

# **The North Avenue Review**

## **Disorientation Issue**

**Vol. XVII**

**September**

**1992**

### **INSIDE**

**Guns**

**Atlanta's Bookstores**

**Georgia Tech's Apathy**

**and the solutions**

**Women's Issue's**

**ASSET**

**FASET**

**A Cultural Revolution**

**Poems**

**Stories**

**and more**

**"...an open forum guide to an expanded paradigm."**

## Structure

The *North Avenue Review* is produced by a collection of

Georgia Tech students, faculty, and staff— all of whom have contributed writing, graphics, or time.

Unless otherwise state, the views expressed herein are solely those of the individual contributors and are not intended to express the sentiments of the Georgia Tech community.

The *North Avenue Review* is published quarterly by Chapman printing.

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All letters are welcome. Your letter will not be edited, so submit it as you wish it to be printed. You may request that your name be withheld from the letter, but we must know who you are.

## Submissions

We welcome all original contributions, including articles, essays, poetry, graphic materials, announcements, clip art, poetry, fiction, photographs, surveys, polemics, small items of interest, sheet music, recipes, chemical formulas, madcap hypotheses, prognostications (both psychic and earthly), reviews, dramas, artwork, computer graphics, new

patent ideas, dissertations, proclamations and whatever else is adaptable to the printed page excluding bricks. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni are invited to share ideas, opinions, expressions, and delusions with the **NAR**.

## Procedure

At 'writers workshops' throughout the quarter and at the deadline meeting, all submissions are presented for group review. The editors (we are all 'editors' or 'non-editors') then read all submissions, offering written constructive criticism and suggestions. If an editor feels that a particular piece is unnecessarily inflammatory or obscene, he or she can bring the piece to the attention of the group in order to discuss the piece. A submission will be excluded from the **NAR** with a three-fourth votes against its publication. This provision is essential to prevent the publication of items that might jeopardize the **NAR's** existence and in practice we have never censored a final submission although we welcome attempts for your piece to be the first. Attendance and participation by each contributor is extremely important and strongly encouraged to allow feedback and comments— hopefully improving the quality of everyone's work.

All texts must be submitted on a Macintosh 3.5" disk to lighten the burden of the **NAR's** oppressed layout workers (who are forming a union and planning a strike under present conditions). Articles must be typed in ten-point Times font in either Microsoft Word or Wordperfect.

We simply cannot type your piece for you unless it is a very short poem. To make layout easier remove tabs and

indentations, leave a line between paragraphs, and quote your sources appropriately. Be prepared to rewrite. Also we encourage writers to find visuals to accompany their articles (these do not have to be on a disk simply bring them with your submission).

## Getting Involved

The **NAR** needs your help. Anyone who wants to get involved regardless of his or her literary or ideological pursuits. Come to the first meeting next quarter which will be held

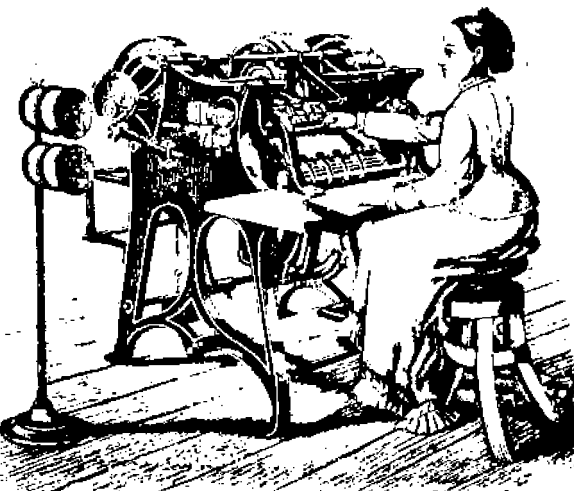
somewhere on the third floor of the Student Center on the first monday of the quarter.

"Well I've always said that any reaction, favorable or otherwise, is a good sign that you're affecting someone." — *Dr. David Ray*  
*The North Avenue Review*  
GT Campus Mail  
50271 Georgia Tech Station  
Atlanta, GA 30333

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—The dedicated summer **NAR** is:

Robert Abdelal  
Anne Balsamo  
Traci E. Battle  
Allison Beerhuis  
Doug Bennet  
Li Cai  
Jeff Cardille  
Kelly Collins  
Steve Danyo  
Joel Davis  
David Erhat  
Scott Fredrickson  
Ed "Catfish" Gibbs  
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Choya Lee Harden  
Heather Havey  
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William Moore  
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Michael Piasecki  
Raul Ramirez  
A. L. Rafter  
Christopher Rawlins  
Dr. David Ray  
Ian Seymour  
Sunil Shah  
Joe Stallings  
Susan Sutherland  
Dr. John Tone  
Earl Williams  
Donna Wong  
and perhaps others I've forgotten, sorry



# MORE FUN . . . with **YOUR GUNS**



. . . the  
**Year  
Around!**

*Join* The North Avenue Review

## The North Avenue Review

is needing writers, designers, artist, photographers, poets, politicians, intellectuals, anti-intellectuals, bleeding-heart liberals, fascists and *any* one else interested in working with us.

PLEASE SEND  
ALL YOUR  
STUFF TO →

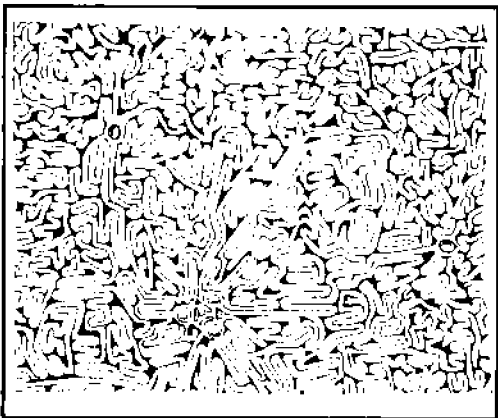
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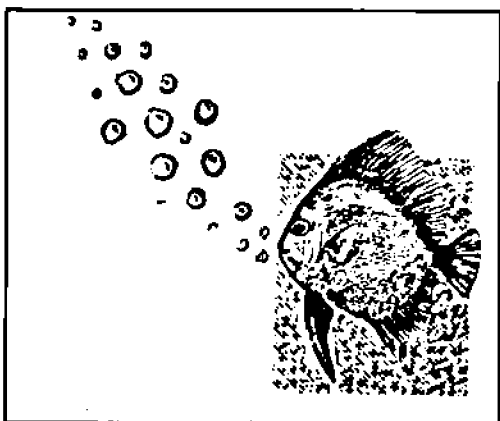
In the next issue **this** page will be the letters page  
so send us letters to print and respond to with wit!

First Fall Quarter Meeting : Thursday October 1, 3rd Floor Student Center, 6:00 pm

# contents



disorientation



fishrap



everything left

Letters ?	3
Guide To Disorientation	5
Fishrap	35
Final Hypocritical Confession	A. Lowe Raiteri 47
Gun Control Means Hitting the Target	Jeff Hostetler 49
A Record Review	Ali Mahjour and Michael Piasecki 51
Sustainable Agriculture	Stephen Danyo 52
"SHUT UP!"	Michael Piasecki 56
House of Politics	Joe Stallings and Tom Kemp 57
Must Reads: a slew of reviews	arranged by S.J. Danyo 59
Armageddon	Jay Wynn 63



# Guide to *Dis orientation*

<b>Refreshingly Wierd</b> by Thomas Peake	6
<b>You arte what you Watch</b> by Dr. R. Neupert	7
<b>Student Goverment</b> by Tom Kemp and Susan Sutherland	9
<b>Food Reviews</b> by A L Raiteri	10
<b>Only in My Dreams</b> by Jerry Liu	12
<b>Local Bookstores</b> by R. Abdelal and Traci Battle	14
<b>Logicic!</b> by Doug Bennet	16
<b>Local Recordstores</b> by M. Piasecki	18
<b>You go to Tech??</b> by RL Hobson	20
<b>Assets</b> by Michael Piasecki	22
<b>The Neighbourhood</b> by T. Peake	23
<b>The Way Things Are...</b> by David Miertschin	25
<b>Historic Observations</b> by Dr. David Ray	28

Welcome to this, the second (dis)orientation issue of the North Avenue Review magazine. Why disorientation? Doesn't FASET cover all the bases? Well yes and no. Much valuable information that is initially unavailable to the incoming student may be gained by talking with upperclassmen, graduates, professors, and so on. The last guide was so well recieved we're doing it again. Hopefully this one-while certainly not comprehensive-will offer a point from which to begin exploring the breadth of intellectual and cultural oppurtunities on campus and in Atlanta.

In the wee hours of the morning, 3 or 4 am, earlier this year, I was merrily DJ'ing in our Overnight Alternatives format on 91.1 fm, the Georgia Tech student station, WREK.

Sandwiched between Atmospherics and the Classics, from 1:30 am until 7 am, the late night format is a diverse mix of all shapes, sizes, flavors, and colors of music. I decided to play, as an experiment in comparative music appreciation, two very distinct versions of the same song.

## REFRESHINGLY WEIRD

by Thomas Peake

An avant garde cellist from New York City and a Dutch punk rock group, both with discographies pre-dating Reagan's presidency, collaborated on a 1991 release. The result was a unique and exhilarating fusion. One of the songs on this album was a version of a Hungarian folk tune also recently issued by a group of classically trained musicians from Budapest. The translation of "Hidegen Fújniak A Szelek" is "Cold Winds Are Blowing"; it is a grim tune about the lack of freedom. In this sense, it might be called an East European blues tune, leaving its audience with that low down, my-baby-done-left-me kind of blues mourning. The two groups' treatment of the song represents the old/new, the rural/urban, the acoustic/electric, and the organic/industrial schisms between tradition and modernity. At the same time, they convey similar feelings of despair.

This amazing on-air concoction inspired every DJ's dream, a listener comment! A young man's voice, presumably a Tech student, sounded confused. "That was weird," he offered.

The word "weird" has become the most meaningless adjective in the American English vocabulary. Rather than search for a truly representative modifier (or perhaps rather than figure out what they really want to say), many folks opt instead for "weird". I figure the least I can do is inquire further - demand a real adjective - to do my part in the fight against mental atrophy.

I began my investigative effort. "Do you mean 'unsettlingly' weird, or 'refreshingly' weird?" After all, we already know that rock versions of Hungarian folk songs are not exactly a dime-a-dozen. Our listener did

not seem troubled by what he heard, only bewildered. And that is good.

His curious response to such a distinct stimulus was, I honestly believe, healthy. It is what WREK is all about. A local 'easy listening' station once had a motto, "We Play Favorites"; perhaps WREK could use "We Create Favorites"? Whether it reaches back to a pure and uncorrupted folk tradition, presents a new and unique hybrid between supposedly unrelated genres, or is just plain fun, WREK seeks to broadcast what we have not heard before (although we do play oldies, they tend to be the more obscure ones). The effect of this approach is intriguing.

If DJ's are discovering new music (new to them) at the same time it is being aired, then they are put in the same position as the listener. There is a connection between the WREK staffer and the WREK listener that you do not often find elsewhere. Our DJ's do not have our rotation memorized - the possibilities are endless. DJ's stumble across wonderful new performers in the course of their airshift, just as hungry listeners hear gems for their first time.

So there's really not much of a distance separating our listener and me. We both reacted strongly to the same performances. WREK is where we both first heard the Dutch punk rock, the Hungarian folk, and the New York cellist.

WREK does have a programming philosophy, and it coincides nicely with the mission of both Georgia Tech and non-commercial radio. Education, of all involved, is actually taking place. We are not talking 'hip alternatives' here - they are just as fleeting and formulaic as the 'mainstream'. We seek authentic and/or innovative artists.

There is a method to our so-called 'weirdness'. Of course, it's not weird to those involved at all - in fact, it is 'natural', or 'invigorating', or 'shocking', or 'mind-boggling', or 'amorphous', or 'soothing', or 'rockin'', or

QUALITY  
DIVERSE  
91.1  
RADIO

# You Are What You Watch:

## Seeing Movies in Atlanta

by Dr. Richard Neupert

The *average* movie in 1992 will cost \$28 million to shoot and another \$15 million to advertise. The *average* movie is aimed at a wide spectrum of the population, known as the *average film-goer* (17-30 yrs old). In order to guarantee a profit after such a huge investment, the *average* film has to take in *five times* more at the box office than it costs to make (to pay off exhibitors, distributors, buy those ads, etc.). Thus, the mainstream cinema works very hard to come up with films, much like TV shows, that will interest a specific segment of the mass audience. Therefore it is easy to be *average*, just go to all the movies with full-page ads in the paper, or if you really want to be *average*, check the papers on Monday to see which movie made the most money during the past weekend, and then go see *it* at a theatre near you. In this way, going to the movies becomes safe, predictable, and as *average* an experience as eating all you meals at McDonalds and you never have to worry about your own aesthetic taste. It is perfectly *average*.

Strangely enough, going to college should involve new experiences and influences, and, corny as it sounds, it should develop a more personal, mature, and rewarding taste in the arts (film, music, dance, novel, cartoons, etc.) Many of us begin the whole process much earlier of course; for instance, I typically could be found sitting on rusty folding chairs in the basement of an art center on Saturday nights during high school where I saw experimental movies while my contemporaries were watching **Smokey and the Bandit** at drive-ins. Anyway, college *should* encourage a period of experimentation, and enhance a curiosity about the margins of "mainstream" art, to build up a more rewarding and distinctive **personal taste** or **aesthetic**. I assume that is why the fine folks here at the **North Avenue Review** asked me to suggest where to see movies in the area. Well, any fool can look in the papers

and see where the movies are playing, but I recommend something a bit different that seems to defy the carefully crafted laws of marketing followed by the *average* producers.

**THE NEXT TIME YOU PICK UP** the weekend newspaper to choose a movie, ignore the full-page ads for Stephen King or Steven Spielberg-type pictures and hunt out the tiny little advertisements in the corners. These will be for theatres that do *not* show the *average* genre pictures. Rather, these tiny ads (at least the ones that do not say "XXX") signal a different type of film and a different kind of theatre. These houses, listed below, are close equivalents to the nearly dead tradition known as the "art house." Foreign films, cult films, rereleased films (from **Casablanca** to **Wages of Fear**), and unusual films are there, but in order to see them, you often have to search them out like you would a favorite alternative music group. Fortunately, **Creative Loafing** will often provide information on films of interest that have found their way their way to Atlanta, so you should let them help you in your search. The following theatres provide good to places to check in the vicinity:

**Garden Hills Cinema, The Screening Room, Tara,** and the **Plaza** in Virginia-Highlands.

There are also other outlets such as Georgia State University's **Cinefest**, the Atlanta High Museum's films series, Image Film and Video Co-operative, and even special free film series and events at Emory University. Here at Georgia Tech there are, of course, film classes taught through the Literature, Communication & Culture Department (aka English).

**BUT DO NOT SIMPLY STOP THERE.** Most of us see more motion pictures on videotape (a poor but

accessible substitute to 35mm film images and sounds). Thus, next time you visit a video store (and I recommend checking out stores near campuses or in midtown—such as Movies Worth Seeing—since they have the most diverse and interesting collections), you should continue your search for the unusual. One of my favorite rules of thumb at the video store is that if it is checked out it probably isn't worth seeing anyway. Look for the rare titles rather than asking "Gee, when do you expect one of those 42 copies of *Hook* to be returned?" Scan foreign films, cult films, classic films... because video stores, like the small theatres, should be placed places to experiment—they are filmic versions

**"One of my favorite rules of thumb at the video store is that if it's checked out it probably isn't worth seeing anyway..."**

#### **Garden Hills Cinema (Leont):**

2835 Peachtree St.

Phone: 266-2202

#### **The Screening Room (Leont):**

Broadview Plaza, 2581 Piedmont Rd

Phone: 231-1924

or have characters that appear on collectible cups at McDonalds, some of them should stimulate you enough to drag a friend along the next time to share the unusual experience of seeing a film that is *not* for everyone, but just for you.

#### **Tara (Hoyts):**

2345 Cheshire Bridge Rd. NE

Phone: 634-6288

#### **Plaza Theatre (Leont):**

1049 Ponce de Leon

Phone: 876-8048

#### **Cinefest (GSU):**

66 Courtland St., 2nd Floor

Phone: 651-3565

#### **High Museum of Art:**

1280 Peachtree St. NE

Phone: 898-9535

#### **Image Film and Video:**

75 Bennet St NW

Phone: 352-4225

#### **Emory University:**

1380 S Oxford Rd NE

Main Information Number: 727-6123

of college radio, just as the "new music gourmet" might buy the new CD by Sugar, like it, and then look for previous albums by its leader Bob Mould (and then research back to listen to his earlier band Husker Du). the serious film buff develops a "search and enjoy" mentality hunting down other films by the same director or even other films "quoted" in the contemporary one: If you saw Nicholas Cage praise his snakeskin jacket *Wild at Heart*, you can now rent *The Fugitive Kind* (1959) to hear Brando recite the same exact lines. You may not like everything you see, but you will turn movie-going back into an exciting pursuit of the perfect film experience and will avoid feeling like you have been duped or bought and paid for by a major marketing campaign. Furthermore, even though these less average films may not have action figures for sale

**Dr. Neupert is a professor of film studies in the LCC department at Georgia Tech. This fall he will be teaching *The Narrative Art of Film* English 3131**



# “ ‘SGA?’ ”

Is that a Veneral disease, or  
Something?”

by Tom Kemp

**“The Government?!”** Why would I want to get involved with ‘The Government?’ Everyone in Office is either a crook, liar, or drunkard! ...Right? I mean, those folks in Office don’t actually do anything useful, do they? Besides; even if they did do anything meaningful, all that ‘Government’ stuff is so boring!”

Well, maybe some of the functions of government are boring (the occasional long meeting, some of the extra paperwork), but as a general rule, what “The Government” does for our campus is not only interesting, but it’s pretty important for the students of Georgia Tech.

Now, you may be asking yourself, **“of what ‘Government’ do you speak,** oh wise and shrewd author?” Why, the Georgia Tech Student Government, of course!

**“Student Government? What’s that? Is it like a University Congress, or something?”** In a way; it’s a representative body of students, elected by the students, for the students, of the students (does that sound familiar, or what?!). Student Government (a.k.a. SGA), just like Congress, has two elected Houses: the Undergraduate Student Council and the Graduate Student Senate. These two Houses, along with a separate Committee Structure, complete the Georgia Tech Student Government.

**“Oh, and what does this Student Government actually do?”** If you mean besides taking itself a little too seriously on occasion, quite a bit. Student Government is responsible for representing student concerns to the Georgia Tech Administration, to the Georgia Board of Regents (the body responsible for passing state-wide laws which affect college students), and the State of Georgia (i.e., the General Assembly, the Governor’s Office, etc.). SGA is also responsible for allocated over \$1.6 million annually. This money is your Student Activity Fees, which you pay every quarter when you pay tuition. Student Activity Fees let Student Government help fund SAC (the Student Athletic Complex), the Student Center, the Georgia Tech Theatre for the Arts, and over 40 student organizations on campus.

**“How can I get involved with Student Government?”** Well, the most obvious way to get involved is to be elected to office. SGA holds graduate and undergraduate elections every Winter Quarter. Class Representatives, Major (School) Representatives, and the Graduate and Undergraduate Vice-Presidents and Presidents are all voted upon during Winter. Elected from within the two Houses are the Assemblies’ Secretaries and Treasurers, as well as Members-at-Large.

If you decide not to run for an office, or even if you do, you may still be a part of SGA’s Committee Structure.

Both Graduates and Undergraduates have representation on varying committees, with committees ranging in interest from Campus Services to Governmental Affairs to the Joint Finance Committee.

So, if you’re interested in Student Government, just stop by the SGA Office, room 131 in the Student Services building (across from the Student Center), or phone at 894-2814. At SGA, we’ll keep a light on for ya.”

## What the Student Government Association Can Offer You

The following information was submitted by Susan Sutherland, SGA President:

**The Course Critique** - A collection of professors’ grade distributions and a paragraph describing his/her class, teaching style, types of exam, etc.. The survival guide before you register for classes! Stop by the office to purchase one.

**Legal Advice** - A lawyer comes to the SGA office and offers free legal advice on Monday and Wednesday afternoon. Call for an appointment.

**Student Discount Card** - Early fall quarter there will be a distribution of the ‘University Savings Card’ providing Tech students with discounts to many businesses in Atlanta. Look out for it in your PO Box!

**Committee Membership** - Get involved! There are twelve committees dealing with most campus activities such as football block seating, improvements to campus services, and the chartering of campus organizations. Committee membership is open to all students, year-round. All you have to do is fill out a committee interest form (they were in FASET packs) and your name will automatically be added to the membership list.

**Elections** - One of the biggest activities of SGA is the allocation of Student Activity Fees. Class and major representatives are elected every winter quarter and have the casting votes on the allocation process and are also asked to represent students concerning major issues on campus. Stop by the office the beginning of Winter Quarter and receive an application to run for a position.

For more information - SGA office is located in room 131 of the Student Services Building. Phone # 894-2814

# Thoughts for Food

a survey of local eateries and  
dining institutes by Ashley L. Raiteri

I HAD JUST ARRIVED AT THE INSTITUTE and my wealthy father gave me two hundred and fifty dollars to deposit into a Tech Express card. It's an electronic account by which I could supposedly meet all my eating needs on campus. The card is supposed to last you one quarter. When I finally zeroed my card out, it was November of my sophomore year and I bought lunch for everybody I could find who was sitting in the atrium section of the ARA dining hall. It was somewhere around \$45.00. Certainly I am not trying to imply that you can survive on ARA food for that long with only \$250. I don't think you can survive on ARA food that long. Although I hate ARA, (I think they are an evil empire) I will not go into all the gory details. When I did eat at ARA it was usually for free because I got pretty skilled at theft. I justified my actions using the argument that it was my money via Georgia Tech that paid for the whole thing to begin with. There's this legend of a contract that ARA has with Tech that says no other food service can operate anywhere on campus. It is supposed to contain a no-compete clause but no one knows what it contains because Roger Wherley (now being groomed as the Dean of Student Services) will never show it to anyone. However these days I am less willing to risk imprisonment for ideals or free food. I pay for what I eat when I eat there but in general I take the advice I am giving you, go someplace else. What follows is by no means a comprehensive listing of alternatives to ARA in Atlanta. It is simply the ones with which I am most familiar. My subjective reference frame by which I evaluate an eatery is rather socialist or "family-value" oriented. I believe in supporting local businesses as opposed to national corporate chain stores. I am opposed to eating at fast food restaurants for environmental, socio-economic and health reasons. I believe in eateries that treat you as an individual being served by individuals. We are all living in Atlanta, and it would be nice if we were all a part of the Atlanta community, instead of economic parasites on the indigenous peoples. You are more than welcome to travel past Buckhead and eat at your favorites like Chili's, Western Sizzling, or AppleBee's but I don't know how to get there. I've also been told that all the malls have excellent "food" courts.

