griffin

## HOT- or -NOT



### Holiday helps

The 56 students heading down to Mobile, Ala. for the winter break service trip will be exemplifying the idea of lending a helping hand. Much thanks goes to President Clough, who provided much of the internal funding for the trip. It's great to see the Tech community pull together in continued support of the victims of Katrina.



### New symbols

WREK radio and GTCN finally have a brand new logo thanks to Buzz Studios. The new designs can be seen for your viewing pleasure on channel 17, 20 and 21. WREK radio fans now wait with anticipation for a new bumper sticky boasting the fresh look.



### Megamod?

After a semester of megamod after megamod, the mailing list broke down just as the all-important message regarding the online ticketing system for basketball games was sent out Monday, reaching only a small percentage of students. There will probably be an excess supply of tickets as a result, though. Check it out, you'll probably get one.



### Dawgonit

Last weekend's loss to our rivals to the east was heartbreaking. Coming off a high from an unexpected win against Miami, the Jackets scored first in a game that became a 7-7 showdown with the Dawgs, who managed to score again with only 3:18 left on the scoreboard.



## Letters

from page 7

reasonable speculation would be that the three losses would be Auburn, Va. Tech and Miami.

Yet reality couldn't be further from the truth, and the question is why did Tech lose to N.C. State and Virginia?

My contention is that great athletes rise to the occasion for big games and that coaches must motivate their players for lesser games. Furthermore, the coaches must always have an effective game plan no matter what the opposition and be able to adapt on the field as needed. Gailey struck out on all accounts against Virginia and N.C. State and he had clearly been warned about only seven wins.

Thus combining outstanding wins against Auburn and Miami with expected wins over N.C. State and Virginia would have put Tech at 9-1, something Braine claims Tech is not capable of achieving.

Is it ironic that this should occur in the same year Braine said it cannot? If it had not been for Braine's choice of head coach, it would have happened. So why did Braine make the foolish comment about Tech capabilities, to justify the extended Gailey contract?

Perhaps both Braine AND Gailey should be sent packing so that we can continue with the Tech tradition of excellence and winning.

Ronald J. Parise  
BME '72, Ph.D. '89  
Football Letterman '72  
rjparise@hotmail.com

## Publix shuttle great

Despite the opinions others have voiced, I believe the Publix shuttle is a wonderful idea. I have shopped at both Kroger and Publix for the past two years, and I believe Publix to be the better choice.

People have claimed that Kroger's prices are better, but I disagree. Publix's selection is greater and the quality of the food far exceeds Kroger's.

The problem is not prices but rather smart shopping on the part of the consumer. Those people should stop blaming the grocers for their lack of knowledge when it comes to shopping for lower costs and realize that if they were to pay a little more attention to the shelves, then they can save loads of money anywhere.

Atlanta is making a great effort to keep tourism and the economy within the city. It is also opening its appeal to a younger crowd, including college students, and encouraging them to leave their dormitories and do something.

This also saves the students from fluctuating gas prices and the horrible system known as MARTA, which really does not offer an adequate method of transportation through such a wide-spread city.

Tech is simply trying to make life a little easier for its students, and people want to complain about the prices of groceries. Why can't we just say thanks for thinking of us and putting our needs first?

Kate Dorrity  
Undergraduate ME  
kate.dorrity@gatech.edu

# "F" word causes fear for the future

I'm going to use the "F" word. Finals.

It's a word that strikes fear into all students, young and not so young alike. Finals are preceded by "dead week," which doesn't exactly sound like a week of football and romantic evenings to me.

The word "finals" makes some run in fear. Others click on Jon Stewart reruns in procrastination and denial. Still others go into "perpetual study mode at ludicrous speed." Perpetual study mode at ludicrous speed involves shutting oneself in his or her room and studying for hours at a time, neglecting Xbox 360 addiction, fighting burning eyes, cramped backs and a new case of tendonitis.

Here's another "F" word: fear. I remember my first semester of finals my freshman year. I was pretty fearful. My high school allowed seniors to exempt all our exams. It seemed like a great idea at the time, but I realized I had nearly no idea how to study for a final exam! Was I to memorize formulas? Or memorize definitions? Prepare for an essay test? Or a more mind-crunching multiple choice exam?

Oddly enough, the week of finals taught me a lot more than just what was on the exams. I can't remember a single question on any of the exams, except for something about the human intestinal tract.

Finals week my freshman year was a strange week. At first, I slept about eleven hours each night. I didn't have any classes to attend, so no reason to set my alarm clock. I took long,



"I remember my first semester of finals my freshman year. I was pretty fearful."

**Alexandra Pajak**  
Columnist

hot showers because they were valid study breaks and practices of good hygiene, too. And I spent most of the days in my pajamas.

The first exam went without a hitch. I think that was my Spanish exam. Nothing unpredictable. The only hard part was that the whole thing was in a foreign language.

The next few days were spent in complete regret that I slept so much. Psychology was the next exam. Maybe I felt that when studying the way the human mind works, it would seem all the material would just come naturally. But apparently there are things to be learned about everyone's noggin.

All I remember is scribbling something about the id and the superego and something about the concept of "burnout." (I didn't appreciate the inclusion of that concept on the exam.)

My final assignment was an English paper. It was on a bizarre theatrical play by Timberlake Wertenbaker that had something to do with prisoners. I traced the prisoners' developments in morality in my paper, but that's all I remember.

After I turned my paper in via email, I ran into two of my friends in my dorm's stairwell. We talked for about two hours right there on the cement steps in the chilly air about the plans for the rest of our lives. We each wanted to graduate, have exciting careers, marry the perfect guy (we assumed there were at least one for each of us in the world), and travel across the world.

The fantasy girls on the stairwell and I laughed at the intensity of our conversation our senior year.

But I don't think all things happen on accident, and dreams are meant to be dreamt. That's what makes life worth living. Maybe I will travel the world. Maybe I'll become the next great rap artist. After the memorization comes real life. And it's pretty sweet.

So to use the "F" word again, don't worry. Finished. That's what finals week will soon be.

And don't forget "future." It's what lies ahead of the dark cloud of finals. As well as goofy hall-mates, video games, and Comedy Central.

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