

OPINIONS

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Quote of the week:

"I don't know why we are here, but I'm pretty sure that it is not in order to enjoy ourselves."
 —Ludwig Wittgenstein

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Neighborhood watch

Recently some residents of Home Park voiced their displeasure over what they view as "excessive partying" from their student neighbors. The Home Park Community Improvement Association (HPCIA) has reached out to campus officials from GTSMART and the GTPD to curb the problem. While the HPCIA feels that the issue should be handled by Tech, the issue is clearly one that should be addressed by Home Park residents and the students, not by the Institute.

Instead of complaining to the GTPD, GTSMART or the Dean of Students office, the HPCIA needs to reach out to students directly. Much of the problem stems from the fact that the majority of students who live in Home Park are renters, and therefore, are only aware of their landlord's rules and not their neighbors' wishes. Additionally, students typically live in the area for only a short amount of time—one or two years. Non-student residents in Home Park should speak to the landlords if they have problems with a particular house's behavior. Non-student residents should try to welcome new students when they move in to foster a better sense of community and prevent misunderstandings before they start.

Academic progress

Tech's athletic programs have fared well in the NCAA's new Academic Progress Rate (APR) report, with 16 out of the 17 Division I athletic teams scoring above the standard acceptable score. Baseball scored below the standard due to the large number of juniors who left the team early for the minor leagues, but still within an acceptable range. Although there are no penalties for poor performance this year, it is encouraging that Tech teams are already living up to the new standards. Additionally, the report has strengthened Tech's academic reputation within the NCAA community.

While the new system is an improvement over the NCAA's old method of determining whether schools are doing their jobs of educating and retaining scholarship student-athletes, the NCAA's methodology in computing the APR still needs fine-tuning. The APR's formula penalizes teams that lose students to transfers and withdrawals. By penalizing universities whose athletes choose to begin their professional careers early or transfer to another college, whether for athletic or personal reasons, the NCAA is unjustly punishing schools for complying with players' wishes. The only factor that should figure in the APR is whether or not athletes are able to remain academically eligible to play.

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

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WHAT ABOUT
FULFORD, GILLIS
AND GEORGIA
TECH HOUSING?

I'M GONNA MAKE
THEM AN OFFER
THEY CAN'T REFUSE.



By Brian Lewis / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

First amendment needs protection

A couple of weeks ago, I came across a story on www.cnn.com citing a study of high school students' beliefs concerning the relevance of the First Amendment. Given all of the recent issues regarding free speech with things like blogging, I was very surprised to see that over one-third of high school students polled stated that the First Amendment guaranteed too many freedoms.

I just couldn't believe it. Here I am, not three or four years older than most of the students polled just hoping that those three or four years make enough difference to these students to help them realize that the First Amendment isn't "no big deal," as the subheading of the CNN article suggested.

Even more frightening to me as a journalist is that half of the students polled believed that the government should have to approve news stories before they are published. The freedom of the press to publish without prior restraint is one of the fundamental facets of the First Amendment. The executive director of the Journalism Education Association, Linda Putney, offers a reasonable explanation. She is quoted in the article as saying, "Schools don't do enough to teach the First Amendment. Students don't know the rights it protects."

Ignorance, however, is never an excuse. In a time where people are becoming more and more apathetic towards all things political, legislation can be passed and policies can be made right under our noses without our knowledge. While much of that legislation may not affect us directly, it often slowly chisels away our rights.

As more and more of these students reach voting age, their apathetic, or at best misinformed, views will adversely affect our political system. Sure, many of them won't vote and won't have a direct



"Students in many schools are unable to fully practice their basic freedom on a daily basis."

Hillary Lipko
 Entertainment Editor

impact on who is elected or which referenda and initiatives are passed, but even this can hardly be viewed as a good thing.

In an annual report on American journalism, it was found that the average age of someone who regularly watches cable news is almost 57. The average age for network news is even higher: 60. It means that people our age, the ones who are supposed to be able to affect the most change, are probably not watching the news.

Whether or not this is a bad thing, however, is a bit ambiguous. Television news has become notorious for sensationalism and not telling the whole story, so the fact that younger audiences aren't watching it as much could be interpreted as a good thing if they're getting their news from someplace else, like magazines, newspapers or the internet. However, the study suggests that people our age, on the whole, aren't getting their news from anywhere.