The listings are classified into three categories: [1] cheap as shit (under four dollars for a filling healthy meal.) [2] less cheap (between three to eight dollars for a decent meal.) and (3) not cheap (not cheap). I mostly reviewed those in category one, because that's where I eat. That's where the local counter-culture eats (I think because counter-culture is almost by definition poor as category one is cheap.) That's where I feel at home. But none of these places is a substitute for home. If you live in a dorm, you're outta luck. Still, one day you will have a home; and nothing beats cooking at home. It's usually the best tasting, the most satisfying and always the least expensive.

## Cheap as Shit:

**Tortillas:** atmosphere: The camelot of Atlanta's counter-culture, although lately they've made a lot of changes and cater more towards the economically overdeveloped. Decent local art and always excellent music. Ask for John Robinson or Johnno and tell them they're cult icons. John is the guy in the Creative Loafing ad with six fingers. food: San-Franciscan style burritos and quesidillas. Start with a Bean and Cheese and work your way up to a Shrimp Super-Burrito with potatoes. Plus the chips and salsa are a meal in and of themselves. Ask for more chips it's all you can eat but they don't tell you that. Best Guac in the city. pricing: cheapest, plus look for coupons in the back of the Tech directories

**located:** 774 Ponce De Leon, closed on Sundays

**Frijoleros:** atmosphere: genuine blue-collar version of Tortillas. Working man's burritos. It's less trendy and more realistically an urban hispanic eatery. You won't catch a yuppie in there. They have live music on Wednesday nights. food: quesidillas to kill for, don't get the green sauce unless you can handle it. If you eat here first you probably won't like any other burritos elsewhere. It's an example of how your environment can control your taste price: oddly enough it's more expensive than Torts, by a hair.

**located:** 1031 Peachtree St. NE (it's walkable from campus, at 10th St.)

**Fellinis:** atmos: tattoos, freaks, bikers and one booth over accountants. The Little Five's location is a center for local music types and the decorations are part of the Atlanta

counter-culture heritage. It's a nice place to go and drink a beer with dinner. food : pizza, get the sicilian or the salad is a meal too. price : about \$1 a slice

**located:** 422 Seminole Ave. (that's the little five's location. Call 525-2530 for less desirable stores called Fellini's throughout Atlanta.)

**\$3.50 Pizza and Pasta:** atmos : bare minimalist warehouse. plus they'll turn down the Brian Adams if you ask them. food : tasty, two notches above adequate. price : the name says it all. if you're going to the Farmer's Market don't pass it up. This place is proof you can make a profit and stay in business.

**located:** on East Ponce up from the market

**La Fonda Latina:** atmos : a genuine Latin-American eatery. They have Tito Puente's *Mambo King* playing over the PA and many of the staff are Cubans who speak in English only if they like you. food : blue corn chips and tomato based salsa. great Cuban sandwiches for you meat eaters and cheese quesidillas for you vegans. Plus cafe busteillo. price : midly inexpensive, the chips are a buck .75

**located:** in little five points

**Juniors:** atmos : as you walk in the door Tommy and his family will greet you shooting the shit, always respectful and addressing you as sir or ma'am. They know you and treat you like a human being. It's a traditional cafeteria. As a freshperson it's a way to get acquainted with Tech traditions and it's probably the one place on campus you can get respect without taking it. food : southern diverse food. you get what you pay for. price : they go out of their way to make it cheap, all kinds of specials and coupons and for under \$4 it's enough to make you sick with indigestion.

**located:** across from Smith Dorm on North Avenue

### Less Cheap:

**Mick's:** atmos : cheesy-gentrified diner. it's a psuedo-retro fifties style but it feels real sanitized. Plus all the white tile feels neat to and they do play Album 88 style music. Classic Masculinity pervades. Remember this is Atlanta, so if you're homophobic check it out, like The Stein Club it's still straight after all these years. I worked there so trust me. food : cheese fries. incredible malts, burgers, salads, etc. vegetarians can eat here too. price : they take credit cards. \$3-8\$

**located:** lot's of places, check the phone book

**Bridgetown Grill:** atmos : American Jamacian. Reggae music and African colors. food : best Jerk ( the only Jerk) around and if you get the fun vegetables on your beans it's a totally new taste experience. Filling loaves of pineapple bread and drinkable coffee. price : if you get more than beans & rice or chili: \$3-7\$.

**located:** in little five points or on peachtree across from the Fox

**Einsteins:** 1077 Juniper St. NE

**Cafe Diem:** Highland Ave. between North and Ponce, next to Condom Art

**R. Thomas Deluxe Grill:** 1812 Peachtree Rd. NE

**Huey's:** next to Scheffeifer's

**Scheffeifer's:** next to R Thomas.

These are all essentially indistinguishable. They all have patios and all serve food for both vegetarians and carnivores, except Scheffeifer's they serve Gyro's. All of them have drinkable coffee with free refills. Huey's has beignets, and that's about all they have that's like New Orleans despite their claims. The atmosphere is usually contrive but R Thomas and Cafe Diem stay open late.

### Not Cheap

**The Abbey:** I've eaten here twice. I'm a vegetarian so I could only eat salads and soups but that was good. The atmosphere is pretty extravagant and nifty.

I've heard these places were nice:

**Dailey's, The Pleasant Peasant, Coach and Six, and The Sundial.**



My apologies to ARA. It's them that I disagree with them so much. It is the fact that we have a profit company serving students on campus for dining services. A "campus" should have a food cooperative like at Harvard. Anyhows, there are plenty of other great places to eat. I know of a lot more but i'm overworked and underpaid. So go out there, check them out.

# Only In My Dreams

an editorial by Jerry Liu

BACK WHEN I WAS A FRESHPERSON, ONE OF THE FIRST TERMS I WAS INTRODUCED TO WAS TBS. This stands for Tech Bitch Syndrome (not Turner Broadcasting System). This term was coined by some guy named John from a long time ago, even before my time. Is it a myth or something too real? Let's examine the concept first. Supposedly, this symptom evolves in females when they come here and decide they are God's gift to this green earth (they are). This attitude comes from a situation where the women here can be more selective about whom they want to pair up with because they are in the vast minority. We can explain this process (Natural Selection) in terms of Chemistry 1101. The free atom representing the female population, we'll say Na (sodi-yum), is attracted to the more electronegative atom in the halogen column. In the halogen column, we have, oh, lets say, Chlorine, Fluorine, Bromine. Now, if we put one mole of each into a sealed flask, the Na will want to combine with the most electronegative types of atoms (Fluorine). That leaves two moles of atoms (Cl, and Br) with nothing left to bond with. Simply speaking, Tech is the flask, and if you're not a Fluoride Ion, according to TBS, you're screwed. This is a concept you will see in Chem 1. It's called "limiting re-agent".

A couple of years later, I was talking to a friend who said to me, "Hey guy, you will never ever get a date here, I haven't, and neither will you."

And I said to him (name withheld by request), "That's a pretty negative attitude. I haven't had a date here since... wait, I don't think I've ever had one. But oh well, as this great institute of higher learning as my witness, I swear by the River Styx that I will eventually get a date here."

He said to me "Yeah, only in your dreams."

NoT!. Not even in my dreams. This is the fun part... I usually don't remember dreams too well, but this one has stuck to my mind, sending me a deep psychological

message.

I went to sleep one night, thinking about how my friend said I would only be able to find a date in my dreams. Like a bad meal, nightmares have a way of repeating themselves. After a few minutes of listening to weird, messed up music in my bed to induce alpha brain wave activity, I hit dreamland.

I came upon the gate of an old playground. I opened it, and to my surprise, a tall (taller than me), slender, beautiful brunette was standing there with a basketball. Physically, she was my dream lady. Well, in this case she is my dream lady.

The lady asks me "Hey, wanna play a game?"

Now, at this point a whole bunch of other people showed up. I didn't even pay attention to them, so I can't remember nor can I describe them. I just remember them laughing at me in the end.

So all of us started to play. Naturally, I couldn't run too well because the pontine cells in my brain inhibited my movement while I was asleep. I remember my dream woman coming at me. I got in her way and tried to block her shot, but she leveled me, and I fell down down down in one of those strange "I'm falling" things when you dream. And as I hit the imaginary pavement, I saw her stuff the ball into the basket. I really heard it from those imaginary people, laughing at me like they would cough up an ARA meal or something.

When all was said and done, I believe I lost this game by a slim margin. It was then that something wierd happened. I decided I wanted to get to know this model of physical perfection of a woman better personally. She seemed nice, but I wanted to find out more about her over a hot meal or something.

I walked over to her and said "Hey, I really enjoyed getting beaten by you, blah blah blah..." and eventually I asked if she would like to dine with me.

I got a flat "No" for an answer. Just a plain "No."

And I said "Ok...."

And then, she laughed, and they all laughed.

And I laughed too. I was laughing at them laughing at me, and it made me feel better. Just then, the world started to unfold on me, and the park began to look more and more like Peters Park at East Campus. I was surrounded by buildings, noticeably the one with the Big

"ECH on it. It was just then that I warped out of this dream and realized how pitiful my life had become.

I was not able to get a date. Not even in my own dream. Absolutely pitiful. For the next few months, I had similar dreams, all ending with the flat "No".

**SO I STARTED THINKING (HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT I DID).** I thought to myself, Maybe it's not really TBS that is affecting my romance life, it's me. I knew I didn't have an inferiority complex, because I always feel like I'm in a dandy mood. Must be something else. I thought about a psychological term that could fit what I experienced in dreamland. The term self-fulfilling prophesy (Merton, 1948) came to mind. Consequentially, I interpreted my actions and defeat as being influenced by the prejudiced views drilled into me by the term TBS. What I had been taught to believe had changed the way I acted, and now the dream proved that it changed the way I thought.

I also appeared to be suffering from a condition I call "self-defeating prophesy", where I always wind up defeating myself whether I really had a chance or not. How else could I explain being rejected over and over again by women in my dreams, figments of my warped imagination? All of the sudden, it appeared to me that something was wrong with me, rather than with the women of Tech. What was then clear had now become vague. Had my deep psychological fear of TBS caused me to fail?

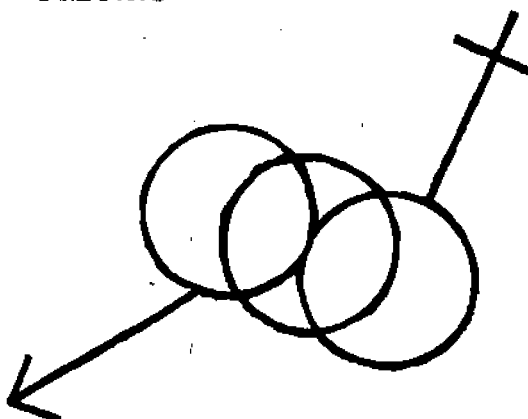
I also knew my condition showed attributes of a psychological concept known as learned helplessness (Maier and Seligman, 1976), whereby the individual cannot achieve a goal no matter how hard he or she tries. The individual finally gives up even when presented with the opportunity to succeed.

In the end, I decided the correct diagnosis for me is "learned hopelessness (Price, 1992)". I never stopped trying. I just gave up all hope. My learned hopelessness was a result of self-fulfilling prophesy. Cool huh?

So who's fault is it that I can't get a date? Did I ever date in high school. "Noooo..." So what makes me think that I can get a date now? Nothing really. And are the women at Tech to blame for my problems? "Nooo... not really." So I wonder to myself about how the guys here always bitch and moan about getting screwed over

by the ratio. If you can't get a date, you can't get a date. If you can't get a girlfriend, you can't get a girlfriend. It's not fair to attribute your problems to the attitude of the female population at tech. From my experience, I've had no problems with the women here. The vast majority of the women here have been rather nice to me. Yeah, maybe a few throw me the cold shoulder. But what good is this TBS generalization ("all women who go to Tech have an attitude problem) if it doesn't apply to the vast majority of the women here at tech? Hell, I've seen some mega-geeks here who women probably wouldn't want to touch with a ten foot pole and an airtight suit on. Heck, they could go anywhere and still not have a life, and to listen to them blame their social failures on the ratio here at tech is just plain bad. Blame it on the homework and the shaft tests, but don't blame it on the women. Maybe it's just time to take a look in the mirror and say "what the hell, the problem might just be me." Then again, there are some guys at tech that do date (Hell if I polled anyone). But hey, life is more challenging if you don't believe in false reasons for your own defeat. I dunno. All I'm saying is, it is time to give the women here a break, and to treat them as you would anyone else. It is hard enough for them to be playing by rules made by men. And if you can't ever get a girlfriend or a date here, don't give up, but cheer up. At least you are decreasing your risk factor of carrying HIV. Lastly, maybe you can give yourself a break by not "hitting on" anything that moves. I'm not a psych or chem major by the way. Just a peion engineer wanna-be that big business wants to take advantage of. But that's economics, and we can talk economics some other day.

**Jerry Liu is a hopeless electrical engineering major.  
Box31419b**



## Of Books

by Robby Abdellal  
and Traci Battle

## and

## Bookstores

An examination of local  
Atlanta READeries

The core of a real university education is the pursuit of knowledge. The best ways to pursue knowledge are to ask people who know and to find out for yourself. The beauty of a university is that you are surrounded by people who are also pursuing knowledge.

Unfortunately, Georgia Tech will not give you a real university experience unless you demand or forcefully extract one. Therefore, be aggressive. Talk to professors and students about everything, and sometimes do it over a pitcher of beer at Pero's. Don't waste your time. Most important, however, is to read. Read on every subject you can imagine. Don't limit yourself to your major (especially if you are an engineer), and ask people whom you respect to recommend their favorite books to you. In order to read you must have books. Borrow your friends' books, the library's books, professors' books, and my books. Try and collect books of your own, too. Here are a few stores in Atlanta that we have visited and can offer an opinion about the quality of selection, price, and atmosphere. Because this list is not exhaustive and we are not experts (just pursuers like yourself) don't take our word for it — go decide for yourself.

**A Capella** (1133 Euclid Ave. 681-5128, 15 minutes)

This small, used bookstore in Little Five Points is excellent for browsing and, for such a small store, has surprisingly good sections on such topics as student activist, women's, and African-American issues that many mainstream bookstores ignore. Moderate prices and a good book finder service make it an excellent choice. Also, its proximity to Tete a Tete cafe and Fellini's make for a well-rounded visit to Little Five Points.

**Atlanta Book Exchange** (1000 N. Highland Ave 872-2665, 10 minutes)

The disorder is charming and frustrating. The Atlanta

Book Exchange has shelves of books in seemingly random order, other than broad categories of literary criticism, psychology, or feminist issues. The social science collections are amply stocked and the employees can amazingly tell you whether they have the book you need in those stacks, on the floor, or behind the shelf in the corner. There is not really room to sit (or stand for that matter) so have a list of books that you are looking for handy if you are claustrophobic. Otherwise, wander around for while.

**A Book Nook** (3342 Clairmont Rd. 633-1328, 20 minutes)

Although the drive to The Book Nook from Georgia Tech is a little long, the fun of browsing through their numerous stacks of used books is often worth it. Their fair trade and book buying policy makes it possible to walk in with some books you have read and walk out with several you haven't, without spending any money. Not as convenient as some other used stores in Atlanta. The Book Nook is good for occasional trips of selling back old books and stocking up on new ones.

**Book Warehouse** (3157 Peachtree Rd 237-1038, 10 minutes)

Formerly "Three Dollar Book Sale", Book Warehouse has a different name and has moved next door to a smaller location. Book Warehouse has uneven collections of books in different topics and is not strong in any particular area. However, careful perusal of the stacks can yield surprisingly good deals on new paperback and hardcover books. Another good reason to make a trip here is that all the profits are given for cancer research at Emory University Hospital. If you are going to spend some money on a few books check this place out and maybe you can contribute to a worthwhile cause rather than a capitalist's coffers.

**Borders Book Shop** (3655 Roswell Rd., at Piedmont 237-0707, 15 minutes)

Probably the best bookstore in Atlanta, Borders has extensive holdings in most areas of serious scholarship as well as classics, literature, contemporary work, and various light subjects. How can you go wrong at a bookstore with a radical thought section? A large discount on best sellers and most hardcovers and generally low prices are attractive to college students. Perhaps the biggest advantage of shopping at Borders is the ease with which a thoughtful, bookish staff can order almost any book in print. The wide range of periodicals is also a big plus. However, Borders deals only in new books and lacks a coffee shop atmosphere.

**C. Dickens** (Lenox Square Mall, 2nd floor, 20 minutes)

C. Dickens is a store meant for buying old and rare books, but it is not fit for the college budget. If you enjoy finding old copies of books you read as a child or unique library collections, you would enjoy C. Dickens. If you are bored at Lenox while your friend is shopping at Macy's, go downstairs to look around. If you are trapped in Lenox and are not bored, don't waste your time here — if you are not serious about finding or buying a book there, the staff often makes browsers unwelcome.

**Charis Books & More** (419 Moreland Ave. 524-0304, 10 minutes)

One of the very few and probably the best feminist bookstores in Atlanta, Charis has extensive collections of new books by, for, and about women. Of particular interest is their feminist thought section which has several of the lesser known works by Alice Walker and even Virginia Woolf. An interesting section about homosexuality and gay rights demonstrates Charis' willingness and intent to sell books most stores will not stock. Charis is generally not for casual book shopping, but everyone (including men) should visit the store at least once.



**Old New York Book Shop** (1069 Juniper Street 881-1285, 5 minutes)

Rather than a book store, Old New York is a book dealer. Old New York has exhaustive collections of used, scholarly, and rare books, including first editions. Their specialty is hardcovers (one room

contains all their paperbacks), and there is free coffee for those of you planning to stay a while. This is a wonderful place to browse and indulge yourself with an interesting find in the leather armchair in the basement. The knowledgeable staff is helpful in locating sections and books in a somewhat disorienting maze of rooms in this converted house. The cramped but intimate atmosphere of this book shop so close to school is ideal for the student seeking to superbly waste an afternoon.

**Oxford Bookstores** (3 locations: 2345 Peachtree Rd. 364-2700; 360 Pharr Rd. 262-3333; 1200 West Paces Ferry 364-2488)

These stores sell exclusively new books. The Peachtree Battle and Pharr Road locations have large selections of books, international newspapers and periodicals, and both are pretty good about special orders. Although the West Paces Ferry store has an extensive periodicals section, it lacks the bookish atmosphere and that the other two stores capture and the books themselves which define the worth of a store. Also, the Pharr road store's selection of videos for rent puts most mainstream rental outfits to shame. With a slightly higher prices, a lower quality staff, and a more limited selection the Oxford stores rank lower than Borders. Nevertheless, the very pleasant cafes at each of the stores provide a great place to enjoy a new purchase with coffee or tea. Desserts at the Pharr Road store are always good, and both are excellent places to relax.

**Oxford Too** (right by the Peachtree Battle store)

The used bookstore in the Oxford chain, Oxford Too has a very reasonable selection of used books. Atlanta unfortunately does not have a great used bookstore, but Oxford Too's proximity to campus and reasonable prices and book trading policy make it appropriate for the Georgia Tech student's time schedule and budget. Of particular interest is their policy of allowing the credit for selling your old books to be used at any of the other Oxford stores for new books.

**Renaissance Bookshop** (595 Piedmont Ave. 873-4161, 10 minutes)

The closest contemporary bookstore to Georgia Tech, the Renaissance Bookshop offers the kind of selection one might find at Waldenbooks or B. Dalton; Renaissance Bookshop hardly lives up to its name. Because this bookstore is tucked away in the upper corner of the desolate Rio shopping mall, you will never find it overwhelmingly crowded. For an obvious, mainstream book you need in a hurry, Renaissance is fine because of its proximity to campus. Otherwise, don't waste your time.

**Yesteryear Bookstore** (3201 Maple Dr. 237-0163, 10 minutes)

Yesteryear has one of Atlanta's best selections of rare, first edition, and leather-bound books. An excellent place to shop for a gift for the book lover who seems to have everything. Yesteryear is not a place to stock up on paperbacks for your leisure reading. Nevertheless, interesting collections of autographed books and old-prints and maps make for at least one worthwhile visit.

### **Georgia Tech Bookstores**

Of all three bookstores that serve the Georgia Tech community, the Georgia Tech Book Store generally has all the books you need for your classes. However, prices are generally higher and the staff less courteous and helpful than those at the West Campus Book Store and Engineer's Book Store. The Georgia Tech Book Store is very much a profit-making business and definitely does not exist to provide the students with a low cost source of reading material for classes like some major university bookstores. You won't find any great deals at any of these places but West Campus and Engineer's deal more exclusively in used (therefore less expensive) books than does the one on campus. Spend a

little while at each comparing prices for the books you need. Also, the book trade-in policies of the bookstores do not differ significantly (the Georgia Tech Book Store has improved in recent years).

A few that were recommended which we have not visited:

**First World Bookstore** (780 N Highland Ave 875-2651) African-American

**Hakim's Book Store** (842 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr 221-0740)

African-American history.

**International Bookstore** (3652 Shallowford R. 454-8206) Spanish Literature

**Science Fiction & Mystery Book Shop** (752 N Highland Ave 875 7326)

Self-explanatory.

**Shrine of the Black Madonna Culture Center** (946 Ralph D Abernathy Blvd) African-American culture, literature, thought.

**The Sphinx** (1510 Piedmont Ave. 875-2665)

Metaphysics, music, incense — hippie stuff.

**US Government Book Store**

Editors' Note: The West Campus Bookstore plays WREK over it's PA.

## The Logical Pitfall

*The Institute will bring about the death of your aesthetic*

I was asked to write an anti-orientation article for this esteemed publication, mainly as an antithesis to the wonderfully two dimensional FASET program. As one friend reminded me, the only thing I remember about FASET, which we both went through three years ago, is not to wear your bookbag on both shoulders, or you'll look like a geek. I recently found out from my former FASET leader, who is now in his sixth or so year here, that the reason he liked telling us that was because he was too big to get his bookbag on both shoulders anyway.

Now to get us beyond superficial trivialities, I'd like to relate my earliest experience at Tech. I first saw Tech while half way through my senior year in high

school, when I came for a visit. I picked up a Technique (the student newspaper), and read a letter to the editor from a graduating Electrical Engineer. Basically he hitched up and down about how after his four and a half to five years here, Tech had completely stripped him of all aesthetic and artistic values.

I will now take the torch and pass it on to those of you which it may apply. By now, you either are or soon will be immersed in a very logical and meticulous thought process. Physics and Calculus are the first major introductions, but it goes much further than that. In all the engineering courses, everything is broken down into logical elements of ones and zeros. Everything is black and white with no shades of gray. This is, I believe, the major pitfall of our illustrious institution. Life is much too complex to break it down so simply, yet we are continually taught to think in those terms here at Tech.

This argument may not mean very much at the moment, because as a senior in high school it sure as hell didn't mean anything to me. But, keep the thought floating in the back of your mind. Because, one day,



you may find yourself walking across campus analyzing the path you follow in terms of vectors, or you and a friend may notice that that crack in the sidewalk almost exactly fits the equation "y equals x-squared".

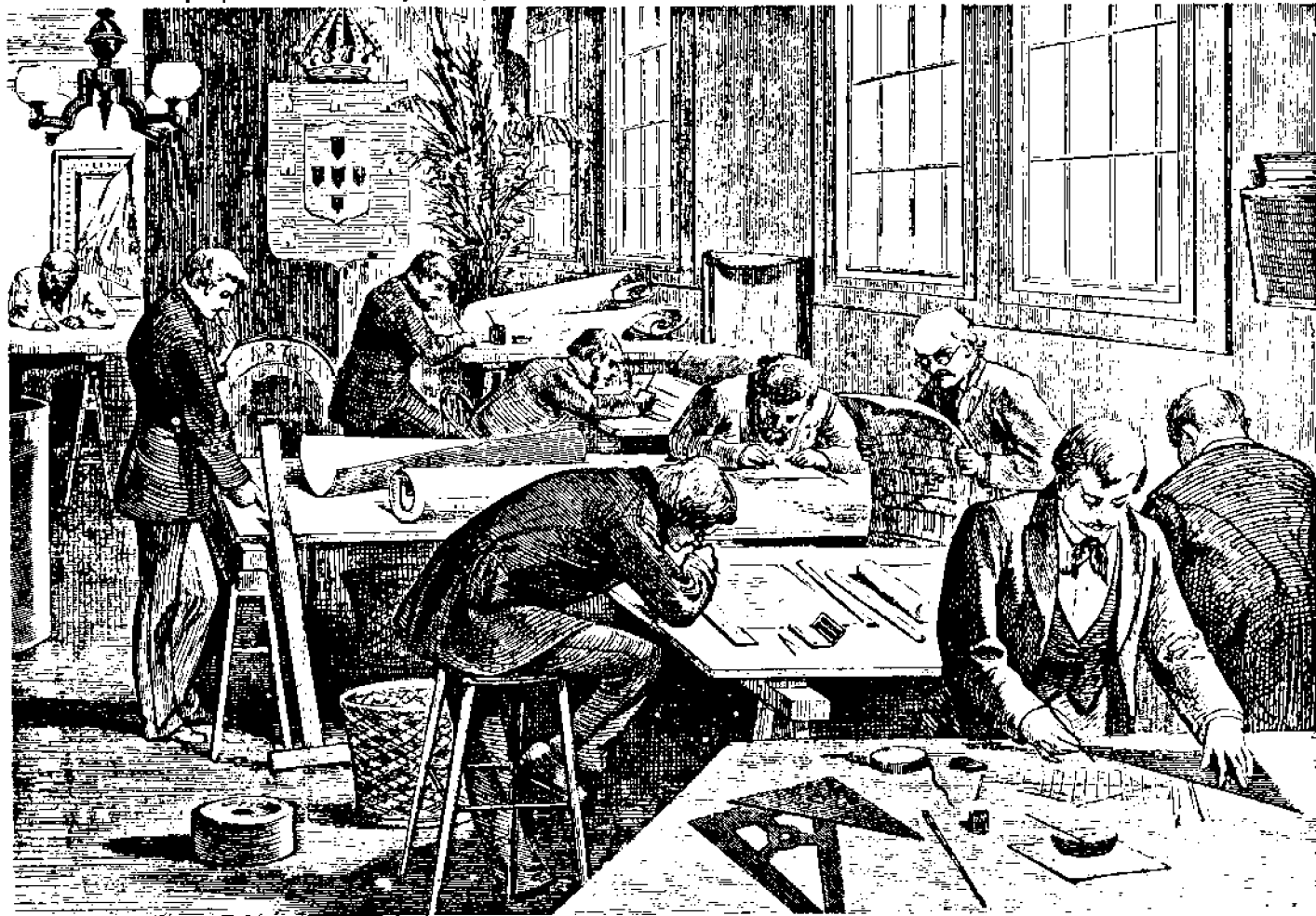
These examples should not only speak of a mental change, they should shout it. These experiences should act as a trumpeter of doom that something malevolent is befalling your person. But, the greater enemy is the subtle yet subversive manifestations of this mind molding. If you were ever inclined to do anything artistic (writing, painting, etc.) and suddenly you don't feel like messing with it anymore, or you just don't have time for it, then that means you are falling in the mold. Because, if you stop, your artistic pursuits, you may never start again, at least while at Tech, and that would be robbing you of some of your most creative years.

So, you may ask (or maybe you won't ask) what can I do to avoid this affliction? Bringing myself out of pure theory, I'll try to attach these ethereal wanderings to physical ground (which, by the way, very few Tech classes achieve). The best medicine for the disease, which most people can't stand, is your English classes.

Yes, I know most of you hate your English classes. But, if you approach these classes with the attitude of gaining something from them, and not just thinking of them as a required class, you might actually get something out of the class other than writers cramp. Also, when you choose an English Prof, ask around first and pick one that isn't always that easy, but pick one that is good, and one that makes you think in non-linear terms. Most of the time, the easiest Prof is also the most boring.

Well, any mental exercise can always use physical exercise to go along with it. The best two areas for this are Drama Tech and the Craft Center. Drama Tech is the theater group on campus and the Craft Center is on the third floor of the Student Center. These are just two examples where you can express yourself artistically. If you look around, I'm sure you'll find other outlets. But, in any case, your mind is a non-linear entity, don't force it into a false state of logical conclusions for every situation. After all, we are not logical animals, so enjoy it while you can.

-Doug Bennet



# Vinyl Solutions: Atlanta's Record Stores

## Where To Buy, Sell, And Trade Music

by Michael Piasecki

**A**S AN AVID MUSIC LISTENER AND CONSUMER, I thoroughly enjoyed writing this piece and encourage people to check out some of the less-known record stores in Atlanta - you may find something you really like. To qualify what I have done, I didn't review all of the mall and chain stores, since they generally carry the same items. There is an emphasis on local stores, since they help to foster many of the up-and-coming artists of Georgia that you will undoubtedly hear about while at Tech. I also didn't use a comparative rating system, since all of the stores mentioned have their own strengths.

### Atlanta CD 4060 Peachtree RD NE 239-0429

With three stores to choose from, this local chain specializes in - you guessed it! - compact discs, no vinyl. Atlanta CD has a decent selection of pop and rock, as well as some small sections of other genres of music, with a decent selection of classical. This store resembles some of the mall record stores, but is locally-owned, and occasionally will have midnight openings for new LPs. The closest of the three to Tech resides at the end of a hefty drive up Peachtree, and is easily accessible by Marta. Atlanta CD has average prices, as well as a good selection of imports and CD5s; this store will order rare items and sometimes carries them when other stores won't.

### Collector's World 5351 Buford Highway 452-7102

This Buford Highway shop certainly lives up to its name - the last time I was in there, I saw quite a few vintage records from some notable groups from the "Classic Rock" era. If you're looking for a Led Zeppelin CD bootleg from '71, a Beatles concert from '67, or a Cure gig from '83, Collector's World may not actually have it in stock but can order it quickly from its vast mail catalogs. The employees are very helpful, but items are generally expensive - that's the price you pay for rare collectibles.

### Criminal Records

Located in Little Five Points, this local record store specializes in compact discs, with some t-shirts, posters and literature. Criminal carries mostly alternative/college rock music, with a good variety of import and domestic LPs and CD5s. The employees are EXTREMELY friendly and helpful, which may explain why this relatively new store has done so well. You'll find a few jewels here, and prices are generally competitive with many of the chain stores. Also, there's usually some very interesting music playing on the store's speakers.

### Fantasyland Records 2839 Peachtree RD NE 237-3193

Though not a dealer of new items, Fantasyland has an excellent selection of used vinyl, as well as CD bootlegs ranging from the 60s to college material. Fantasyland carries t-shirts, posters, rare rock videos, 8-tracks, older music literature, used tapes and CDs, and other memorabilia. There's

even a huge section of vinyl 7"s for you nostalgia buffs. With courteous service and always some rare gems to be found, Fantasyland is a local record shop done good - after all, they had the guts to hang a Smiths poster in the window of their Buckhead shop!

### Full Moon

**Records** (location unknown at time of print)

A tiny little 5 & dime vinyl shop, Blue Moon is a quaint record store near Little Five Points that always has something you'll like. Carrying mostly vinyl, and a few used tapes and CDs, Blue Moon is a local shop looking for attention so check it out. It's very easy to find items in the store, and the shop P.A. is always playing something really interesting that I dare say you haven't heard before.

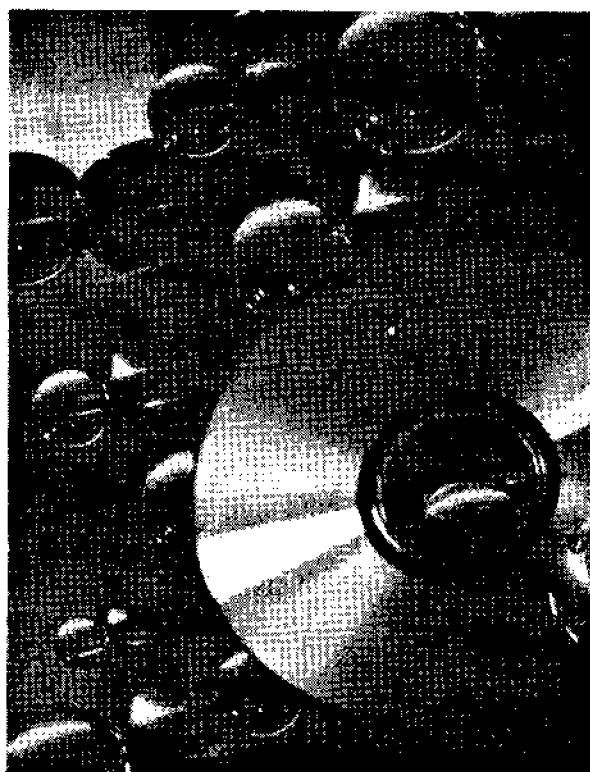
**Tower Records** 3400 Wooddale DR NE 264-1217

The Rolls-Royce of national music chains, Tower epitomizes the MTV client. Resembling a huge, glitzy New York disco, Tower has an enormous variety of music, mostly on compact disc. With great selections of pop, classical, rap, folk, alternative, dance, oldies, and ethnic music, Tower is possibly the best place in town to window shop. Other items of mention are cassettes, CD5s, musical literature and fanzines, videos, a Ticketmaster outlet, a movie rental store, its own free magazine, imports, and the fact that it's open until midnight every night. Employees are

sometimes unfriendly, and prices sometimes unfriendlier, but we all like to browse for things where we know there are a lot of options.

**Wax N Facts** 432 Moreland AVE NE 525-2275

One of the most interesting things you'll notice about Wax N Facts when you walk in is that the



most predominant display area is dominated by vinyl instead of CDs. Wax N Facts is the best place in town to find new and used 12"s and 7"s, but you can get virtually any domestic contemporary CD you'd find at any chain store. Wax carries music videos, literature, posters and t-shirts, bootlegs and import items. Because Wax N Facts is a local operation, very much in the tradition of a mom & pop establishment,

there is a strong trend toward Georgia music, so this is the place to get your favorite local artist's tape. Prices are competitive, and employees are pretty helpful. It's also a good place to buy and sell used music on virtually any medium, making Wax an ideal place for anyone on a budget.

Other helpful hints for finding music in the Atlanta area:

1. Many thrift stores in the metro area still carry both 8-track players and 8-track tapes.
2. Pawn shops sometimes carry used CDs, which are generally competitively priced.
3. Although I listed a variety of Atlanta record stores, if you are an avid music connoisseur, you should go through the phone book and call each store to find out what they think is good about them!

# "You go to Tech?... Really?"

When I first thought about writing an article for this issue of North Avenue Review, I couldn't decide what I wanted to write. There are so many things I would have loved to address, but to me, I think sexual discrimination and male/female relations on the Georgia Tech campus are crucial topics of discussion for both males and females. Maybe this opening statement can be looked upon as somewhat of a "disclaimer" to any offensive comments or preconceptions in the following article, but my only hope is to raise awareness of this problem/issue. I am not a male basher and by no means believe that all men on the Georgia Tech campus are "chauvinist slime." I am also aware that some women use sexual discrimination as a crutch for their own personal betterment. (If I could, I'd slap each one of them silly). There are exceptions to every generalization. However, I do need to generalize to some extent in this article, or how is this issue ever really to be addressed? Hopefully, it will act as a stimulant for both individual and group discussion and maybe lead to ideas as to correction or improvement of existing gender relations on Georgia Tech campus.



THE OTHER DAY I WAS ON A BUS RETURNING FROM A BRAVES GAME with some of my college peers. On either side of me were two Georgia Tech friends of friends who had apparently been drinking. One of them struck up a conversation with me by using the generic opening line, "So, do you go to Georgia Tech?" I responded, yes, only to receive a shocked look with a very questioning, "Really??" I don't know if he expected me to take this as a compliment, but it only acted as proof of his own ignorance. (Welcome to the world of Georgia Tech, ladies).

Male/female relations on this campus leave quite a bit to be desired. The ratio probably doesn't help at all, so yes, tolerance (to some extent) is in order. Be prepared for "pick-up" lines during class, while studying, even waiting for the bus. Has this ever occurred to you guys as

maybe being one of the root causes behind the ever-famous TBS?? — better known as Tech Bitch Syndrome?

I completely understand that many times academics is used as somewhat of an "excuse" to meet people — a completely natural occurrence, especially with the difficult social barriers set up here at Georgia Tech. This is why females also need to be somewhat understanding when it comes to men and the various approaches that they make. Many men at Tech have been brought up with the traditional image of females and are not quite as familiar with females in the mathematical and scientific roles. I can safely say that this is not completely their fault, but both males and females need to take a second look at how they view each other.

After two years at Georgia Tech, I can proudly say that I consider myself a feminist. I could not have said this as an entering freshman, because I'm sure, like many

of you, the word "FEMINISM" (sounds kind of ominous, doesn't it?) carries with it that radical image of (as Alice Walker, author of the *Color Purple*, puts it), "...a 'pawn' in the hands of Gloria Steinheim, an incipient bra burner!" Time for a reality check. The true definition of feminism, as stated by Webster's New World Dictionary, is as follows: "the theory that women should have political, economic, and social rights equal to those of men." I hate to be the one to shatter this concept, but a woman does not need to lose her femininity (what a subjective term) or her sexuality in order to stand up for her rights. Many females on the Georgia Tech campus are considered feminists, because they are not waiting for some man to come sweep her off their feet — instead they are learning all they can, ready to embrace the world. Be proud to say you are a feminist. I am. Many of my male friends even proclaim they are feminists (pretty shocking concept, isn't it? — male feminist?! Wow!). Take these situations where you are discouraged, crushed, or disillusioned due to sexual discrimination and strengthen yourself. The Georgia Tech campus is still very bad about proclaiming equality but sending another message through policies and/or actions.

For example, I'm not sure how many of you attended the half-hour session with Dean Carol Moore to discuss "women's issues" at FASET, but topics such as sexual discrimination and date rape were discussed. This seminar wowed a conscientious effort to inform females of these issues, but why aren't male students required to attend a seminar on date rape/discrimination as well? Are these not social issues as well as gender issues? Shouldn't the Administration be focusing not only on how to cope with the issues/problems, but also on how to prevent them?

This is just a subtle example of how the Georgia Tech Administration views women's issues. As entering Freshman women, you will almost certainly experience much more blatant sexual discrimination. Take for instance the story of a friend of mine who forgot to take her textbook to class one day. The professor, noticing her delinquency, chose to bring this to the attention of the rest of the class. Unfortunately, he did not suggest she be more prepared in the future, but instead stated (oh so eloquently), "It takes more than a pretty face to get through this school." Again, I have to ask myself if this same attitude would have been taken toward a male student? (Suffice to say that this professor did have charges brought against him later by a different female student).

I don't want to alarm any of you as to the occurrence of these incidents on a regular basis. A lot of

you may not even have to deal with sexual discrimination on a large scale. However, it does happen, so be prepared for it.

Now I'm sure many of you are asking a question as to why the students at Georgia Tech should try to do anything to correct this problem, if it seems to be so prevalent? Why should students be motivated to instigate change when the Administration is clearly sending signals that it is up to the women to deal with and overcome these problems? The only answer to this question is that we want these attitudes changed on campus and do not have to be motivated by anyone but ourselves. Sexual discrimination is wrong. No question about it. However, as women and men on Georgia Tech campus, the most beneficial thing we can do right now is take time to learn during our University Experience and use this knowledge as a base for when we enter the "real world." By all means I am not saying that I accept the idea of sexual discrimination as being morally just, but I am a realistic woman in the 1990's and have learned a great deal from my experience here over the past two years. I accept the fact that sexual discrimination exists and always will — just like any other social evil. Some may say that this is a defeatist or pessimistic attitude, but I must defend myself — realism and pessimism are two totally different things! Pessimism breeds apathy whereas realism breeds awareness and stirs hope. At the age of 20, I have not been jaded and my dreams not yet crushed by the "real world" phenomena. I believe each of us still has the power to make a difference somewhere (and each of us should). That is why I have taken these not-so-pleasant experiences and tried to benefit from them as much as possible. The best each of us (male and female) can do at this point is take a look around us and see what we can individually do to correct what may be wrong with the system as it currently exists. As Freshman females, be prepared to experience sexual discrimination and sexism, but all I ask is to please let it strengthen, not discourage, you. Take these next four or five years to prepare yourself for what is yet to come. And as Freshman men, remember that the next time you meet a female on Georgia Tech campus, she is there because she has the equal intelligence, and never ever respond with a questioning, "Really?"

-R L Hobson

# ASSET Treats Freshmen Like Assets

## New Program Aims At Improving Tech's Retention Rate

by Michael Piasecki

In January of this year, Dr. David McGill and the CETL office (Center for Education, Teaching and Learning) began discussing how to raise Georgia Tech's retention rate by tackling the problem at the freshman level. CETL came up with ASSET (Academic Support for Students Entering Tech), a program for freshmen which involves Faculty Friends and Upperclassmen Friends giving students guidance, help and support during their first year at Tech.

Georgia Tech President Pat Crecine's office had looked into how it could improve both the retention rate and graduation rate. Figures researched by CETL showed that 20% of Tech freshmen dropped out during or at the end of their first year and through attrition only 64% graduated after five years. President Crecine would like to see a 21% increase in graduation by 1996, so CETL began to explore how to facilitate such an improvement.

In April of this year, CETL sent 500 memos to Tech faculty and administrators asking them to volunteer to be a Faculty Friend or recommend candidates for a new concept designed to assimilate freshmen into Tech. After receiving an overwhelming number of interested faculty members, CETL notified all of the roughly 250 applicants chosen and set up a training retreat for mid-May.

This ASSET training retreat involved a number of issues that Faculty Friends will deal with during the ASSET program's more active period. Important issues included an overview of the situation at Tech, and the goals of the program. Faculty Friends were told of the structure of the program, and of how to meet with their freshmen. The retreat gave Faculty Friends guidance pertaining to how to relate to freshmen, how to deal with the diversity of the freshmen in their individual groups, how to answer questions and handle concerns, and how to help each student feel at home at Tech and find the keys to survival and exceeding here. Interestingly enough, the Freshman Class President Greg Foster was among the speakers at the retreat.

Faculty Friends were chosen mostly through the recommendations CETL received and also because of a need for a diverse group of leadership for this program.

Faculty Friends come from a wide variety of backgrounds and aren't all just faculty; there are administrators, professors, faculty, staff, and even people from GTRI. The ASSET groups were arranged in much the same way, with no attention to majors of students but more emphasis on creating groups with ethnic and gender variety. This also holds true when matching the Faculty Friends and Upperclassmen Friends, who will also participate in these groups.

Faculty Friends will first meet their freshmen at FASET, whichever FASET the freshmen are participating in. Then, these groups of 6-8 freshmen will meet their Faculty and Upperclassmen Friends once a week for the first six weeks of Fall Quarter to get a feel for Georgia Tech, have questions answered, and to also have a good time. Each ASSET group is budgeted for \$200 to spend for whatever it wants to help make the ASSET experience more of a social atmosphere than an intimidating one. One ASSET leader told me that they may take their group to a movie after a meeting once, and then have the meeting at their home for a barbecue.

After the first six weeks of interaction, freshmen are encouraged to keep in touch with their Faculty Friends if they have any problems and Faculty Friends will also keep in touch to help with any problems that may arise and to let the freshmen know that they are still available to help and encourage. After the end of the first year, an evaluation will be made by CETL to judge the effectiveness of ASSET, and of course retention rate will be looked at. I also hope that the freshmen will be surveyed for their impressions of this new program.