So what can be done about it? I wish I had an answer. Of course, there are tons of suggestions from just about everyone, but which of those suggestions might lead to real results? Could more vigorous civics and government curriculum in schools help remedy the ignorance of and apathy toward the First Amendment and the Bill of Rights as a whole? Could the integration of news media in the classroom condition students to read the news in the future and make them want to know what's going on in the world? It's hard to tell.

It can be inferred from the study cited in the CNN article that students who take part in media activities such as newspaper and TV production are less likely to be apathetic and more likely to be informed. About 90 percent of principals of the schools included in the study said that learning some journalism skills is important for students, but lack of funding has resulted in a large number of schools eliminating student media opportunities.

There are so many other possibilities that it boggles the mind. Students in many schools are unable to fully practice their basic freedoms on a daily basis. How are they supposed to understand them if they can't use them?

What it all boils down to is that at some point in time, something went very wrong with the way young people understand the political process and become involved in it. It's becoming less and less common these days to hear about student activism. Fight the trend. Scan through the headline stories on your browser's start page, watch the evening news, tune into a cable news channel for half an hour or skim through a major newspaper. (The *Technique* is a good start, but you might want to think a little bigger.)

At the very least, become addicted to *The Daily Show*. It's funny, a little informative and a good place to start if you're really not into the news. In no time you'll be wanting to know more and before you know it, you'll be a regular news junkie.

Library project serves as model for future

"Don't worry about money. If you could do anything at all with this space, what would it be?" asked the moderator at the library renovation focus group I attended earlier this week. I'm not asked this question, either by administrators or anyone else, that often, so it did catch me off guard, and most likely some of the other participants as well. It also inspired me to write this editorial because in all of my four years at Tech, I can't ever think of anyone asking me for my opinion on what average students need to get out of a space before its completed.

Typically, I'm used to hearing about a building's plans for construction and how it's supposed to benefit the students but never really having any clue how it's going to revolutionize the campus until it's completed. Never mind getting the opportunity to participate in a focus group about the topic. Or if I do hear about how great a project is supposed to be and exact details, it's from a *Technique* article or news release about the project.

What's great about the library renovations project is that the Library Student Advisory Council, staff from OIT, and the library and administrators are making sure to take into consideration what faculty, staff and students together want in the project before making any final decisions



"Before any new buildings begin construction, the planners should follow the library's example."

Kimberly Rieck
Opinions Editor

about what exactly they will do with the space. The renovations are being tailored to the feedback the planning committee has received. Current plans for the space include building a café and better areas for group study, all of which were detailed in the Feb. 11 *Technique* article "Library plans for upgrade." Additionally, nothing has been made final until the planning committee has a chance to hear the perspectives and opinions from everyone affected by the project. Before any more new buildings begin construction, the planners should follow the library's example.

While I'm sure the library may not be the only entity on campus to actively seek out student input, and that there were probably dozens of focus groups about the Student Center Commons project and Technology Square, all of those took place before my time at Tech. Same goes for the Campus Recreation Center renovations project. Although I'm a

fourth-year, I'm not that old.

Now if I was curious about what students and faculty thought about putting in a water slide and if it was their main concern at the time, I would have nowhere to turn to find out this information. All I could find was pictures of the construction that took place for the CRC. The reason is that currently there exists a lack of historical records for these projects' planning phases.

That's right, if you wanted to know what the student opinion of the time was about the project and how their opinions were taken into consideration before the project was implemented, you would have no Institute resource.

While the minutes of the Student Government Association's committees and the Institute wide committees that play a role in these key planning decisions are publicized, online records at SGA's website only exist for this current year. There's nowhere to go to find out what last year's

committees worked on.

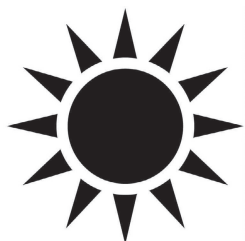
Although these records may seem unimportant to the average person, the work of past committees and advisory boards affect students' quality of life and administration policies for years. Given the amount of time and effort that has gone into making sure input from all over campus is taken into consideration for the Library project, why not make the project even more of a model by listing online the results of the planning period, along with the specifics about construction? This way if a new or old student had a question about why the Library renovations were done a particular way, they could have an online record to turn to.