As a freshman two years ago, there was nothing like this available to me or my friends, and I wish there was. There were some problems I experienced as a new student that I had very little knowledge of how to fix, and also so many things I wish I were told that could have helped me to become more involved in campus life at an earlier time. I am very much looking forward to ASSET helping freshmen deal with both academic and non-academic concerns alike which will allow freshmen to become a more active and welcome part of Georgia Tech. I am very interested in the results of ASSET and how CETL views it after one year, and plan to write a follow-up to this story conveying them. I wish CETL and ASSET the best of luck, and I am glad that freshmen, the future of Tech, are being treated like valuable assets.

# ALL ABOUT HOME PARK

Ups & Downs in the 'hood that's "kinda like a mountain...only it's flat."

by Thomas Peake

Home Park is that delightful little neighborhood sandwiched between I-75/85 and Northside Dr on the east-west axis, and Atlantic Steel and Georgia Tech on the north-south line. That includes a host of businesses, apartments, homes, stray animals, rubbish, churches, and clip joints between 10th, 14th, and 16th streets. If you're a dorm-dweller looking for an out, but not wanting to commute at all, you'll want to check into it. Unlike Grant Park, the centerpiece of the community is a modest one acre plot of grass adjacent to a basketball court and a child care center. Nothing spectacular, sure, but look closely my friend...

I write of Home Park, my beloved neighborhood, not as a seasoned resident, but as a two year renter. Every house has a history, and Home Park's histories are probably longer and more intricate than most other Atlanta dwellings. Every year we Tech students play musical homes, swapping our humble abodes in a desperate attempt to trade in last year's landlord (or slumlord, as the case may be) for a better model. Of course, landlords are doing the exact same thing, seeking 'responsible' tenants! Rent is low, and lessors are usually lower. Home Park landlords have little respect for Georgia State Law. They see no problem with including in the lease the right to enter the property and remove everything if rent is late. Forget those pesky eviction procedures, take the law into your own hands! Plumbing problem? The old man who came to look at our toilet said we'd have to learn to live with a leaky toilet - now that's service! Living arrangements in Home Park may get a bit taxing at times, but there are plenty of wonderful people, places, and things to make it into a charming kind of 'urban suburbia'.

## UPS

Home Park is a loopy conglomeration of Tech (and State and ACA) students, steelworkers, retired folk, Islamic fundamentalists, a smattering of young homeowners and other miscellaneous types. Right now, we live next to an Algerian mechanic who used to work on Mig 23's - that certainly qualifies him to fix my Honda. We used to live next door to a very friendly and easygoing skinhead couple, but they had a child and headed for the outer limits of Atlanta. Probably the nicest house in the neighborhood belongs to that elderly couple at the intersection of Calhoun

and Tumlin: they're up early in the a.m. pruning and cultivating a dense, colorful lot of vegetation. As I mentioned earlier, these homes acquire histories. I can trace the flow of residents of the house on the south corner of Ethel and Mecalvin back almost four years. That can put one in the rare situation of having many memories in houses you never 'lived' in. Give me another ten years, and I'd have the pros and cons of every address mapped out in my head.

I've been living on the Lower East Side of Home Park park for a year without a front porch. This is a painful lifestyle even for one who grew up inside The Perimeter. There's not much sense in enjoying Porch Life at a house that sits on an automobile route, or a remote untraveled street. What makes Porch Life great is the sense of community and neighborliness of pedestrian life. Getting to know the folks (and their dogs) as they walk by on a blustery, sunny day while reading a good book in a comfortable chair is my idea of a good time. It's also hard to imagine in a Buford Highway apartment complex. In September I move into a house with a spacious, well-placed front porch. With my Haz-y-Guy recliner, a Double Deuce, and the neighbors, how could I go wrong?

Home Park has some bona fide hot spots at the properly zoned intersections. First, and most important, is the Kool Korner Grocery. Mr. and Mrs.





Ramirez run a little Cuban grocery at 14th and State St. They make big, tasty, and cheap sandwiches. Cuban (Best in Atlanta according to Atlanta Magazine), Roast Beef, Pastrami, 'Kangaroo' (a test for the uninitiated), etcetera ... custom built sandwiches to titillate your taste buds. Mr. Ramirez is a former chemist, apparently, and will gladly give you his impressions of Fidel's Paradise.

Next in sheer (pun intended) uniqueness is the Swing Blades Clip Joint, a.k.a. Jerry's Barber Shop. Jerry's cuts, though not always consistent from head to head (or even hair to hair) are cheap. Five bucks for the basic cut and insight into his daughter's emerging rebelliousness - the Clip Joint seems to be an extension of their home. Enter at your own risk, next door to Kool Korners on 14th.

I will never understand the sentimental attraction for the 'par le Bri Wa'. Or so one of the signs reads, actually it's the Sparkle Bright Wash 24 hour laundromat. This is the 24 hour laundry at State and 10th. Beyond convenient hours of operation, the Sparkle Bright doesn't have much going for it, yet old Home Parkers (those who have moved 'up' to Midtown, Va. Highlands, etc.) return just do their wash here. The biggest problem is that Sparkle Bright's washing machines seem to add dirt, grime, and discolorations to clothes, not remove them. If you drop your garments on the floor, just say 'ick!' The Manager Guy - you'd recognize him if you saw him - is around at odd hours and is reluctant to make change. Last time I asked him for quarters, he responded enigmatically, "We don't play that game around here!" Whoa! What

kinds of games do you play? The Sparkle Bright has served as a screening point for prospective renters interested in neighboring apartments and houses. I don't play that game. If it's your only choice for wash, fine, but can someone explain to me this obsession with the dirty, racist Sparkle Bright?

Let's move on. Bobby & June's Kountry Kitchen, with local color galore and charming, rustic decor, serves up mean Southern home cookin'. Bobby's skills as a restaurateur outstrip those as a landlord. I recommend the former, hold off on the latter. Each table in the Kountry Kitchen has its own little jukebox, and some of 'em work. Great greasy breakfasts served late in the day at reasonable prices - thumbs up. Their sweet iced tea is just like my great aunts made it. The Kitchen is at the corner of Mecalvin and 14th.

Let's not forget Home Park itself. Home Park is a plot of grass, a day care center (such cute tykes!) and a basketball court, all at Calhoun and Tumlin. Don't be bashful, come on out and shoot some hoops. There's nothing like watching a basketball mix of rednecks from Norcross, frat boys, PIB's (people in black), foreigners, and elsewhere - except playing in it. Good basketball with fewer bad vibes than SAC. The court is on Tumlin near 10th.

Exhibit A is a neat-o little art gallery near Jerry's Barber Shop on 14th. They host openings featuring photography, silkscreening, prints, sculpture, and lots more. I haven't been there as much as I oughta, but it's quite an asset to Home Park. Drop by



and get on their mailing list.

Musically speaking, a new club, The Sombre Reptile, has just opened its doors at Northside and Marietta. Admittedly stretching the bounds of Home Park, it's still within walking distance. These folks are interested in exposing all kinds of media (print, video, art) but will primarily focus on a diverse slate of musical guests. From underage hardcore to experimental instrumentals to Latin music it should be a interesting venue. Until alcohol license time, it's BYOB. Look for the WREK benefit there in late November tentatively featuring Mary My Hope, King Kill/33, Flap, and Bad Egg Salad (plus films, poetry, and more).

#### DOWNS

Hey you entrepreneurs! Home Park is missing two ingredients. A Small Cozy Bar That One Can Walk To And Stagger Back From would be a nice outlet, as would a coffeehouse / bakery. The way small businesses fare these days, however, don't hold your breath.

Home Park is a relatively safe residence (at least the 30318 zip code is prestigious). However, the occasional incident should be enough to keep folks on their collective toes and aware of the inherent

dangers of intown life. Break-ins are a dime a dozen. Burglar bars, big dogs, and lots of roommates are the best deterrents.

Home Park has one superlative claim to fame in common with our neighbors in Knight Park. Rumor has it that 30318 is the most polluted zip code in the Southeast. Did I say claim to fame? I meant claim to infamy.

It's also hard to be proud of a neighborhood that has an unofficial recycling program - men with shopping carts sorting through garbage cans for aluminum. More of an education than an eyesore, one learns more than the evening news provides about our community. When you see entire families scavenging, you know something's wrong in America. Racist or otherwise intolerant and irresponsible landlords also burst the romantic bubble of a homey Home Park.

Nay, Home Park is not the best of possible worlds, but considering its current location and its gentrified future it's a comparatively liveable place for the moment. Belief that it's a great neighborhood may be some survival mechanism for me; I may have brainwashed myself into glorifying the place for my own mental health. Regardless, I will miss the 'hood when I am gone. See you on the front porch.

## The Way Things Should've Been

when I arrived at this fuckin' institute. HAVE YOU EVER LOOKED AROUND THIS CAMPUS AND REALLY

TRIED TO SEE HOW IT OPERATES ? At first glance it seems normal. However, if you talk to people who have ben here a while you start realizing that it is a big operation. It has an enormous amount of relations to the business world and to the United States government. These ties are product -both student and technology-, and monetary. If you look at how the campus itself operates, however, there are problems that arise in part due to its monetary ties *and* in part due to its monetary ties and in part due to the structure of the classes and administration. I would like to point out some of these problems and offer some solutions.



**F**irst I would like to say that the problems with this school are not inherent to its technological interests. The types of problems that are apparent to me now are ones that are becoming increasingly apparent on a national level. They are centered around two major areas: first there is a lack of community among students, faculty and administration.

It is my opinion that this campus would benefit from nothing more than the alleviation of these two fundamental problems. They permeate tech life in almost every aspect and allow for things such as alienation, racism and sexism to

continue to exist. Furthermore, to allow these problems to continue to exist is a failure of students, faculty, and administration alike.

The problems are not difficult to identify once you have become attuned to them. The lack of community around campus is seen in any activity on campus. Watch people walking around many at the ground, others look up but never speak, still others overcome muteness but only in the presence of previous acquaintance. Remember the last time you were walking alone at about dusk from the Stud Center to Skiles and there was only one other person in sight, walking in the other direction, and you did not even look them in the face and simply say, "Hello." ?

This is one simple way to start drawing community around campus. By making friends at random we could all learn a little bit about this campus and the world around us. But what limits this from happening already? Why is it that 'liberals' and 'nerds' and 'fraternity men' and 'sorority women' and 'conservatives' and blacks and whites and men and women cannot speak to each other in person in public or outside of some

special organization. Has this campus polarized so much that it cannot look itself in the face? Has our society come to such a failure? Are we so miserable? I think it is time to grow past this pretence of integration and become unified. This is not a black thing or a liberal thing or a nerd or a frat or a feminist thing, this is a real solid problem with our campus and this country. Bias must be overcome, or democracy has truly been forgotten.

This summer I have been looking into the problems and trying to get a feel for them. I have spent seven quarters on this campus and if things go according to plan I will

spend only three or four more. Some of you have told me that you are 'just here to get a degree and then you leave' or that 'this is just the way Tech is.' I have a reply to that. **You Are Wrong!**

First, if you are here just to learn from books, you are either stupid or blind. A higher education is why anyone attends college, and spending four and possibly more years at college, away from home, some for the first time, is full of learning about the world. That is why a degree means so much. The college experience is life experience. It is time to start organizing your life and learning how to deal with people. It is now that you are free finally of your parents tyranny and can start to lead your own life: go on that road trip to New Orleans for Mardi-Gras, get shit faced, try a drug or two: LIVE!

Secondly, this is not just the way Tech is. Tech is a melting pot and a place of extreme intelligence. Tech students are not stupid and they can see the importance of knowledge. *That is the way Tech is;* however, it seems to me that the students here lack the ability to distinguish what knowledge is valuable. They seem to think

...Tech is not just a place  
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be. If it is, it has failed.

**This is why I write.**

that given all the right buttons to push they can make it through life at a control panel. This is not true; life has many decisions but very few correct answers. Nothing is dead right or dead wrong. No on off switch, no one or zero society will work. Every one wants to be number one. Tech is not just a place to earn a degree. It cannot be. If it is, it has failed.

This is why I write. I see a problem, one that is pervasive and massive. I have, as I said, tried to get a grasp on it and now I will start by saying that the campus must move. The lack of community and communication on this campus is frustrating and brings about alienation and all its effects. It is rooted in the fragmentation of this school.

Every person is jockeying for position, and no one is allowed time to think. The classes are so demanding that students are posed in opposition to each other and faculty. It is not good to learn that the only way to do the best for others is to do worse. From a corporate standpoint you must learn to work with a team and help each other out, or the whole company will fail. You cannot steal or cheat or sellout or be cheap. That does not help anyone. The 80's should prove that.

It is time to gain responsibility. The first thing this school must do is start to learn to take responsibility for its education. That means realizing that what it teaches has an effect, and the way in which it is taught has an effect both on the future of the school and the future of the graduates. This school must encourage its faculty to work towards the common goal of higher education, not a self serving goal of who gets the best research or who gets the least classes. The Administration must also see that by not announcing its agenda to the rest of the campus before it makes decisions every move will be looked at suspiciously and taken resentfully.

The faculty needs to understand that their job here is to teach, not to torture, weed out, pacify, or do research. I know that without research, teachers lose their

edge both financially and professionally. But, students are paying to be taught, not be made to jump through hoops, weeded out or given excuses from learning new things. Yet these exact things happen: passing tests from Hell is not learning material; being defeated by curriculum will not contribute to bettering this or any school. By using the same tests or by being led to believe that a course is not important will never encourage anyone to grasp for even the concept of a higher and meaningful education. And, above all, students should never feel that they are second in line to research.

The students must mature beyond this high school mentality that pervades this campus. Students here are failing to see the point of going off to school. This is the time in your life (and mine) to look at the world around you and try to understand its problems. It does not stop there! Then it is time to begin looking for solutions. It does not stop there! It is then time to put a valid solution to work. Right, it cannot stop here!!! Then it is time to drive or steer your plan down a well planned route. Then you can breath: Retirement. Here and now is the time to make something happen for yourself. Education is the springboard but you must make use of it.

**I** do realize that there have been improvements on campus. I would like to take this opportunity to commend several programs. The Freshman Experience, ASSET, The Campus NOW affiliate, The Wellness Center, and the North Avenue Review. I am quite sure that there are other groups, but I do not know who you are. There has been a meeting planned by the Student Government that is designed to begin alleviating this problem. Government that is designed to begin alleviating this problem. It is designed to draw together different organizations with common goals. This is something that I honestly believe could help, if the groups will attend and come with an open mind.

**Editors' Note:** We decided to reprint this ourselves because we liked it so much.

# Student Life at Georgia Tech: Problems and Solutions

David Ray, Associate Professor  
School of International Affairs and  
School of History, Technology, and Society

Students at Georgia Tech are treated badly. This is common knowledge among students, and among any faculty, staff, and alumni who care to listen to students. In 14 years at Tech, my impression is that the way students are treated has not improved, but has actually worsened. The current magnitude of the problem can be seen in the 60 percent retention rate and in the *Technique's* lead editorial by this year's editor-in-chief, urging graduating seniors not to give money to Tech. ("Maybe after we graduate we should treat Georgia Tech the way it treated us. Like dirt." Taken from "Don't Give More Money to Tech." *The Technique*, February 8, 1991, p. 6).

In this brief statement, I would like to identify ten major problems in the way Georgia Tech treats its students. After that, I will simply list a number of concrete ways in which the new Vice-President for Student Services (hereafter VPSS) could act to solve many of these problems. Before any of that discussion, let me state several things about the context within which any new VPSS will be privileged to work. First, **Tech has extraordinary students.** In general, they are very bright, incredibly hard-working, and highly motivated. This is a nearly ideal situation from a teacher's point of view (I came to Tech from Boston College primarily because of the high quality of Tech's student body). I strongly believe that Tech's current students are its greatest asset. Their high quality can be a key factor in designing policies to improve student life. (Here's one additional measure of how badly Tech students are treated: when I once told a class that it was a privilege to teach Georgia Tech students, one of them responded suspiciously, "are you being sarcastic?")

Another key point is that the Tech student body is **extremely diverse, much more so than most Tech students realize.** I do not simply mean diverse in ethnicity, religion, or regional and national origin. Even among

those students who most appear to fit some "Tech stereotype" (such as the conservative white male engineering student), there is in reality a huge diversity of interests and tastes. I constantly run across Tech students with serious interests in the widest range of subjects, often well beyond their academic major—for example, interests in music, literature, art, film, nature, politics, religion or philosophy. This diversity must be kept in mind when thinking of ways to improve the quality of student life. Such diversity is largely unrecognized, but, if acknowledged and encouraged, it can be used to good advantage.

## Ten Major Problems

What does it mean to say "students at Georgia Tech are treated badly"? I think it's important and useful to try to answer that question with clarity and precision. In attempting to do so, I have identified the ten following problems. Of course this list simply represents my own point of view. Not everyone would come up with the same list, and perhaps not everyone will agree that all ten items truly *are* current problems at Tech. I want to stress that the ten problems are not listed in order of importance, but in the approximate order of the relative ease or difficulty with which they could, in my judgment, be solved. This closely relates to the simplicity or complexity of the problem, and the extent to which it is a local, Tech phenomenon or derives from the larger society of which we are a part. Those problems which seem most solvable (at least potentially) are listed first; those which seem most intractable are listed last.

(1) On some occasions, Tech students are not even treated with courtesy by some of the faculty and staff. It is difficult to know how often this happens, but that it happens at all is inexcusable. From student conversation

and letters to *The Technique*, this appears to happen most frequently with staff who deal with students periodically, processing fee payments or financial aid, for example. Unfortunately, some faculty members at times also treat students discourteously. Last year a student wrote to *The Technique* on behalf of another student who was treated disrespectfully by a professor in front of a large lecture class. (A foreign student was ridiculed for his failure to understand instructions in English; see "Student Treated Disrespectfully by Tech Faculty Member," *The Technique*, April 20, 1990, p. 12.) After describing the incident and naming the professor and the class, the student signed his own name for publication. Since this took some courage (the letter-writer was still enrolled in the course), I suspect that such a letter may be the tip of an iceberg (that is, such a letter may be a much rarer event than the incident it describes). A year later, it saddens me to say that the student who wrote this letter is in the process of transferring to Georgetown.

(2) **It is frequently the case that Georgia Tech does not even deal with its students competently.** Student conversation, as well as letters and editorials in *The Technique*, abound with literally dozens of examples of frustrations and difficulties caused by unnecessary screw-ups. To cite just one representative example, it was announced in Spring Quarter, 1990, that deferring a portion of student fees for later payment from financial aid would no longer be permitted in summer quarter (as it had been in the past). The announcement of this new policy was posted on campus, but none of the co-op students working off campus were notified. All co-ops who unwittingly attempted to defer a portion of their fees, as they had done in the past, had their registration schedules cancelled. An angry *Technique* sports editor wrote that his repeated long-distance phone calls led to assurances that his schedule would be reinstated, but when he reached Atlanta this had not been done: "I had to go to department heads for an overload of every single class I had scheduled . . . waiting two hours for an English overload." (See "Financial Aid Foul-ups Frazzle and Frustrate," *The Technique*, July 20, 1990, p. 4). In a school with a vigorous co-op program — almost 2,300 students — it seems like minimal competence that co-ops working off-campus be notified whenever there is any policy change that will affect them significantly in the next quarter. Either changes should be announced several quarters in advance or departments making such changes should be required to work with the Co-op office to see that co-ops working off-campus are given timely notice. After such highly visible student dissatisfaction, one wonders if such a policy is currently in place. There are many, many other areas in which students are not treated with the competence they deserve.

(3) **Except in very limited ways, Tech does not provide its students with a "sense of community" to**

**which all students genuinely belong; nor does it provide any sense whatever that the Institute cares about them as individuals.** To some extent, this may be inherent in the nature of the institution: in a frequently under-funded state school with an enrollment over 11,000, the tendency to process large numbers of students bureaucratically is natural, and perhaps unavoidable. On the other hand, relatively small changes in the attitude and behavior of those administrators and faculty who deal most directly with students could produce large results. For example, when a junior told me that I had been the first professor in his three years at Tech who had asked his name, he added this significant comment: "So I decided the place wasn't so bad after all." Similarly, while it may be unavoidable that a "sense of community" is difficult to achieve (Tech is a highly fragmented campus, with many dozens of units and programs that have widely varying missions, styles, and priorities), efforts should nonetheless be made to reduce existing divisions within the student body, and to increase communication to and among all its components: graduates and undergraduates, Greeks and non-Greeks, residents and commuters, men and women, whites and blacks, US nationals and foreign students.

(4) **Many Tech students feel isolated and have a difficult time finding others who share their interests.** Tech can be a cold and impersonal place for some students; for such a crowded and busy campus, there is a lot of loneliness here. Perhaps because Tech is a highly competitive and grade-oriented environment, many students have difficulty in getting acquainted with large numbers of new people, and in establishing close friendships, especially those built on common interests. On countless occasions, a Tech student has told me that he or she has some strong extra-curricular interest (in literature or classical music, for example) and that, since no other Tech students share this interest, he or she feels completely out of place. One by one, I have heard literally dozens of students *with the very same interest* make such a statement. In 14 years at Tech, this is the single observation that most haunts me. For some reason, Tech doesn't seem to provide sufficient mechanisms to enable these students to find each other.

(5) **Georgia Tech does not provide its students with the stimulating cultural and intellectual environment that should be the hallmark of a university education.** Beyond its already strong curriculum, Tech should provide students with a wide range of opportunities for cultural enrichment and intellectual growth. At present, this is not the case. Many students describe the campus environment as very narrow, even anti-intellectual. Perhaps this is understandable; Tech's educational emphasis is preparing students for professional careers and vocational success. But such an emphasis needn't preclude optional activities — speakers, seminars, concerts — through which students can learn more about music, politics, the arts, or

the latest scientific research. While reality dictates that the typically busy Tech student will be able to take advantage of only a few such opportunities, the Institute should ensure that he or she has a wide range of choices, and is encouraged to explore and grow. In recent months, Tech has moved in the right direction with panel discussions on international events, language and computer technology, etc. A step in precisely the wrong direction was the recent suspension of the film series because it was not generating sufficient revenue. A university with students as bright and diverse as Tech's should, in my judgment, offer *several* film series, and if they don't generate enough revenue at the door to be completely self-sustaining, then the modest additional amounts required should be provided by the Institute.