I realize that any student that's on an advisory council or committee probably has more on their plate than they can handle, but if a simple online database that was easily accessible and maintainable was started now, it wouldn't be that hard to continue the effort.

I've seen many great strides over my time at Tech to make everything on-campus more student-friendly. Now is the time to document the efforts the Institute is making to accomplish this goal. The time has come for the ones in power and making key decisions to start keeping records for the benefit of future members of the Tech community.

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT- or -NOT



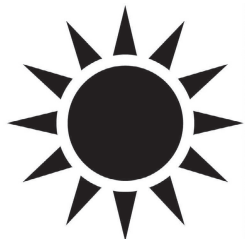
A cultural experience

What better way to celebrate our diverse international population than to offer students a chance to try foods from a variety of ethnic groups? This year's Culturefest was a huge success and gave everyone a chance to try anything from curry to Iranian rice pudding for only \$4. It was the perfect way to picnic at Yellow Jacket Park on a clear day, and the music selection wasn't bad either.



Squirrel invasion

It's been a running joke at Tech for years, but seriously a squirrel has launched an attack on Fourth Street Apartments. The rodent actually chewed through one of the building's dry wall in search of food. To combat the four-legged terrors, Housing has launched an offensive and instituted anti-squirrel attack measures that include making preventive screens for all potential rodent entrances.



Burdell's film fest

The George P. Burdell Film Festival at the Student Center is giving students a free opportunity to check out great international films. Tonight is your last chance to check it out; *The Motorcycle Diaries* is playing. Remember it's the film that had the song that Antonio Banderas so should not have sung at the Oscars.



Stingstock?

We have nothing against Sting Break, but we don't like the name "Stingstock." We can only hope the name was just a sad joke for the chalkings. If it wasn't, then here's a suggestion: Woodstock is over, and unless the resurrected Creedence Clearwater Revival are playing this year—get a new name.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Display's message clear

Last week's *Technique* featured an editorial titled "Student Center display prompts new debate."

Apparently, the writer found the College Republicans display on feminism "unclear" which we find hard to understand.

Any free-thinking individual could have easily determined that the display was one that contrasted the radical leftists of the modern-day feminist movement with leading female figures of the conservative movement. It asked viewers to decide: "Who Represents You?"

The "propaganda" referred to in the editorial was simply a

collection of quotes, photos and statistics from both the right and the left which were mainly taken from left-leaning research institutes. If the writer was offended by the ridiculous behavior and disturbing statistics which were put on display in the Student Center, we certainly join in her disgust.

The College Republicans are of the opinion that today's radical feminist movement, which in essence the Vagina Monologues represents, is damaging to the progress and the reputation of modern women. In particular, we find

See Display, 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 Daniel Amick, 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 8 a.m. Wednesday 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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Information and rate cards can be found online at www.nique.net. The deadline for reserving ad space and submitting ad copy is noon on Friday, one week prior to publication. For rate information, call our offices at (404) 894-2830, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Advertising space cannot be reserved over the phone. The *Technique* office is located in room 137 of the Student Services Building, 353 Ferst Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0290. Questions regarding advertising billing should be directed to Corey Jones at (404) 894-9187, or Rose Mary Wells at (404) 894-2830.

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.

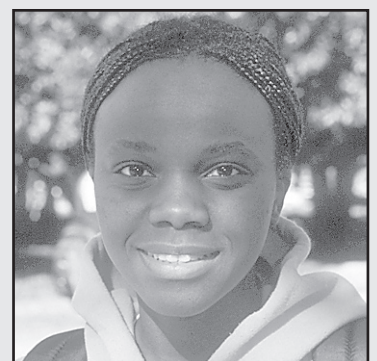
BUZZ

Around the Campus
How did you celebrate last Friday's Drop Day?



Andrew Fraser
ME Freshman

"I sat at my computer and did 'Mastering Physics.'"



Nndi Ogbechie
EE Third-year

"I already dropped my class before drop day."



Jessica Lewis
PSYC Third-year

"Nothing, but I'm glad it was moved back."



David Hubbard
IE Third-year

"I rejoiced in the fact that I didn't need to drop a class."

Photos by Andrew Saulters

BLINDED BY SCIENCE

Intelligent design debate not for public schools

In recent months, I've noticed several stories in the news about the resurgence of the evolution versus creationism debate or, more specifically, what should be taught in American schools.