(6) **It is the perception of many Tech students that the campus is not a safe place.** In the three months from mid-February through mid-May of this year, *The Technique's* "Campus Crime Report" listed 31 home or campus burglaries, 56 "personal burglaries," 52 vehicle break-ins, 17 stolen vehicles, and 13 reported attacks on individuals. Recent *Technique* columns have described personal experience with muggings and attempted rape. However these figures may compare to the averages at other urban campuses, I believe they are unacceptable. There should be a much more visible police presence on the campus, especially at night and around buildings that are open late. Perhaps this increased visibility could be achieved in part by revising priorities or trying innovative approaches such as the recent use of radio-equipped student foot patrols, but it may also require substantial additional resources, and these should be allocated at once and without hesitation. The physical safety of students on the campus should be Tech's single highest priority.

(7) **Most Tech students do not find ways to develop constructive ties to the Atlanta community of which Tech is a part.** They neither benefit from the advantages offered by a major metropolitan area nor learn how difficult and complicated are its social problems. In large part, this is due to the heavy time demands on most Tech students. To the extent this is the case, the problem will persist. But part of the problem is simply a lack of information about what's available in Atlanta, in terms of the Symphony, the High Museum of Art, all kinds of live music, excellent bookstores, and an especially vigorous theater community. There is also a lack of information about ways in which Tech students may interact in volunteer and service capacities with the metropolitan Atlanta area. For example, one of the very best programs at Tech (in my judgment) is the Techwood Tutorial Project, administered by the Student Center Programs Area. Tech student volunteers are paired one-on-one with children from two of the elementary schools in nearby downtown neighborhoods, with a time commitment of approximately

two hours per week. I have recently witnessed discussions where seniors involved in Techwood Tutorial say it has been one of the best and most educational things they have done at Tech, and (this is the key point) other seniors in the discussion say with great regret they wish they had known about the program.

(8) **Relations between male and female students at Tech are often awkward and strained; sexism is widespread on the campus, although much of it is unconscious.** To some extent, these problems are an obvious result of the unbalanced male/female ratio among the student body. Thus increasing female enrollment from 24 to 35 percent (the goal for 1996 set by the Enrollment Task Force) is a major step in the right direction. My own view is that Tech should attempt to move even further toward 50 percent female enrollment, recognizing this will take time. To achieve such goals, both admissions and retention efforts need to address explicitly the concerns and perspectives of women students. At present, problems involving male/female issues need to be addressed more directly. Dean Carole Moore's lectures to incoming freshmen about the issue of date rape, and the formation last year of the rape task force and a rape recovery group on campus, are also major steps in the right direction; such efforts need to be supported and expanded. It is also my observation that Tech students — both male and female — need an increased awareness of the possibility and definition of sexual harassment, and some awareness of how to deal with it. In their co-op jobs and future careers, many Tech students will be in situations where women are now entering fields that have been traditionally male, and this can be difficult.

(9) **There is considerable racism at Tech (often just below the surface) and relations between the races are distant and worsening.** The evidence on this point is often informal but nonetheless very strong. At a meeting this spring honoring the 30th anniversary of Tech's integration, Black students described current conditions to some of Tech's earliest Black alumni. Some of these alumni expressed the view that race relations at Tech seemed actually to have worsened over the years, not improved. One alumnus wept. Faculty and library staff who have observed long-term trends in racist graffiti have expressed similar conclusions. I want to stress that I am most concerned here *not* with overt acts of racism (such as hate phone calls or racist epithets painted on a Black student's dorm-room door). Tech has responded to such incidents forcefully and effectively, and its policies have focused correctly on actions, leaving speech unrestricted. Of even greater concern (in my judgment) is the highly visible, very large and growing distance between black and white students generally. After talking with a great many students and faculty, I believe that there is almost no serious discussion *between* black and white students on

issues related to race and cultural diversity anywhere on this campus. We cannot reduce racism without interactions of this type.

10) **The pervasiveness of cheating (and the reality that it is de facto ignored by the Institute) indicates the absence of an environment in which there is serious discussion of moral values and ethical issues.** I would like to stress that everything I know about cheating at Tech I have been told by students — by many dozens of students and with a dismaying unanimity. I also want to stress that I do not view pervasive cheating at Tech primarily as a fault of students, or as a problem that can be genuinely solved with a punitive response. Indeed, it is mainly Tech students who repeatedly have tried to call attention to the magnitude and gravity of the problem. There have been three major *Technique* editorials on the subject in the past three years. I have personally heard many dozens of students comment upon widespread cheating; this has usually been in complaint. This spring was the first time I talked with a student who openly defended cheating. After a long and frustrating discussion, this student — in a courteous, amazed, and serious tone — asked this question: “Do you really think a person needs moral values?” That cheating is pervasive on this campus is not caused by some defect in our students; indeed, placing them in an environment where pervasive cheating is almost entirely ignored by the administration and faculty is one of the major ways in which Tech treats its students badly. (Several students say cheating is actually abetted by some of the faculty, who repeatedly use old tests and overload students with problem sets requiring an incredibly unrealistic amount of time. This is a serious aspect of the matter, but it is more an academic than a student services issue.) This spring, Tech’s student newspaper flatly stated that “cheating is socially acceptable on our campus” (see “Cheaters Never Win, Or Do They?” *The Technique*, May 17, 1991, p. 7). That such a statement received no public response from the administration or faculty sends a very clear message to our students. This is simply a fact; to deny it is self-deception. At present, Tech is highly vulnerable to the kind of cheating scandal involving dozens of MIT students reported last month in *The New York Times*.

### Possible Solutions

This is a formidable list of problems, but the reality is that all of them need to be addressed and many of them could be solved. I believe it is entirely possible, with enough effort and commitment, to transform Georgia Tech into a school where students are treated with courtesy and competence as a matter of course; where their ideas, suggestions, and concerns are solicited and given serious consideration; and where each student feels that the Institute cares about him or her as an individual. I firmly believe that

all this is genuinely achievable, although I realize most Tech students would openly scoff at such a prospect (and perhaps laugh in one’s face for suggesting it).

It must be recognized that changing Tech into a school where students are treated with courtesy, competence, and individual consideration would require a huge transformation in the way business-as-usual is conducted at Tech. It must also be recognized that achieving such a transformation is a labor-intensive task, requiring motivation and perseverance. Tech should not announce such a transformation unless there is a genuine commitment to achieving it, backed up with concrete and effective action. Simply announcing it as public relations rhetoric, while actually changing very little, would be the worst possible step. Tech students are already extremely cynical, and they are keenly perceptive about the way they are treated. We must not add to their cynicism.

To achieve such a transformation, the new VPSS and his or her office must play a central role, although the attitudes and behavior of many others must also change. At the most fundamental level, the VPSS should serve as an *advocate for students*, and must perform this role imaginatively, aggressively, and tirelessly. I believe the VPSS should focus his or her efforts in the following broad areas.

**Accessibility and Outreach.** At least once during each academic year, the VPSS should offer to meet briefly with every possible segment of the student body: each floor of every residence hall, each fraternity and sorority, each student organization, including every organization of international students. These meetings should be arranged to maximize potential attendance; for example, regularly scheduled floor meetings or house meetings, in the late afternoon or evening, as appropriate. Such meetings should be used for these five purposes:

- (a) to re-affirm and clarify Tech’s commitment to improving student life;
- (b) to solicit student comments, suggestions, and complaints on all aspects of life at Tech;
- (c) to publicize and encourage participation in student organizations and special extra-curricular events;
- (d) to publicize the resources and facilities that Tech makes available to students (such as the Counseling and Career Planning Center) and to encourage their use;
- (e) to publicize and encourage participation in the new programs and events that are suggested below.

The new VPSS should also maintain and publicize “Open Door” office hours — perhaps two hours per day, several days per week — when any student can feel free to stop in without an appointment and discuss briefly any specific problem or question.

**Improving Communications and Reducing Fragmentation.** At the beginning of

every quarter, the VPSS should send a letter to the post office box of every student enrolled at Tech. This letter should simply reiterate Tech's commitment to improving student life, call attention to new policies or programs, once again solicit input, and emphasize special events of the quarter. I think of this not as yet another newsletter but simply as one or two pages in the format of a personal letter. A comprehensive quarterly schedule of meetings, plays, concerts, films and lectures (both on campus and in Atlanta) could be attached. A copy with appropriate cover letter should be sent to every co-op student away at work, and perhaps to every member of the faculty and administrative staff. An E-mail version of this letter could be posted on the on-line Student Access System (SAS), inviting student questions and suggestions, and the comprehensive schedule of events could be updated daily.

At the beginning of each academic year, the office of the VPSS should prepare and distribute to every student enrolled at Tech a booklet that provides a comprehensive listing of all extra-curricular organizations on the campus. This booklet could have perhaps a page or half-page prepared by each group to describe its activities and invite attendance and participation. This should include organizations like ORGT, DramaTech, GTAAA, WREK, Radio Techwood, the Environmental Forum, College Republicans, all student publications, and the various Student Center programs. Special effort should be made to get as complete coverage of all such organizations as possible, especially including information from each of the religious organizations on campus. If we want more awareness and discussion of moral issues and values, these last groups should be considered a major resource.

I firmly believe that student participation in all extra-curricular organizations can be increased substantially by repeated efforts at outreach, providing information (many Tech students are not aware of all the available groups and programs) and encouraging participation. Not all Tech students are self-starters, and not all have high levels of social self-confidence. Those who are a bit shy or hesitant may have a great deal to contribute, if we can find ways to bring them in.

#### **Responding to Student Complaints.** If

Tech students at present are treated badly, it would be naive to expect this to change overnight, or to believe such a change could be brought about exclusively by the student services office. A way must be found to change the way hundreds of people conduct business-as-usual at Tech. (To state the obvious, some faculty and staff fail to treat students with courtesy or competence because they feel there is no requirement or necessity that they do so.)

One way to change this situation would be the creation of the position of Students' Ombudsman (a Swedish word and concept, now commonly used in Europe,

New Zealand, many local governments in the US, and perhaps 100 American colleges or universities, such as Michigan State). The Students' Ombudsman would be a full-time staff member who receives student complaints, has the authority to investigate them, and then makes a written report suggesting an equitable settlement. It is difficult to imagine how treatment of students will change decisively without some such mechanism. On the other hand, there should be no illusions about the fact that such a mechanism will initially create considerable difficulty and a great deal of work. To put it very simply, there will be *lots* of complaints, at least initially. It will be necessary to work out a number of issues regarding the Students' Ombudsman, including the following:

(a) Some definition must be developed that specifies what types of complaints are valid for consideration by the Ombudsman, and what types are not. For example, this would not be the appropriate venue for complaints about grades under most circumstances. One possibility is simply to announce, at the Presidential level, that it is Tech's policy to treat all students at all times with courtesy and competence, and that failures to do so should be reported to the Students' Ombudsman.

(b) The investigative authority of the Students' Ombudsman must be clearly specified, and this should be done in consultation with the faculty and in accordance with the Statutes and other established procedures. However Ombudsman investigations are structured and conducted, due process is obviously important.

(c) The status of the Ombudsman's reports needs to be specified. Should they be solely advisory, and, if so, to whom? My own view is that, while the Students' Ombudsman should be in the office of the VPSS, the Ombudsman should report directly to the President, and should be someone known to enjoy the President's confidence. While Tech is a highly fragmented institution, it is also very hierarchical. The student services office is not perceived as near the top of the hierarchy and may not be taken very seriously by some administrative or academic units: the President's office will not have that trouble. I realize that creating a position like Students' Ombudsman may be seen as opening the proverbial "can of worms," and some less adversarial method might be desirable, but I see few other ways to improve the treatment of students quickly and decisively.

**Supporting and Expanding Several Current Programs.** In describing student problems at Tech, one must avoid sounding too negative. Not simply because positive reinforcement is much more effective than criticism, but because many caring and talented people are currently doing many good things with regard to student services. I think it is especially important to recognize and express appreciation to them, and to build



upon their current efforts. The installation of well-marked emergency police phones should be applauded. The on-line student comments about the OSCAR registration process, and the responses of the Registrar's staff (printed in each quarter's hard-copy OSCAR) are excellent examples of sensitivity and responsiveness to student needs and problems. The need to increase budgetary support for a more visible police presence has already been mentioned. I also think it is necessary to increase the resources available for counseling and clinical services; the potential demand for these services is very high. Recent brochures aimed at students (encouraging them to seek counseling in a variety of situations) and at faculty (advising them on when and how to make referrals to the Counseling Center if they encounter highly stressed or deeply troubled students) are important steps in precisely the right direction. The VPSS should also give much more support and visibility to the Techwood Tutorial project, and explore with the Parent-Teacher organizations of the participating schools and the tenant organizations of Techwood Homes to determine if there are other ways in which Tech volunteers may be useful to the community. Publicizing and providing other support for groups and programs like the Tech chapter of Habitat for Humanity and the International Festival are also desirable. And when student groups seek to improve the quality of student life at Tech (the current Campus Services Committee of the SGA distributes self-addressed comment/complaint cards), those efforts should be recognized and supported.

**Expanding Intellectual and Cross-Cultural Programs.** The student services office should take the lead in providing and publicizing a wide-range of intellectual and cultural opportunities on campus. This can take a wide variety of forms, but the most important thing is to try many different approaches and projects, experimenting and learning from initial successes and failures. To some extent, the SGA might be persuaded to contribute Student Activity Fee money to such programs, but the effort should not be contingent on that decision, which is properly a matter for the student government. Tech students deserve the intellectual and cultural environment of a fine university; they should not be expected to create one by themselves. To suggest just one possibility, I personally know of several small groups of students who established on-going reading and discussion groups that met weekly for lively discussions on one or more topics of interest; some of these groups functioned for more than a year. These groups flourished because they filled a real need, and they were almost entirely student-driven. They received quite minimal faculty encouragement and support (basically the assurance that such a project was actually achievable and helping make available a meeting space), but *this minimum of support seems to be crucial in*

*the Georgia Tech environment.* The office of the VPSS should provide support of this type in a systematic and widely publicized way.

### **Supporting and Sustaining Campus-Wide Discussions of Race Relations, Male/Female Issues, and the Prevalence of Cheating.**

In our list of ten problems, the last three are huge, complicated, and very difficult. They are certainly not just local or Tech problems, but are reflections of larger troubles in our society and nation. To state the obvious, there will be no quick or easy solution to problems of sexism, racism, and widespread cheating at Tech. On the other hand, I believe it is part of Tech's obligation to its students that these problems be acknowledged and addressed. I also firmly believe that there is a way in which these problems genuinely can be reduced in magnitude: by consistently facilitating *increased awareness* of each problem, and finding ways for students to have face-to-face discussions — in small groups, with other students and with members of the faculty — on the complex aspects of each problem. There are many different ways this could be attempted. For example, some revived form of 1988's Freshman-Faculty Reading Program, focused on a certain set of issues. As another example, a wide range of one-hour, pass/fail courses — limited to the size of a small discussion group — could be offered on aspects of these issues. I taught three of these courses on a strictly experimental basis during Spring Quarter. One of them focused on a study of Mississippi Freedom Summer (1964), using it as a springboard for discussing contemporary racial issues. One of the students in this class invited several of her friends who were studying at Tech after completing several years at Morehouse College to join the class. When they did so (about half way through the quarter), the class began to have intense, deeply serious discussions — even arguments — between black and white students of good will. On several occasions, when the period ended and I had to leave for another class, most of the students remained in the seminar room and continued the discussion for another 40 or 45 minutes. In evaluating the class, many students felt that they had learned a great deal about the perspectives and values of another race, and that their stereotyped views had been challenged, at least in part. This experience could be multiplied a hundredfold across the campus, not simply involving students in serious discussions of race, sex roles, and honesty, but also bringing together disparate elements of the Tech student body in an effort to forge the beginning of a real community. The structure and mechanics of how to do this may not be obvious or easy, but the attempt should be made, and the student services office should lead the way. This is what Tech students need and deserve.

# New taste comes to Georgia Tech



Celebrating the opening of the new Chick-fil-A unit in the Student Center Cafeteria last Monday are, left to right, Tech President John Patrick Crecine, Chick-fil-A founder Truett Cathy, Ed McMahon, Buzz, and former VPSS Charles Schroeder.

Photo by Brian Nisco



FISHRA

On an empty street  
of hungry souls  
our physical forms  
collide.

The sailing ships  
on a sea of love  
wave hands as they're  
passing by.

On the puppet's strings  
each one of us  
plays nothing but  
a part

Of the spirits that fill  
the endless space  
are personified through  
our hearts.

Is the music, the sound,  
the limits of time  
a creation of  
our minds?

Or are forces of nature  
in need of a soul  
to express their love  
through art?

Paul Ramirez



2

RAMIREZ

## Again

I'm spinning...  
around in circles  
trapping myself, inside  
i'm spiraling down...

I'm falling...  
crashing to the ground  
silence, thud, silence---  
like a heart's last beat,  
trapped

in love...  
the thoughts, the ideas  
the memories, the sour  
taste in my mouth.  
learn from the past  
or fall

again

C.N.

## Sensations Offering Unlimited Liberty

Way back when, they brewed soul tea.  
They grew soul in patches out back,  
rolled it in their cigarettes,  
Sprinkled it on desserts.  
Mothers marinated feasts in soul.  
Children swapped soul lunches at recess.  
Soul was a spice of life,  
A universal solvent  
Far far away, a long, long time ago.  
In my mind.

Thomas Peake

The scale is not the music,  
but the music is in the scale.

Words are not poetry,  
but poetry is in the words.

Art is a science, science is an art.

By means of art, feelings become alive.  
By means of science, the theories are proven.  
By science and art, we grasp the essence of  
reality ...

Paul Ramirez



## This World

People say that things have gone wrong with this world.

When have they ever been right?

Christianity has more flavors than Baskin-Robbins.

All roads lead to heaven.

Justice is so blind she can't see.

Maybe she doesn't want to.

Public opinion decides what is truth.

Those accused of racism are no more so than their accusers.

Love is conditional.

A man's friends are his enemies.

The nonconformists are conforming.

A man can be a misfit even among outcasts.

We have enough nuclear weapons to make mankind extinct.

Institutions are built for those we deem insane.

We're forced to choose between the lesser of two evils.

They have more strings than a marionette.

"Your life is not your own."

Everyone knows what's best for you.

Everyone has an opinion.

No one is ever wrong.

I have a right to do whatever I choose.

You don't!

Capital punishment is immoral.

Abortion is justified.

How should we dispose of the elderly when they become a burden?

When things get back to normal, will we even notice?

Charles W. McCaffrey



# Anna's Tragedy

by Li Cai

"Anna!" I called loudly and ran by the stairway in a subway station. I could not believe that I would ever see her in this southern big city. In the station the music was soft, and the light was dim; I even wondered if I was in a dream. "Anna," I caught up to her and called again. She turned around and jumped backwards. "Oh, I am sorry. I thought you were my friend Anna," I apologized, embarrassed by my mistake....

Anna was one of my best American friends. She helped me struggle through my most difficult time in America. Though many years have passed since we parted, she was still in my mind. In my album there was an enlarged photo of hers; whenever I looked through the album, I could not help pausing and gazing at her and recalling the time when we were together.

The first time I met her was during the last week of a spring semester at Central Vermont University. It was a beautiful evening; the sun colored the hanging clouds scarlet above the green hilly campus. On the way from the swimming pool to the student dining hall I encountered a group of children and adults, and was told that they were going to participate in a pre-school ballet contest at the Student Center. The children, brightly dressed in dance skirts, were like angels come down to earth. On my right, about 10 feet away, a young mother was lifting her daughter to plant a sweet kiss on her lovely face. A little farther away, some of the children were standing together to have a picture taken with colorful blooming flowers behind them. They seemed to be the happiest creatures in the world. No wonder people say that America is a paradise for children. Affected by their gaiety, I half danced towards the dining hall.

In the building, after having my meal card checked, I picked up a pizza, two chicken breasts, a salad and two glasses of coke, enough to feed two people. Spotting a friend of mine who was eating with several women, I went to his table and greeted him.

"Hi, Jeff. How is it going today?"

"Fine. You swam two miles again?"

"Yes." I put the food tray on the table and sat next to him. "Ah, nice weather. Great food, isn't it?" I said.

"The weather is nice, but the food is not so great," my friend responded. He then gestured toward the women. "Li, this is Marie, Anna and Nancy," he indicated each of them in turn. "This is Li," he said to the women.

"Nice to meet you all."

"Nice to meet you too," the women replied.

"Where are you from?" Anna asked.

"From mainland China."

"How long have you been in America?" Marie asked.

"About one year."

"How do you like it here?" asked Nancy.

"I like it here very much because American women are so pretty."

"Haha..., thanks." The women responded as one.

I laughed with them, and then started to

devour my pizza.

"You must be starved."

I raised my eyes and saw Anna smiling at me from the other side of the table. My gaze remained fixed on her. She was undeniably different from other women.

"Anna is a graduate student majoring in English Literature," Jeff said. He must have noticed my curiosity.

"A graduate student?" I asked her.

"Yes."

"What degree are you working on?"

"master's."

"Li, when is your exam?" Jeff asked.

"Next fall."

"What's that?" Anna asked.

"The English Speaking Exam given by the American government," I told her.

"You'll pass it. You speak English fluently. I can understand you very well," she said.

"Thanks. But I am afraid that my accent will make me fail the exam."

"If you like, I'd be happy to help you with your pronunciation."

"Thank you," I said. I was touched by her generosity.

"I'll be free tomorrow afternoon. Would you like to meet me after lunch?"

"Sure, whenever it is convenient for you."

After eating, I thanked her again and left in a happy mood. An American who spoke clear English was going to help me with my pronunciation. I was so lucky!