The fact that a real debate, one that started near the beginning of the last century, is still even being considered today is alarming.

What is perhaps even more worrisome about the debate is that evolution has a new, more seemingly scientific (according to its supporters) opponent: intelligent design.

Now, I'm not trying to dispute anyone's religious views or their right to hold them.

What I do dispute is their attempt to foist those religious views onto others.

As a Christian, I personally don't think that the ideas of creation and evolution have to be mutually exclusive, but I firmly believe that creation has no place being taught in the science classes of America's public schools.

I believe this for two reasons:

1. I don't think that ideas of a religious nature have any place being taught in secular public schools.
2. The teaching of an idea such as intelligent design that has no real basis in science is dangerous to the future of science education in America.

The average American's knowledge of science is already disturbingly limited, and as a society, we really need to work to improve science



"We really need to work to improve science education in this country, not undermine it."

Andrea Thompson
Columnist

education in this country, not undermine it.

I'm sure most people are familiar with the gist of this debate, but with the advent of the "intelligent design" proposal, a few things are worth pointing out.

An excellent article in *Scientific American* by John Rennie, entitled "15 Answers to Creationist Nonsense," clearly explains the charges that intelligent design proponents make against evolution and exactly why they are bogus.

Many proponents of the intelligent design concept either misunderstand or willfully misrepresent basic tenets of evolutionary theory.

For example, many fundamentalists become outraged at the supposed suggestion that humans descended from monkeys.

In fact, evolution simply states that humans and monkeys have a common ancestor.

Fundamentalists have framed the debate so that it seems as though scientists are attacking religion. In fact, we are simply trying to preserve the integrity of scientific investiga-

tions and teaching.

Supporters of the intelligent design philosophy say that they can debunk the theory of evolution based on the principles of science.

For example, they claim that because it is the "theory of evolution," its certainty should be called into question.

This is another misunderstanding or willful misinterpretation of what a "theory" is in science.

There have been no true scientific studies calling into the question the veracity of evolution.

Certainly there is much debate within the scientific community as to particulars about evolution for certain species and what particular processes occur, but these debates in no way detract from the fact that all the evidence points to the truth of evolution.

But the debate is no longer about whether or not to ban the teaching of evolution from schools, it is about whether or not "other options" such as intelligent design should also be taught and given equal weight and emphasis in the classroom.

Including intelligent design in a science curriculum would completely undermine the teaching of what science actually is. The truth of the matter is that the intelligent design argument doesn't hold water, scientifically speaking.

Intelligent design is a fundamentally un-testable idea that employs convenient hand-waving where gaps in our knowledge occur, instead of using scientific investigation to search for an explanation.

One of the main reasons I am bringing this whole discussion up is the danger this debate poses for a school like Georgia Tech, whose students are among the best and brightest in engineering and science.

For students to study science in college, a working knowledge of the scientific method and what is and what is not considered true science is critical.

If students were taught intelligent design, it would give them a skewed perception of what exactly science is and put them at a disadvantage in college.

Scientists will generally acknowledge when something in science is not well understood, when something needs to be investigated further. The larger idea of evolution does not fall into this category.

Science is, ideally, about the pursuit of knowledge and truth, and including an idea that doesn't hold to the rules and rigors of science undermines that pursuit.

Display from page 7

it quite perplexing that the Vagina Monologues is a "play" that almost exclusively highlights the sexual exploits of women.

If the purported goal of the radical feminist movement is indeed to keep women from being viewed strictly as sexual objects, we must question why they support a play that focuses on vulgar descriptions of women's sexual behavior.

We feel as though the Vagina Monologues neither help "liberate" nor "empower" women; nor do we believe its message represents the majority of women on this campus or in this state.

The College Republicans believe that the best way to advance the cause of women in this nation is to demand that they be treated with respect and honored as equals, and not as women who have finally come to terms with their sexuality.

The College Republicans believe that the modern-day liberal feminist movement is heading in the wrong direction.

We simply seek to expose its destructive consequences, while also promoting constructive alternatives.

While I respect the editor's comments, I, as a woman and a conservative feminist, have the right, along with my organization, to provide the student body with a differing opinion on how the term 'feminism' is defined.

Jessica Smith
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