The next day, after lunch, I followed Anna slowly down the stairway leading from the dining room. The dining room was on the second floor. From there one could see a large lounge used for dormitory meetings and parties on the floor below. One side of the lounge was made of tinted glass through which one could view an attractive hillside. In a corner by the wall, there was a piano. Anna asked me if I minded her playing a piece of music. "Not at all," I replied. She then sat down in front of the piano. I stood by her and wondered what kind music she was going to play. I had heard too much rock and roll since I came to America. Anna began to play. It was beautiful. The soothing melody carried me away to a peaceful azure ocean where a child in a small wooden boat was playing with colorful fish; seabirds flew back and forth, sporadically brushing the waves....

When the music ended, I stood by the piano, silently. A moment later I heard Anna's voice from a distance, "Let's go study." Slowly turning toward her, I saw that she was smiling at me. "We can sit there," She gestured toward a couch on the other side of the room. I nodded and followed her to the sofa. Once we were seated she took a Webster's dictionary from her bag and taught me how to pronounce the letters of the alphabet, and the basics of phonics. The lesson was long and dry, during which I yawned several times and apologized each time. When it was over, I thanked her and wished her a good summer. I also told her that I would be looking forward to seeing her in the fall.

That summer I worked on my English alone. When the fall arrived, I moved into the dormitory where Anna was living.

Early one morning during the first week of school, I went to the dining hall to have breakfast with a friend. Upon entering the room,





## Anna's Tragedy Cont.

I saw a woman waving at me. Recognizing it was Anna, I asked my friend if he minded joining her. After I introduced them to each other, Anna asked me if I had taken the Speaking Exam.

"Yes, but I did not pass."

"Do you have any more chances?" she asked.

"Yes, next semester."

"Good. Then we have plenty of time to work on it. I live on the seventh floor in wing B. Come up and see me any time you want."

"Thank you. I will," I replied. Because I was late for the class, I hurriedly ate my breakfast, then exchanged phone numbers with her and left with my friend.

That evening, when I came back from school, I got a message from my roommate that Anna had called and invited me to watch *The Good Earth* on TV with her. I had heard great things about that American-made film on China, but had not yet seen it. After dinner I went to her room. Anna had a room to herself. Her bed was next to a big window, through which one could see the open hilly terrain of the campus. Next to the other side of the bed was a desk on which there was a large framed document, leaning against the wall.

"What is that?" I asked, pointing to the document.

"My B.S. degree certificate," she replied. She then told me how much she had enjoyed her time at the University of Maryland.

She talked continuously for the next twenty minutes and stopped only when it was time for the movie. During the movie she asked many questions about China, which made me happy. When the movie was over, she gave me a Webster's dictionary and an Atlas of the World, in the hope that it would increase my understanding of the world as well as my knowledge of English. She told me that she would be happy if I could come to see her every night to practice my English. I told her that I would like that very much. From that night on, I visited her in her room every night around 11:00 pm, my usual time for leaving the library. She became a part of my life.

One night in the early winter, I went to see her as usual. When she opened the door, I saw that she was wiping her eyes with a tissue.

"Gee, my eyes," she said. "My eyes are bothering me."

"What is wrong?"

"My eyes haven't been well recently. They watered a lot today. This afternoon when I came out of the classroom, I didn't notice the stairs and fell down. Look at my leg." She pulled up her skirt. It looked painful. The blue and red bruises spread wildly around her swollen knee like a bizarre abstract painting created by an eccentric artist. Her left ankle was badly swollen. I was afraid that if it became any more swollen the skin would break.

"Have you seen a doctor?"

"No. It's too far."

"I will call the infirmary to come and get you." I went to the telephone.

"Don't bother. It's not as bad as it looks."

"I think that I should leave and let you sleep," I said. I put on my jacket and prepared to leave.

"Please don't leave. I'm okay. I'll lay down here and listen to you read English." She insisted that I stay. I sat down and opened the book she handed me and began to read with my strong Chinese accent. I had been reading for only a few minutes when she interrupted me.

"Side news? What's that? Repeat the last sentence."

I read slowly and carefully, "When she heard the side news, she cried."

"Let me see." She took the book, and moved it under the yellow desk light. "It's sad news, not side news. Say 'sad'."

"Side."

"No. Get your tongue to your bottom teeth like this." She showed me.

I tried to imitate her, "Zide."

She laughed. "Relax. Don't be nervous. Look at my mouth. 'Sad'," she said with emphasis.

"I cannot tell the difference between 'side' and 'side'. They sound same."

"One is 'side', the other is 'sad'. Listen carefully. 'Sad'."

"Side."

"Chinese and Americans use different muscles when they speak. You have to learn how to use muscles you have never used before. It'll be difficult for you. But keep practicing. You'll get there. Now, listen carefully. 'Sad'."

"Sad."

"Perfect! You got it! Say it again."

"Side."

"What?"

"Side."

"What? You had it right. Think how you did it."

"I do not know what I did. It came out randomly, like the lottery. God, I am hopeless!"

"Don't give up. You'll get it."

After spending about 10 more minutes on the same word and making no progress, we decided to put it aside temporarily and continue with something else. When I finished studying, I left with three books she had given me to return to the library for her. Anna always studied in her room while I usually studied in the library which was about a 15 minute walk from the dormitory. It was never a problem for me to help her check out and return books.

"Books are my friends and also help me make friends," Anna liked to say. It was true because at almost every dinner many students sat with her, listening to her talk about literature, history, current affairs and other things. However, because she talked too much, did not know when she should stop and held very strong opinions, people gradually stopped coming to sit with her. Sometimes, even I had to avoid eating with her.

Early one morning, my friends and I went to the dining hall to eat breakfast. After loading up our trays with food and drink, we peeked around behind the soft drink fountain to see where Anna was sitting, trying not to be noticed. Anna realized what was happening to her. One day she asked me why her friends were leaving her. I did not know how to answer, because I was not sure if it would be good to tell her the truth.

"Maybe they are just busy, and have no time to talk," I replied. She was apparently not satisfied with my explanation and kept searching for a better answer.

The Sunday before finals week, I went to see her.

"How was your weekend?" I asked.

"Okay, I guess. I watched TV in my room. I called you several times last night, but you weren't home."



## Anna's Tragedy Cont.

"I went to a dance with my friends until two o'clock in the morning." While I was describing the party, she listened quietly and carefully, and then said, "Maybe I should learn to drink beer and enjoy rock music..."

"No! Do not do that!" I interrupted her immediately. I wondered if I should tell her the truth. "No. That would only hurt her," I said to myself.

"Are there any good shows on tonight?" I asked.

She went to her TV and switched from channel to channel.

"Nothing good," she said and turned the TV off.

After a short awkward silence I found a subject and asked, "How is school going?"

"Not too good," she responded. Then she told me about her problems at school. From her words, I learned that she was bothered by her classmates and her thesis adviser, a young man in his early 40's. She said that they did not enjoy listening to her, always interrupted her, and did not agree with her on many issues. Her distress compelled me to tell her not to talk too much and give other people a chance to speak, but I blocked my words before they came out.

Because the next week was finals week, I left early and did not see her for a few days. Upon finishing my last exam, I called her and told her that I was going to move out of the dormitory for the Christmas break because I could not afford to pay night fees.

"But the dorm is so convenient. And you won't have to move your things back and forth," she said.

"I know. But it is too expensive for me. I will stay at my friend's apartment. He is going to visit his brother in San Francisco."

"I'm going to stay in the dorm."

"Then you may be the only one in the building during Christmas."

"I know," she said. "Are you going to call me after you move out?"

"Yes, I certainly will. I will call you as often as possible." I gave her my new phone number and added, "Call me any time you want."

"You're so nice."

"Well, I have to go shopping now. Do you need anything?"

"Oh, yes," she said. "I need to stock up on some food. Can you buy me ten cans of beef stew, ten packages of instant noodles and two boxes of powdered milk?"

"Powdered milk? Why not fresh milk?"

"Powdered milk lasts longer, and you don't have to refrigerate it."

"Do not worry about which lasts longer. If you need anything, just call me and let me know. Maybe I should go downstairs to rent a refrigerator for you."

"You're so nice."

I hung up the phone and went to the information desk to check out a refrigerator. After helping her get settled, I moved out for the school break. It was my first Christmas in America.

On Christmas eve, I went to an international student party and came home very late. It was about 1:30 am. While I was relaxing on my bed, my phone rang.

"Hello?"

"Hi, Li. This is Anna."

"Hi, Anna. How are you?" I was glad to hear from her, because I felt guilty for not calling her before going to the party.

"Fine. What did you do tonight? I called you several times."

"I went to a party. I just got back."

"How was it?"

"It was wonderful. It was the first Christmas party I have ever attended. How were things for you tonight?"

"Not bad. Li, you know what?"

"What?"

"It's too hot here. The RAs turned on all the heaters on my floor before they left."

"It is freezing outside. The snow is about a foot deep. The heaters have to be on to keep the pipes from breaking. If you feel too hot, you can open the window."

"The temperature in my room is okay. But it's too hot in the hallway and the bathroom. I'm afraid that it may cause a fire."

"Is there anyone you can talk to about this?"

"I called the campus police. They came and said that everything was okay."

"If they say that it is okay, I think it is okay."

"Li, you know what?"

"What?"

"The water on my floor tastes terrible. I want to go down stairs to get some from there."

"You mean the water from the water fountain on your floor?"

"Yes."

"I do not think there is any difference between the water on your floor and the water on the other floors."

"There is a difference."

"Okay. So, why not go to another floor?"

"I'm afraid."

"Don't be afraid. The only people who can enter the building are those who have an entry key."

"I'm not afraid of burglars. I'm afraid of the elevator."

"Afraid of the elevator?"

"Yes. If it gets stuck, I'll die inside."

"There is an emergency button in the elevator."

"It'll do no good. There's no one else in the building."

"There is an emergency phone in the elevator. You can use it to call the campus police."

"The phone hasn't been used for a long time. It may not work."

I did not know what to say.

"Well, I'm going to get some water now. Please call me in ten minutes to make sure I'm back."

"Okay, I will."

Anna lived in the dormitory by herself for the whole winter break. When school started, I moved back into the dormitory and went to see her every night just as before.

One stormy evening in the early spring, I stayed in my room, talking to my friend Susan on the telephone instead of going to the library.

"Susan, would you mind holding on just a second? There is an incoming call." I switched lines. "Hello?"

"Hi, Li. This is Anna. Would you like to come over now?"

"Okay. I will be there in a minute." Then I switched back to Susan and told her that Anna wanted to see me.

"Who's Anna?"

"The woman we met this afternoon when we were playing the





## Anna's Tragedy Cont.

piano in wing A."

"Okay. Call me when you get back."

"Sure." Hanging up the phone and hurrying to Anna's room, I wondered why she had called me so early in the evening; she knew that I was going to see her at 11:00 that night. Arriving at her room, I knocked at the door. When she opened the door, I was shocked. Anna was brightly dressed; her hair was glossy black; her lips were red, and her cheeks were rosy. I stared at her, wide-eyed.

She smoothed her dress on her left leg and asked, "Do you like my dress?"

"Yes."

She looked at me expectantly and said nothing.

"You look young in this dress," I added, not knowing what else to say.

"Is my hair black enough?"

"Yes."

"I had it dyed today."

"Oh."

"What do you think about my makeup?"

"It is great."

"Tomorrow I'll go to class like this."

"What? Why? What happened?"

We entered her room, and she told me the story. That afternoon

she had had a discussion class, during which almost all the students disagreed with her. When she defended her opinions, one student told her that she should go to stay in a nursing home instead of a college. Clearly, Anna was deeply distressed by the incident. While she was describing the event, she became more and more excited and started to shake. I stared at this 72 year old woman, worrying that the anger might cause her physical harm.

KABOOM! Thunder shook the window and penetrated the room. "Do not be sad. They did not mean that." I tried to calm her down. "Sometimes young people do not know what they say. Do not be so sad." I walked over to her and helped her sit down. I then went to get a cup of ice water for her. After she drank some, I turned from her and went to the window. The wind was throwing rain drops violently against the panes; sheets of water were falling from the sky. Watching the lightning and listening to the thunder, I remembered Hemingway's short story, *The Old Man And The Sea*, and seemed to see the old man struggling to conquer the big fish. I wished that I were a musician so that I could compose a score for the story and play it for Anna, encouraging her to fight against fate. "Yes, I should remind her of that story. It may be helpful," I said to myself.

When I turned toward her, I saw she was trying to stand. She stood up, staggered and then fell back.

I left Vermont when the semester was over. A few months later I sent a Christmas card to Anna who was in a nursing home

"... it all."

Godammit. Hah. She's covered her mouth

"Why should we live if we're only going to die?

why care if we only end up in pain?

Torturing, why can't i live for me, instead of caring about others.

Screw fuck it all and remain detached.

But then i'd be bored.

You care and you hurt and you care and you hurt

I don't ever want to fall in love again"

Now she's crushed her cigarette butt with a vengeance

"How can you trust yourself. You don't even know what you want.

Your emotions are out to get you. Being kicked out of Heaven

means having emotions other than happiness."

Now her foot is tapping. She's paused, waiting for me to finish

writing it all down, but i'm not i'm writing something else.

"The first two brothers in history. One killed the other, so

how fucked are we really?"

"Knowledge is the beginning of our problems."

I remember the preacher on the student center steps shouting

"Fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge!"

Now she started again but stopped, does she feel any better?

"Even though we know how much ..."

I'm waiting for her to tell me what she's staring at, can she

see her discontent or do i imagine it.

'Even though we know how much pain is waiting for us later,

we still reach for

that immediate high, NOW euphoria, THEN misery.

(You're high and then you hurt and then you're high) and then you hurt

In death, you have no guarantees, no promises.

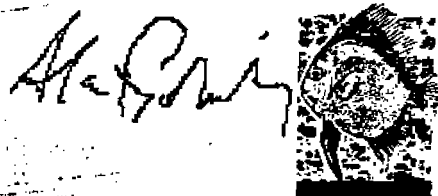
Even still I'll still look for REAL love

Stupid, isn't it?

R L Hobson

## Emptiness

an emptiness from within  
exceeding all rational boundaries  
creating havoc  
an imaginary existence  
captivating the morose  
seizing disappointment  
feeding upon the sadness  
acting as a harness of fear  
a monotonous tone  
creating a deteriorating existence  
witness this entity  
filled beyond imagination .  
controlling everyman  
for it is unyielding



found

i found it again  
it's mine.  
but i don't want it  
i'm only keeping it because  
you lost it.

We made it in the dark of  
my smoky bedroom and  
I watched it take its form.

but when it came time for  
another year again  
you threw it out so you could  
try something newer.

I'm keeping it.

f.flick

wake

how long can you wait to  
wake up.  
if my eyes are open  
i still feel you, even  
though you can dream  
of being with him, there.  
sleeping with you  
was a love affair  
with a Mick Jagger  
groupie.  
all i ever wanted  
was to see  
you seeing me.

f.flick





## 6.0 volume six: Under The Tongue

### 6.1 The Good, The Bad, & The Gumby

"When you have sex with money you don't need a condom." - Mister Lake  
"Saving souls is big business," said Rev. Syung Yun Moon as he began the business meeting. Gumby sat across from the Borgheads, not trusting their servo-mechanical yellow smiles. Luca spoke, "I completely agree, and with the respect and power of the Unification Church's infrastructure our gambling, extortion, and narcotics operations can expand globally. Any suggestions Gumby?" I stopped brooding for a moment to fantasize about the millions of dollars this business venture could mean to me. "Well Gumby, we're waiting!" I snapped out of my daydream and stated, "The arms business could be better."

Luca paused as Rev. Moon considered this. G' said, "Current global economy and political climate infer continued decline in weapons sales." J' said, "Therefore non profitable." My luscious yellow lips formed a smile and said, "But we can change that."

The Borgheads immediately began processing likely profitable hostile political situations, past, present and future. Highest profitability determined to be between two wealthy groups whose differences are unlikely to be reconciled. Preferred: situation where violence will breed more violence. This complex optimization routine was solved in seconds and the Borgheads stated: "War between petroleum producing countries with different superpower allies: most profitable scenario. Similar goals of oil field domination by superpowers will insure continuation of war despite heavy casualties. Selling of weapons to all parties involved insure maximum profit and longevity of client relationship." I sat back, trying not bleed clay onto the expensive chair and said, "Cool."

Moon folded his arms on his profuse abdomen and stated, "But how do we get it started?" I thought about this for a moment, thinking about how I could make the most money off of these peoples misery. "We could use the Borgheads trans-dimensional interface to travel back to Iraq before its war with Iran. Get chummy with Saddam and the Iyatollah and get some contracts. Then Rev. Moon's newspapers, magazines, and television networks could ensure the U.S. backing of Iraq while The U.S.S.R. backs Iran. History will follow along with us making all the money. When Iran wimps out we'll get the Saudi's to join in. Of course, we'll have to "purchase" the arms manufacturers first," said Gumby, laughing.

Moon said, "Already done." Luca smiled and said, "J' and I will talk to this I-O-Tollah while G' and Gumby talk to the other guy." Gumby felt uneasy with being paired with G', and asked, "What weapons should we offer them, guns or some of the good stuff?" Luca smiled and said, "No, just little stuff at first, then we'll string 'em along after the action gets started."

As Moon's full color printing presses began making brochures, Gumby leaned back in the air conditioned office, gazing at the clear sky through the open ceiling. To bad Lake wasn't here to gloat.

### 6.2 Mental Floss

"If winning is so important, why keep score?" - Michael Dom

Lake crawled beneath the black and orange cloud of Halloween flames, the fire close behind him providing the incentive. Upon reaching the relative safety of a drainage ditch, Lake paused long enough to hurl his cookies, the distorted reflection from the rainbow stained pool adding a psychedelic (although not unpleasant) quality. As the burnt throat feeling reached its short climax, Lake recognized another image in the pool.

The charred black CSM 103 resembled a burnt Gumby, its discolored facial features appending an eric sense of malevolence. As Lake looked on in horror the machine reconstituted its self-sculptable ceramic features, the faux-Gumby once again green. It walked past Lake, trying to re-acquire Cameron.

Lake stood up, the shoulder wound cauterized by the recent Stephen J. Cannell inspired episode. Wandering about the city, Lake paused to watch the used TV screens propped in a storefront, the local cable network commercial advertising another "mass wedding." Lake had heard of mass funerals, and theorized this was probably about the same. Rev. Moon "blessed" his human experiments like

a genetic researcher washing out a rat cage, as the picture changed to show some of his investments. Quick shots followed including scenes of chemical plants, office workers, and several blue collar labor forces working mindlessly like drone bees. Just as Lake thought about how envious Gumby would have been, the TV showed Moon shaking hands with Gumby during some ceremony. Lake instinctively reached to turn up the volume, his shaking hand shattering the storefront glass. The shopkeeper pulled the sawed-off shotgun from behind the counter and opened fire.

Lake jumped backward, getting into the Porsche 959 that was just pulling up. "Hey, what do you think-" screamed the driver as Lake reached across and opened the drivers door from inside, pushing him out. Lake gunned the accelerator, letting the tachometer read into the yellow before shifting gears. Grabbing the car phone, Lake called information, asking for the Unification Church headquarters. After promising to donate large sums of money, the secretary gave him their address.

Route 405 was jammed so Lake accelerated the "borrowed" car through the right-hand emergency stopping lane. A passenger door opened and was ripped off as Lake turned up the quality car stereo. The Porsche left the highway at the appropriate exit, with two "CHiP's" following. Spotting the heavy rush hour traffic, Lake aimed the car right at the center of it. Catching the tail of a Saturn, the car spun around, insisting Lake travel a different route. The Erik Estrada wanna be skidded his rice-burner to a stop, its frame trapped beneath the GM. Lake steered the 959 onto the crowded sidewalk, and accelerated towards the underground parking entrance of the Unification Church. People jumped into the moving traffic and already crowded doorways to avoid the sports car/ motorcycle cop duo. The Porsche's speed was too high as it leaped into the concrete bunker, its spoiler catching the overhead beams. The motorcycle collided into the rear of the still moving 959, sending the officer of the law over the roof of the metallic catastrophe...

### 6.3 Every Silver Lining Has A Cloud

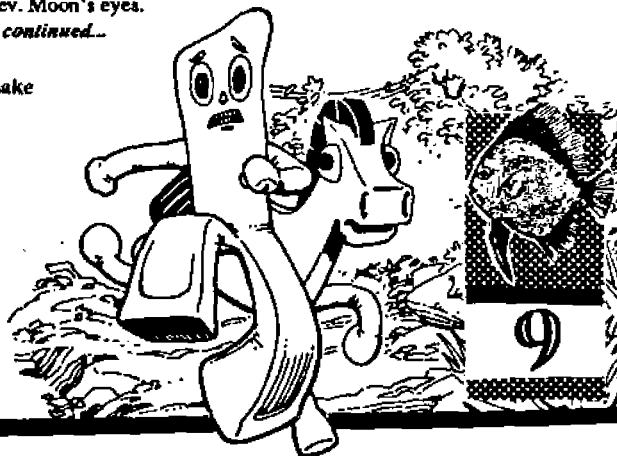
"Those who know don't say and those who say don't know." - Hell's Angels

Lake entered the Church, stopping to look at the map at the information booth. The Asian security guard behind the desk eyed Lake's burnt, bloody clothes with disdain, hoping this white-bred sludge would leave without making a scene. Another guard was about to assist Lake in leaving when the police officer crawled into the lobby, attracting everyone's attention. Lake used the diversion to enter the elevator unaccosted. Lake stepped off on the top floor, the small Korean secretary bowing and inquiring as to his business. As she bowed Lake pulled the taxi cab drivers gun from his torn jacket and shot the guard standing behind her. She straightened up and tried to high kick the gun from his grip. Lake's adrenal glands surprised him as they worked and he contorted to avoid her attack, bringing the gun down on the base of her skull. She fell unconscious to the floor as Lake ran into the office, spotting Gumby, Luca, Moon and the Borgheads. Gumby screamed "BASTARD!" as Lake started firing into the group, the Borgheads electromagnetic divergence shields bouncing the lead projectiles all over the room. Luca pulled his pistol and returned fire, one of his bullets catching Lake in the left arm. J' grabbed Luca and engaged his trans-dimensional interface, the pair de-materializing and on their way to meet Khomeni. Lake fired into the glass skylight, the broken shards raining down like a hailstorm of razors.

Moon jumped under his desk as Gumby crouched under G's divergence shield, the glass shards bouncing off the electrical umbrella. G' engaged his trans-dimensional interface as Lake jumped them, the trio de-materializing before Rev. Moon's eyes.

to be continued...

James Lake



# A Desperate Escape

by Jeffrey K. Hostetler

Bobby slammed the door of his apartment on the yammering of an oriental couple and the suicidal noises of the building's many tenants. Running his aching, greasy hands up to the door's series of locks, the man turned, threw, and latched them with the deliberate thoughtfulness of an exhausted cook.

The building's din now muffled by its thin walls and tiled floors, Robert Harvey Williams ingested the comparable silence, trudging into the one room apartment's bedroom/kitchen/living room. Bobby kicked off his worn canvas shoes and cracked his toes, scrunching them up into fists on his largest rug.

Looking out the window that faced him, he spied the silhouette of a woman undressing across the alley. Unimpressed by her shapely figure projected onto an amber window shade, Bobby rubbed his eyes raw and walked over to a mirror in the adjoining bathroom.

Now he looked at a familiar visage. Blue eyes, bloodshot and yellowed, peered drowsily at him, as if stoned, but Bobby knew the desperate man in the mirror hadn't touched a joint in years. A sharp nose waved from side to side as Bobby slowly shook his head, listening to the bones in his neck pop. Matted and sweaty hair nearly covered his pale forehead. Bobby hated his hair; especially the hair that had abandoned ship just beyond his forehead's property line.

The man in the mirror raised his hand and rubbed the growing stubble about his cheeks and chin. The first flecks of grey were becoming apparent, but his years weren't yet advanced enough to reveal the gray that lurked just below his temples.

"Man, I'm rough . . . ragged," he mumbled, his Adam's apple bobbing just above the collar of his T-shirt. Bobby swallowed, tasting the hasty dinner he had consumed at work.

Staring at his person, many random thoughts scampered through his mind:

"I need a new job. Three years as a cook just doesn't pay the bills which are piling up even as I work seven days a week and scarcely do anything otherwise. I've got a little money; maybe I should go back to college—take a few courses—see if I've still got the brains. No.

"Stephanie's really getting married. I'll be goddamned! I remember just yesterday we were a couple of kids getting drunk, partying, dreaming—breaking up. I guess four years and a rich boyfriend tend to make you accept the eventuality of marriage—wouldn't that be a burden: wife, job, more bills; but hey, I'd be gettin'

some, right?"

Bobby smiled cynically, snickering at himself. "And what about you, Buddy? Been considering your dreams? Been living like you planned? Been living all? Well I'll answer all of those for you: NO.

"Whatever happened to flying—to living like the wild ones—to being a person independent from society? What do they teach you: Be an individual. Right."

Bobby sighed and left the sickly looking man in the mirror. Flopping down into his favorite chair, a great leather Lay-Z-Boy salvaged from a street corner, Bobby returned to his thoughts.

"Dad cut me off five years ago—as well he should 'of. Ain't been in school for all that time. My, the world's cold. Maybe I could go somewhere, somewhere else. Atlanta hasn't turned any tricks for me. But to get out of prison would be easier, I think.

"I've listened to the preachers sing and sing and preach, all speaking of a new, wonderful world, free from oppression and Communism, lit in the glow of Democracy and ringing of freedom; but where is the freedom?"

Bobby closed his eyes and saw unhappy dreams. He quickly opened his eyes again. Now he thought of those fantasy places: the Mexican beaches of Zihuatanejo, the frosty slopes of Colorado, the green, rolling hills of England. Here, in his mind, was his only freedom.

In the window, a red haze blinked on the tiny rain droplets still clinging to the glass. The woman was gone, no longer visible now that her lights were extinguished. Bobby felt neither glad nor disappointed by her absence.

The dry blue light of a halogen bulb threw an eerie veil over Bobby's room when the red neon sign was blinking. Bobby studied the dull bricks across the street, tracing paths through their cracking, mildewed mortar. In the far right corner of the window the rusted remains of a fire escape could be seen.

"That's what I need," the man croaked, continuing in his head, "an escape."

Bobby rose from his comfortable position in the chair and walked over to the refrigerator. The fridge's glaring green-blue light stunned his eyes, forcing Bobby to squint in order to find a can of beer. He settled for lemonade—actually lemon flavored sugar water: Kool-Aid. It went down nicely, utterly cold and tart, drunk straight from the pitcher, giving Bob's head a slight pang for all the cool enjoyment. For an instant the headache was unbearable. Bobby stopped and let it subside. After the last after-shocks had gone, he swallowed some more, put up the pitcher, and closed the door.

Back in the security of darkness, invisible to any outside prying eyes, the man made a quick visit to the bathroom. Once back in the bedroom/kitchen/living room, he bypassed the green chair and dropped onto the bed to his left. It's springs screeched at the man's humble weight.

Lying with his right forearm across his forehead, fully clothed, head to the window, Bobby stared at the wall to his right. Its skin glowed momentarily a lurid red, and



then a moonlight blue. That cycle churned over and over every few seconds in a hypnotizing manner. Bobby had meant to get some drapes for the window, but time hadn't allowed it.

Bobby's mind was completely blank, free from the stresses of the day, trying to merge into the blank wall. It was, in the daylight, an uncluttered rectangle of pure white, free from water stains or stains of any other sort. Now, though, the cycling trapezoid waved to Bobby — not like a person or a hand, but like a glassy body of water suddenly disrupted by a stone or a leaf.

Blinking hard to clear what had to have been an optical illusion, Billy reopened his eyes to see the wall ripple perfectly in widening concentric circles centered in the middle of the wall.

"Whoahhhh," he said, shocked.

The ripples continued, expanding more slowly than in water, rocking about the surface as if it were made of thick cream dyed red and then blue. Bobby sat up slowly, determined not to scare it away or stop the dream or kill the waves. For several minutes he observed the waves about his wall, now coming from all angles, making the plane's surface like that of a small pool; but the motion was slower, relaxed, mesmerizing.

Bobby finally summoned the courage to reach out to the wall. Not pointing or prodding, merely reaching, his hand neared the rippling surface. It halted only inches from the wall, a trickle of warning adding fear to the rainbow of emotions flooding the circuitry of Bobby's brain — but he ignored the tiny, screaming voice and touched the wall.

His fingertips seemed to go numb upon making contact, but it wasn't exactly contact. He could feel within in the substance that felt like incredibly fine sand, a gentle warmth — a liquid heat like a tropical ocean or the touch of a beautiful woman or a mother's womb.

Bobby pulled his fingers slowly from the waves, causing ripples from his own actions that collided mellowly with other crests and troughs. Curling his fingers and flexing them, Bobby decided that they were fine. Without taking his eyes from the wall, afraid that when they returned the dream would be gone, he brought his hand to his nose and smelled the fingertips.

He expected to catch the acrid aroma of grease and the stinging bite of cleaning detergent residue, but his fingers had no smell what so ever.

Bringing his other hand up to compare the two, averting his eyes for a brief instant, he noticed that a definite line marked where his fingers had gone into the wall. They were perfectly clean above this line, white as compared to the grubby skin of his left hand. Even under his fingernails the grease had been removed, revealing thin arcs of ivory white.

Eyes returning to the wall with a snap, Bobby rose, sliding his legs under his thighs and pushing himself upright, staring at the wall. Raising both arms this time, the man extended his hands and slipped them beneath the wavering surface. Now he felt the warmth with both hands, up to the

palms. It felt wonderful.

Again that tiny, wailing voice tried to convince him that his hands would be grabbed, and he would be jerked into the wall violently and eaten by some slaving demon, but nothing like that happened at all.

Instead, Bobby stepped from the bed with his right, shoeless foot, balancing on his left. Without any hesitation he stepped into the wall and disappeared behind its veil of waves. The last thing through was his left foot. It left this world without a sound.

The wall continued to ripple for a few more seconds, and then the waves disappeared one by one, seeming to roll off of the wall into oblivion. Soon, the wall was again a planer rectangle of white plaster cycling between glaring red and arctic blue. The refrigerator's compressor kicked in and hummed, rattling a little. An oriental couple could be heard arguing down the hall; they would soon come to blows. Across the alley the unknown woman with the sensual shape turned on a light in her bedroom and walked to the bathroom. A light rain began to fall outside.



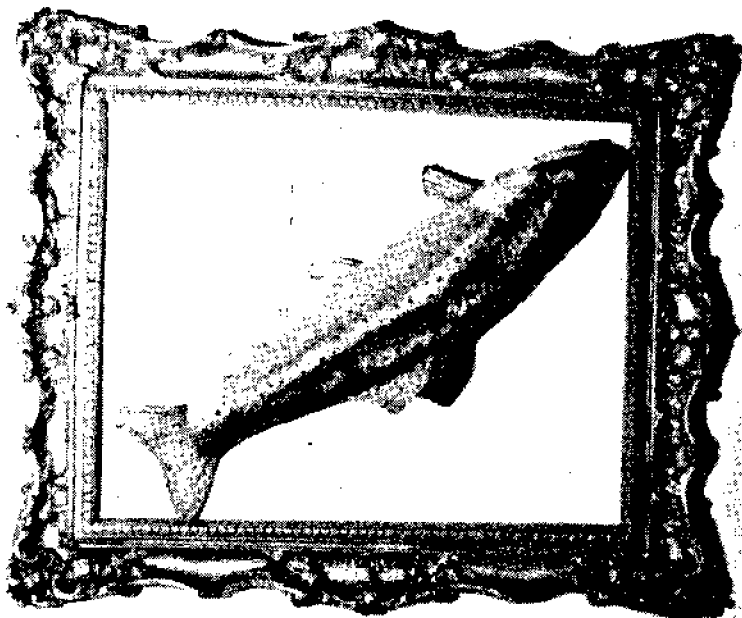
# FISHRAV

All photos & art layout by M. Lott



M. Lott

I never would wish  
for a fish on a dish.  
It would lose all the fun,  
not to mention the bliss  
of devouring those savory,  
multi-finned bits-  
still fresh in their wrap  
and eager to flap.



# Confessions of a Hypocrite

part iv : *finis*

by ashley l. raiteri

There are no more apologies. I will place no warning labels. My lyrics are explicit, my soul is implicit.

**The value of the metaphor is lost on an idiot.**

I don't really care much for individual coherence. the totality is the thing of it.

When I can see my sanity coming apart at the seams, I write. When I am wound and glued together so tightly every thought is a super-collider experiment, I can't even write my goddamn name.

I might but there is a deadline so I'm writing anyway, please forgive it.

## Introduction: father forgive me

The first thing I have to admit is musical. I like Nirvana. I can't help it. I don't think they are Quality (Zen and Motorcycles). I think they are the epitome of what I hate about pop culture, but I can't help it...I can't. Worse still, I not only like this other band Pearl Jam but I am afraid that I think that they are slightly valuable to the mass culture. My life is a series of weakened submissions. I am a victim.

Dr. David Ray, professor of History, has left the institute for a *leave of absence*. His absence is leaving me demoralized. I could perhaps criticize the administration for not creating a more conducive environment in which Dr. Ray would like to remain here. I could discuss the entire issue of what a university education is supposed to provide. I know that Dr. Ray is an example of what a real education can bestow upon you as a student. It's about working with your professors. It's about being treated as a co-worker instead of as a consumer or a product, depending on how close you are to graduation. Though to talk in this way would tell you nothing because you didn't know the man, and I am still too much in shock to adequately describe him. It would be much appreciated if the Technique would re-print his article. It was about the quality of Tech's education, and it is damned obvious from his writing what kind of

person Dr. Ray is, at least in the ideological realm.

God, what can I say about growing up? My brother sent me a postcard from Prague two years ago. All my life I wanted to be my brother. He was the coolest, smartest, most enlightened individual I knew. Then I started to grow up. The older I got, the more I thought of him as a peer. The older I became, the better he treated me. All my teenage years he kept telling me "you figure it out for yourself. I had to." So I did as best as could be expected. The postcard from Prague only said this: *you were too young, and i was too young to handle your being too young.*

I haven't reached any final stage of development. Every year I look back and am amazed at how moronic the things I had said sounded. Every year? Who am I kidding, it's more like every month, or day? I look back at how naive I was, or how little I knew about life and love. I feel good about that. It's a good indication of growth. Hopefully in old age I'll continue to have the same revelation every year. Each time contradicting out-dated truths that don't work in my new stage of growth. Personal development doesn't happen in a linear fashion.

you can't look at someone as being on a time line, two years ahead of, or six months behind you. Personal development

is all about figuring out what you want from life. What makes you happy? Fulfilled? These are not easy questions to answer for a lot of people. As you grow up, it is the time to experiment and evaluate the different possible universes that life has to offer. Jesus, I'm afraid I sound like a useless high-school guidance counselor. I step back from the page created fictionally on the computer, I examine in present time not even conceived of from the paradigm of the writer before editing. Who am I in comparison to the I that wrote before this sentence was inserted post scriptum but here in the middle of the paper to veil it's presence? I am two weeks older and a lot happier but tighter than ever. *Ma gavie la nata* take out the cork, one who is full of himself will be relieved if only he might take the cork out of his ass. Please doctor. *Ma gavie la nata*. I can't help you, i haven't figured out anything that's transferable with words. I wouldn't trust anyone who tries to pass on what they've learned too much. They're probably just writing to see themselves write.

But I was speaking of stepping back, off the page, and looking at the ideas from a larger perspective. It's healthy to grow and experiment. No one, except the Italians, wants to be a fascist. Why have I chosen the ideologies and cultural value systems I've chosen? How did I arrive at the system I currently use? Well certainly, I thought careful and considered many different angles, arguing each to it's logical conclusion, resting on the one that carries the most truth and objectivity to it. Conservatism is wrong! **Whew.** *'d you see that sarcasm?* (that's for those of you upon whom the value of a metaphor is lost.)





I choose to be going in this socialist-democrat/cultural diversified/jazz loving/ semi-non materialism, or rather semi-minimalistic materialism/ anti-establishment/ guilt stricken conspicuous consuming capitalist against his will direction not because it is the right direction to go in. It's not even the right direction to go in, for me. It's just a direction that i can possibly choose and it's more fulfilling and pleasant, more interesting. You might say I'm not even arguing I'm just bantering semantics but there is a clear differentiation to be made. I have no principles. I have no passion inherently defined. I get impassioned because I let myself get that way and fall in love (with life? women, men, my palm?) because I'm not paying attention in class.

Is there a point here? No! There no longer needs to be a point. I'm making an anti-point. Life is not reducible into points and lines that connect such dots creating a rational universe defining theory. Think about plasma, plasmum, plasm. These images are what life is reducible to. This has me thinking about Jonathan Swift. God, didn't you ever just want to jump into a mud swamp, big and brown, stinky and slimy. Didn't you want to roll around in blood and guts and shit and piss and sweat and tears, scatology? These things define life. The orgasm and it's salty semen that can make the squeamish vomit. Like the neighborhood kid who would defiantly eat dog excrement to gross out the girls, life is about thrusting your [redacted] like into a [redacted] menstrual fluids that hold blood and life, all for the sake of filling and pleasing your mate; remembering to [redacted] it all like lentil soup and tomatoes so as not to offend her. It's about reaching into the garbage disposal with the yellow paste and ho-weevil larvae, the extra spaghetti sauce and coffee grounds, mucous and spit; reach in there and get your wedding ring out.

### **Danger: falling metaphors ahead**

Sexual exploration is only one of the limitless methods to expand one's horizons. Fuck anything you can get your hands on. Anyone that will do it with you. Any gender, any race, any species. It'll bring you a lot closer to your own sexual identity and you'll feel a lot more comfortable with that identity when you are through. I know I do. But, this kind of business isn't required in any way at all in order to grow. These

kind of orgiastic desires are usually much better left in a masturbatory fantasy. Sometimes too much experimentation can leave you feeling spent and empty. It can leave you feeling worthless and degraded. I know I do. All I am saying is don't be so eager to lose yourself in wild abandon. At the same time, don't get too freaked out if all your peers are re-enacting Sodom and Gomorrah. It's not about morality, it's about individual expression and personal compatibilities.

You can also try *drugs*. (Eek! a harbiturate! ) By now you've figured out that marijuana doesn't make you go crazy and rape your neighbors after one puff. They lied. Nancy lied. The Government lied. They do that, that's their job. Do not extend this logic to the belief that then therefore all drugs are as safe and benign as marijuana. ( It is benign if used in moderation. Much more so than alcohol or nicotine. But that is another battle I don't want to fight. I'd rather protest for abortion rights than the right to get high. I do have accidental priorities that I can't avoid.) The point is, if you are going to try it, don't believe the hype. Read up on whatever dangerous psycho-active poison you are going to eat. Don't believe the stories about the guy that ate three sheets of acid and now has reached inner peace. There is no inner peace. Your dead head friend is in inert pieces. If you want to tune in and drop out, that's a valid choice. It simply necessitates a lot of thought. Read actual medical journals about the drug you're experimenting with. Ask your doctor. When I was a drug fiend I saw my doctor every two weeks, (he works here at the infirmary). Every two weeks I would go in and tell him how I felt, what ailments I had and I would ask him if they could be caused by the drugs I was doing. He told me straight out, without a lecture, that he didn't believe that my use of amphetamines was causing my heart problems. My therapist tells me straight out that my use of LSD did not cause my nervous break down. However, it could have. All we have learned is that something stronger and more fundamental is broken inside my head than could not have been done by a couple of milligrams ( yes, *milligrams*) of LSD. It's a gamble. I don't travel without leaving the room anymore. My horizons are too expanded. It's like my consciousness is on the rack.. I am working on focus these days. I don't feel the need for speed, or

XTC or heroin or hash. When I want to explode my borders I just call up my schizophrenic friends and ask personal questions about rape and divorce. I like to read about post-modernism and the science of culture or the culture of science. Sometimes I listen to Crash Worship and try and masturbate while riding my motorcycle.

### **Finished: you'll never work in this town again**

The artist in residence is examining his female lover/pupil's latest progress.

Lionel Dobie: it's amazing how much more interesting it's getting...

Pupil-Lover: interesting??

LD: It's not boring, you know you got a nice little irony working for you.

PL: Irony?

LD: Yeah, nice irony.

PL: How's the tension? last time you...

LD: It's nice

PL: nice??

LD: yeah, nice.

PL: You're full of shit you know that?? Look... could you just tell me...if I have any talent or if you think I'm just wasting my time because sometimes I feel like I should just quit because...just tell me what you think! C'mon.

Lionel Dobie: What the hell difference does it matter what I think. It's yours. I mean you make art because you have to, because you got no choice. It's not about talent it's about no choice but to do it. Are you any good? Well, you're twenty-two so who knows? Who cares? you wanna give it up? if you can give it up you weren't a real artist to begin with!

Then he storms and crashes back into his studio, kicking himself in the ass for saying the wrong thing. from *Scorcese's Life Lessons*.

Change, and expansion are alluring. They have no intrinsic value. They are not good by definition. It depends entirely on what you change from and what you change to. Which way you expand. Quit reading bullshit articles like this one and get a clue on your own because no one will give you one. Your too ignorant and I'm too stupid too deal with your being too ignorant.



# Gun Control Means Hitting Your Target"

by Jeffrey K. Hostetler

The National Rifle Association is currently fighting a heated battle with gun control lobbyists to hold up legislation which would require a five day waiting period on all firearms sold in the United States. So far the NRA has been successful in keeping this legislation, known as the Brady Bill, from being passed, but they have lost many battles over the outlawing of certain automatic and semi-automatic rifles, mainly foreign semi-automatic models which can be easily modified to fire automatically and all domestic and foreign automatic models. Although I may agree with gun control advocates that a five day waiting period and the outlawing of automatic or potentially automatic firearms is justified, as a member of the NRA, I applaud the efforts of the men and women who lobby in Washington, D.C. for the protection of the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The second amendment to the U.S. Constitution reads as follows: "A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the rights of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." From Webster's Ninth Dictionary, the definition of *infringe* reads as follows: "to encroach upon in a way that violates law or the rights of another." With this definition and the Second Amendment in mind, it can be seen how a heated debate over gun control legislation can be supported with arguments from both sides. Many Constitutional scholars believe that the Second Amendment has little or no bearing on an American's right to bear arms. While reading no further than the first clause of the amendment could lead one to this

conclusion, it is the second clause which clearly defends "the rights of the *people* to keep and bear arms," and does not mention a professional army or government controlled militia. Over these two clauses a real battle is being fought, and it is the stance of the NRA to forcefully oppose any legislation that might endanger the rights alluded to in the Second Amendment. Gun control advocates are attempting to cure this country's violent ills through anti-gun legislation and degrading, possibly repealing, the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. But the question remains: Will outlawing guns decrease gun related violence? I plan to defend the Second Amendment with 18th Century and contemporary examples of its importance, the unrealistic logic revealed in ALL gun control legislation, and the effect that the Second Amendment has on our daily lives here at Georgia Tech.

When the framers of the constitution became stuck at the impasse of stated versus inferred rights, several consequences were debated. If the rights of a citizen were enumerated, what would keep the government from outlawing all other rights not explicitly described within the Constitution? On the other hand, if a citizen's rights were not clearly stated and simply glazed over with broad, ambiguous language, what would keep the government from interpreting those broadly stated rights to its advantage and not the citizen's? Isn't it curious that in these debates the framer's referred to the government as a hostile, faceless body which only served to strangle rights rather than uphold them? When the Constitution was written, lawyers were

just as shrewd and cold blooded as they are today, and the framers, themselves lawyers, took this into account by adding a long list of ten amendments to their carefully worded Constitution; they also took care to insert a most important part about the protection of "implied" rights as well as those plainly stated (the content of the U.S. Constitution is not being contested here and a copy can be seen in any library).

Recently, gun control lobbyists have been attacking the relevancy of an amendment written over 200 years ago to modern times (though the other nine amendments sit with them pretty well). Some argue that the Second Amendment was meant to protect a state's ability to maintain a militia, and nothing more. Today, police forces are very powerful, and it is the current policy of the Bush administration to push legislation that gives the police more power. In other countries around the world, too various to name, the threat of military dictatorship is a reality. Illegal governments, operating around or without constitutions maintain order by executing citizens with weapons and keeping strict controls on the distribution of firearms. If the people of a nation wish to remain in control of their governments, they must be in a position to be a threat to that government, otherwise their leaders can take control by force. Victims of this kind of coup by a powerful regime are Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Philippines. If the citizens of these countries had been well armed, even with simple hunting rifles and hand guns meant for hunting and self protection, the militant dictators would have had a much more difficult time suppressing the power of the people. It may even have been impossible. There's a bumper sticker that really tickles my Nationalist sentiments and pride in being an American, and it reads like this: "God, Guns, and Guts Made America." The American settlers depended on their guns for protection and a cheap means for acquiring food. But the framers who wrote the Constitution saw firearms in a surprisingly modern context. Thomas Jefferson expressed his feeling while writing the Virginia Constitution: "No free man shall ever be debarred the use of

arms." James Madison felt that "the Constitution preserves the advantage of being armed" in his *The Federalist* essays. And Thomas Paine's strikingly modern observation, "arms discourage and keep the invader and plunderer in awe," supported the rights of Americans to arm themselves for their own protection. Today's American depends on his or her gun for protection, so that another may not infringe on his rights to life, liberty, and property, as the French Declaration of the Rights of Man reads (which is a re-work of our well known version: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness). As our right to bear arms becomes weaker and weaker, possibly leading to the outlawing of all private ownership of firearms, and the power of the police becomes greater and greater, ask yourself: Who will most profit from these actions in the end? It is not the people of the United States.

There are numerous bumper stickers reflecting the public's violent opposition to gun control: "You can have my gun when you pry it from my cold, dead fingers," "Fight Crime, Shoot Back," "When guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns," "If guns are outlawed, can we use swords?" "Guns don't kill people; people kill people," and another variation of the above title, "Gun control means hitting what you shoot at." All of these stickers may seem funny on the surface, but they relate a basic fear that all Americans living in the country or city share: the fear of crime coupled with the fear of having their only viable means of protection taken away by people who don't have to walk down Techwood drive or North Avenue and live right next to the highest homicide region in the South: Techwood Homes. Outlawing guns will not stop homicide at the hand of guns. Anyone who believes differently is fooling themselves. There are too many guns out there already, floating around unregistered

and in the hands of those who would use them for illegal acts. The bans on automatic and semi-automatic weapons haven't ended the occasional rattle of automatic gunfire that incoming freshmen hear once a week coming from Techwood Homes while they lay in bed at night. I can tell you from personal experience that it is quite disturbing.

## "... After the Los Angeles riots, 58,000 Californians bought and registered handguns..."

Gun control laws only work if they are obeyed. After the Los Angeles riots, 58,000 Californians bought and registered handguns, many of whom were told to wait fifteen days while the riots raged in their very own city. A terrifying fact that has been covered up by the media is that within the days that the riots took place, citizens whose fifteen day waiting period had expired were denied their guns, and ammunition sales were temporarily suspended throughout L.A.. Looters and rioters, however, were seen to invade gun shops and take all the firepower and ammunition they could ever need. It's no wonder California gun purchases are up 60% since April—the people of California will not be caught unarmed again. The final toll of those riots is 52 persons dead, 2383 injured, 10,000 arrested (50% of whom had previous records), and \$735 million in property damage. In my home city of Houston, Texas, (also in the month of April) my brother had his car stolen at gun point by a seventeen year old black male who had been convicted of numerous misdemeanors, imprisoned twice, and had broken his parole for the third time. In two weeks he will be done serving his *three year* sentence for unauthorized use of a stolen vehicle. In Harris County the current equation for jail term calculations is 28 days for every year of the sentence. What's to keep him from breaking parole and buying a \$25 revolver or a \$75 Glock (a 9mm, semi-automatic combat handgun) that has been distributed beyond all

government control so he can continue practicing his profession? These are prices that my brother and I have investigated: in 1988 the going price on a Chinese made sub-machine gun sold my high school shop class was \$125. Gun control legislation only affects a law abiding citizen's ability to defend himself and his property.

Today, it is illegal to have a handgun in New York City, the most crime ridden city in the United States, and the city with the most homicides by handgun. In Texas, where gun control is a four letter word, it is illegal to carry a handgun in a concealed fashion, which includes in your car, and any weapon that is carried in plain sight off of your own property must be twenty-two inches in length (basically a rifle). Georgia has one of the most pro-gun stances on gun control: you may keep a loaded handgun on the seat of your car or in the glove box, but if a burglar breaks into your home, you can't put a bullet in his brain unless he has some means of inflicting an equal damage to you (the minimum threat of lethality being defined as a knife), and you may not shoot him in the back (if he is fleeing), and it is illegal to shoot him outside of your house, with or without a lethal weapon. Either way, legal or not, if you fire your handgun or rifle within the city limits of Atlanta to defend your property or person, you get slapped with a ticket for discharging the firearm within the city limits. The definition of infringement comes to mind again, and it is difficult for me to see this kind of blatant disregard for the Second Amendment as anything less than the rape of my rights as a taxpaying citizen of the United States. Every bit of legislation that encroaches upon the rights protected by the Second Amendment causes its foundation to crumble away, little by little. The gun control lobbyists are trampling on OUR rights every day, and on the Georgia Tech campus it is no less insulting.

**W**HEN ASKED HOW MANY CARS HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM THE GEORGIA TECH campus in the month of April last spring quarter, a

GTDP officer replied, "Oh, about ninety." This officer then joked that that was three cars a night; most of the cars are stolen at night, and this summer quarter two cars have been stolen from my fraternity alone. The police believe that it's the work of a twosome. There have been four break-ins where the cars were not stolen, but the car's contents were thoroughly searched and looted, my truck included. Recently the houses on Fraternity Row have also been plagued with vagrants being caught inside them in the process of stealing students' property. So far this summer, in my fraternity house, a mountain bike, three wallets, two watches, and the keys to one of the stolen cars was lifted. One Wednesday night not too long ago a tall black man was caught walking through the Sigma Nu house and quickly escorted off of their property. This man was then seen to enter the Beta Theta Pi house at approximately midnight and was again escorted off of the property. Half an hour later he was caught on the second floor of the Beta house, and this

time ran from the premises. The Betas then watched this man walk up to the front steps of the Delta Tau Delta house and stop. Enraged, the Betas chased the man off, who ran immediately for the Architecture Complex and disappeared.

Crime like this should not be tolerated on a college campus. At Georgia Tech firearms are strictly forbidden, and must be checked in with the police department and left there. Being caught with a rifle or handgun is grounds for expulsion. The reason for the rule is mainly to protect the police, who obviously cannot control the crime on this campus and often joke about and dismiss stolen property reports. There is nothing on this campus to deter crime, so it naturally afflicts Tech students both physically and mentally. Tom Brokaw has been doing a series of inflammatory reports on guns in the U.S., and when interviewing an imprisoned burglar asked if he was afraid of homeowners with handguns. The burglar replied that that was his greatest fear and

the reason why he burglarized homes only when he was sure that the residents would not be home. This burglar also carried an unregistered, illegal handgun while burglarizing homes. I believe that my conclusion is obvious: the students of Georgia Tech should be extended the same rights as citizens within the city limits, the rights to keep firearms in their homes and use them to protect themselves and their property, a right explicitly stated in the Constitution of the United States yet denied on this campus.

The Second Amendment was written into the Constitution of the United States as a means to prevent the government from taking the right to bear arms away from the people of this nation. It was written in clear language, stating that no one shall infringe upon this basic right, yet there are people in Washington right now working to make guns and the Second Amendment museum pieces, but in this they are deluded; although they can make the Second Amendment an artifact, guns will endure just as war has endured through the ages. How free is an American who can't defend himself from any form of oppression? At Georgia Tech, a student's right to bear arms has been completely revoked, and all over the country handguns and rifles are becoming more and more difficult to purchase and own—while sales of handguns skyrocket making any thought of collecting handguns from the general populace a modern day nightmare. There is no viable solution to this dilemma. Gun control lobbyists insist that outlawing guns will keep that drug addict or burglar out of their homes, when in fact it has been shown that the presence of handguns in the home deter crime. Only one question remains: When that masked man barges into your house with a gun or knife in his hand, will you defend yourself with equal force or pray that he doesn't believe in killing? Will you lie on the floor, face down with the wide, cold muzzle of a shotgun at the back of your neck and wish you had a gun?

## Music Review

**They Might Be Giants**  
**Apollo 18** (Electra)  
Ali Mahjouri, Michael Piasecki

"They Might Be Giants in the Houuuusse Boyeeeee!!" Not quite.  
"Whoaaa!! Fuck Yeah, Dude!! These dudes rock!!" Nope.  
"...And now for two of Brooklyn's finest." Sorry, pal—that doesn't work either.  
You see, the fact is, They Might Be Giants is one of those bands that came from another world where categorization is a sin. On Apollo 18, they do all kinds of things ranging from jazz to the Manchester voice of somebody caught in a state of redundancy ("I walk along darkened corridors" repeated about eight times—from *Fingertips*). For two guys from Brooklyn, that's pretty impressive. For two guys period, that's impressive.  
So what is it about John and John? John Linnell is the man that plays accordion and a slew of other different instruments on the album. John Flansburgh is the guitar guy. They have a brew stranger than any of their other efforts just waiting for us to taste on Apollo 18. It contains tracks that are

classic T.M.B.G. such as "The Statue Got Me High" which is filled with the irony and plays on words that are seen on previous They Might Be Giants albums. The new album is at a level of maturity for the silliness that makes them one of the funniest bands in the business.

The most interesting aspect of Apollo 18 is one of the tracks—"Fingertips". It utilizes the shuffle technology on CD players. When you play the Cd on shuffle, the song which is actually broken up into 21 different parts, is dissected. "Fingertips" is like a K-tel sampler of They Might Be Giants' lighter side.

On the whole, T.M.B.G.'s new album is a mature effort and sustains the trademark humor and irony of their previous albums. I personally get bored of T.M.B.G. but then again I've been listening to them for five years. A different feel than Flood but a refreshing break from Color Me Badd. Oh, and They Might Be Giants have been assigned by NASA as musical spokespeople for International Space Year. Time to jump into my "Spacesuit" and fly to Venus or something like that.

# Nature is the Cultural Horizon

## *Toward a Sustainable Agriculture*

by Stephen Danyo

**F**OOD IS A WEAPON", said Earl L. Butz, former U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. He is right, it seems, as small farms collapse under a triple-threat of technocredit, petrodollars and agribusiness, all encouraged by current USDA policies. These forces have driven farm families out of the countryside and into the cities where, disconnected from their familiar ways of life, isolation sets in. This trend has been increasing most obviously since World War II, and has now come to a head. In 1974, only four percent of U.S. farms produced half of all U.S. farm products and less than a third of this four percent produced a third of all farm products, a fact hailed by Mr Butz as a great human achievement, since, with his logic it follows "that 96 percent of America's manpower is freed for food production" — without asking what it may have been 'freed' for, or how many as a consequence have been freed from employment of any kind."<sup>1</sup>

Apart from the loss of, for many, some control over their own lives and their own farms, and the resulting macroeconomic ripple effects of underemployment, the ecological effects of the establishment of the corporate farm have been dire. Wes Jackson, a permaculture farmer and researcher, warns that the topsoil cannot take the abuse; gentler, more sustainable and self-sufficient methods of farming are currently available — methods of production and organization that are more productive than corporate farming — that remain unutilized, except by a very small handful of farmers. What are some of these alternatives? What policies may be adopted to encourage the formation of a new American agriculture along sustainable lines? It may be relevant to first look at a short history of U.S. agriculture: how did we get to the situation at hand?

### **The Industrialization of Agriculture and the Marginalization of the Family Farm: the Roots of Current Policy**

The first twenty years of the twentieth century saw a near-competition between sustainable farming and an emergent industrialized agriculture. In 1911, Franklin King published *Farmers of Forty Centuries: Permanent Agriculture in China, Korea and Japan*. It showed how soil fertility was preserved throughout 4000 years of East Asian farming. This and other books of the time concentrated on the holistic system dynamics found in agroecosystems. While these kinds of books were being published, new capital-intensive technologies began appearing in the fields. Farmers could now, through the miracle of industrial technology, increase their productivity by 20 to 30 percent. Their acreage grew, as the new machines allowed them to work more

land. Growing urban populations demanded more food; U.S. farmers and government policy obliged.

By the 1950s, "technological advances had caused a shift in mainstream agriculture, creating a system that relied on agrichemicals, new [high-yielding] varieties of crops and labor saving, energy-intensive farm machinery."<sup>2</sup> These advances enabled monocropping — growing the same crop every year on the same land — while government programs elaborated it by subsidizing only a few major crops: wheat, corn and some other grains. The result was extensive soil erosion and agrichemical pollution of water. According to Wes Jackson, the soil (which took 400 million years to accumulate) is disappearing 25 percent faster than during the Dust Bowl. The government's response has been to encourage "low till," or "cultivating less and spraying more: the weeds that escape the tractor get blasted with Lasso or 2,4-D. To Jackson, the Department of Agriculture's logic seems worthy of the Pentagon: "We had to poison the soil to save it."

The "purely" economic costs of production were also hard-hit: between 1950 and 1985, interest, capital-related expenses, and manufactured farm inputs (chemical fertilizers, machinery, pesticides, etc.) "almost doubled from 22 to 42 percent, while labor and on-farm input expenses declined from 52 to 34 percent."<sup>3</sup> The small, self-sufficient family farm, now very rare, is fodder for myth and reminiscence, and culture is compromised. Even as early as 1948, "at the dawn of the chemical age, American farmers used 15 million pounds of insecticides and lost seven percent of their crops to insects; today they use 125 million pounds and lose 13 percent."<sup>4</sup>

All of this stems from an overemphasis on production and profit maximization (without the ecological and social costs factored in), logically following from the corporate mindset and organization — something not lost on the small farmer, and on Wendell Berry:

*[The] exclusive emphasis on production will accelerate the mechanization and chemicalization of farming, increase the price of the land, increase overhead and operating costs, and thereby further diminish the farm population. Thus the tendency, if not the intention, of Mr Butz's confusion of farming and war, is to complete the deliverance of American agriculture into the hands of corporations.<sup>5</sup>*

This emphasis is what the Department of Agriculture calls "full production," a polite term on the surface, that is reinforced by

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government policies designed to help complete the deliverance. Kirkpatrick Sale explains that

*the Farmers Home Administration underwrites loans every year overwhelmingly for chemical-based, machine-intensive, monocultural, and large-scale farms, thus setting the pattern for local banks and credit institutions and also for equipment and chemical suppliers. And because federal funds have accounted one way or another for between 20 and 40 percent of all farm income since 1955—easily the largest single source—what the Federal government does is the single greatest element determining the character of American agriculture.*<sup>6</sup>

If government has played such a big part in creating the current situation, then it can play just as big a part in getting us out of it, and into a sustainable agriculture. Ideally or idealistic as this sounds, maybe powerbrokers should be given the benefit of the doubt: "as businessmen and politicians, perhaps they did not know how strenuously agricultural production must be qualified by the restraints and disciplines of soil maintenance and conservation. Perhaps they did not know what 'full production' means in present practice — present technology, methods and disciplines.... It means that production is being paid for, not just with labor, money, and fuel, but with land."<sup>7</sup>

## A Sustainable Agriculture

A crude measure of agriculture's unsustainability may be to include in the cost of production the costs of the land's degradation and the small farmer's marginalization or obliteration. By including these costs we can see the true expense of corporate agriculture as being prohibitively expensive. The "full production" agenda produced more than food; it gave us depleted topsoil and poisoned produce. Agribusiness's argument that theirs is the most efficient organization of production is fallacious.

But we do not even have to look at these externalities to find sustainable farms that are, in comparison to corporate farming, economically productive and worthwhile; we can compare using the corporate yardstick. The National Research Council's Board on Agriculture published a controversial study, *Alternative Agriculture*, finding, among other things, that "well-managed farms growing diverse crops with little or no chemicals are as productive and often more profitable than conventional [corporate] farms." The profitability is increased since production inputs are much cheaper. This finding is supported by many other studies, including one published in 1980 by the USDA called *Report and Recommendations on Organic Farming*. Without including the ecological and social externalities resulting from conventional or corporate agriculture, the sustainable farm is shown to have merit.

So what is sustainable agriculture?

According to ALTERNATIVE AGRICULTURE, sustainable agriculture is "any system of food or fiber production that systematically pursues the following goals:

- \* *More thorough incorporation of natural processes such as nutrient cycles, nitrogen fixation, and pest-predator relationships into the agricultural production processes;*

- \* *Reduction in the use of off-farm inputs with the greatest potential to harm the environment or the health of farmers and consumers;*

- \* *Creative and productive use of the biological and genetic potential of plant and animal species;*

- \* *Improvement in the match between cropping patterns and the productive potential and physical limitations of agricultural lands; and*

- \* *Profitable and efficient production with emphasis on improved farm management and conservation of soil, water, energy, and biological resources.*

This litany captures the scientific requirements of a sustainable agriculture as expressed by the National Academy of Sciences and the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology, as well as others. But some people such as E.F. Schumacher, Wendell Berry, Wes Jackson and Herman Daly also emphasize the attraction of increased jobs created by appropriate technologies; and with the arrival of many new jobs, the resulting positive impacts on community health. Today we brag, as does former Agriculture Secretary Clifford Hardin, about the fact that "only one person in 43 is needed to produce food," liberating others to "become doctors, teachers, shoemakers, janitors...."<sup>8</sup> But, embedded in this brutal equation is the fact that some have been "liberated" from employment altogether. Another component of sustainable agriculture is to base it around local and regional needs and markets — almost begging for an extensive system of small farms and marketing cooperatives to exploit economies of scale at the distribution level instead of at the production level.

Essentially, a sustainable agriculture system expands past the current one-dimensional focus of producing as much farm product as possible. Agribusiness's materialist perspective even counteracts the two other purposes of agriculture, as noted by Schumacher; one is "to keep man in touch with living nature, of which he is and remains a highly vulnerable part;" the second is "to humanise and ennoble man's wider habitat."<sup>9</sup> So far we have failed in these two purposes. Humans are increasingly out of touch with nature; and our wider habitat is contracting: "Before the Green Revolution [which introduced western industrialized agricultural technologies and techniques to the developing world] bulldozed them under, 30,000 varieties of rice had been grown in India, and ethnobotanists have reported more than fifty kinds of potato in a single village in the Andes."<sup>10</sup>

Expanding past the materialist emphasis the industrial economy has placed on agriculture, and embracing the two additional values that should be inherent in any agriculture, involves

**... 'We had  
to poison  
the soil to  
save it.'**

viewing agroecosystems contextually. Soil scientists Reganold, Papendick and Parr, writing in *SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN*, emphasize that sustainable agriculture "is not so much a specific farming strategy as it is a system-level approach to understanding the complex interactions within agricultural ecologies."<sup>11</sup> Wes Jackson would agree. He tells the story of a biology professor he had in college who stressed that the wilderness should be the model upon which we base agriculture: "nature is the cultural horizon."<sup>12</sup>

But this is where the agreement may stumble. Sustainable agriculture means many different things, ranging from a few "sustainable" techniques to something more radical. In Jackson's eyes, "nine tenths of what huddles under the umbrella of sustainable agriculture is 'low input,' while maybe one tenth takes nature as its model."<sup>13</sup> Instead of viewing the agroecosystem holistically or contextually, the agriculturalist "seeks to homogenize the environment," says Jackson. "When you plow, you homogenize, because you've destroyed the plant-soil interactions, plant-water interactions. And when you move to a chemical approach to agriculture, that's further homogenization, because you have the herbicides that knock out all the weeds."<sup>14</sup> The homogenization of agriculture and the environment has at least part of its roots in the homogenization of academics and professions, or what Herman Daly calls "disciplinolatry," the compartmentalization of knowledge and the universities, "in which," Berry writes in *The Unsettling of America*, "complementary, mutually sustaining and enriching disciplines are divided, according to 'professions,' into fragmented, one-eyed specialties." The final result has been the specialization of agriculture, which sacrifices biodiversity by exploiting comparative advantage between only the largest farms — farms that tend to practice monoculture.

**V**IEWING THE AGROECOSYSTEM AS A CONTEXTUAL SYSTEM INVOLVES, to Jackson, using the indigenous American prairie as a model. In practice, the agriculturally productive prairie will be somewhere between a natural prairie and the best current

organic and sustainable farms. Again, nature is the model; and since a natural state cannot be achieved, it becomes the "cultural horizon." And closest to that horizon is the small owner-operated farm. The farmer who lives on his land presumably knows it best. There is no widespread prescription that applies equally to every farm. The family farm is best prepared to enable and elaborate a sustainable agriculture of any kind, given the right incentives, policies and commitment.

It is clear that a resurgence of family farms does not necessarily mean that the farming will be sustainable, although it is much easier to envision a sustainable agricultural system with small farms producing for regional and local markets than it is to imagine a sustainable system on a very large farm that often focuses on profit maximization, monocropping and production for export. In moving toward a sustainable agriculture, it seems an important component would be the small, owner-operated farm. Marty Strange, author of *Family Farming: A New Economic Vision*, reports that from 1940 to 1984, the return from gross farm income dramatically decreased from 38 percent to seventeen percent, the same period that agriculture became corporatized at the expense of the family farm. Similarly, a 1987 survey of 551 Iowa farms demonstrates that large farms are both less profitable and less efficient, finding that "per acre profits were greatest on farms of only 180 to 499 acres, and smallest on farms of over 1000 acres. This finding is consistent with results from similar surveys taken annually in Iowa from 1976 to 1983. They indicate that small farms also get more crop output per dollar invested, and medium size farms outpace the larger farms in output per dollar expended."<sup>15</sup> So we can see that the small farm, even without the sustainable criteria, makes more economic sense than getting 50 percent or more of our food from a mere four percent of producers. Still, one of the most important reasons large farms will tend toward the unsustainable is that "75 percent of the people who own farmland in the United States are not farmers, and less than half the land in the Midwestern Corn Belt

is owned by farmers. Thus, those who actually farm have little long-term interest in conserving the land for future generations."<sup>16</sup> And it is precisely such concern for future generations which underlies any sustainability criterion of ethic.

## What To Do?

Current policy is a dead end. If left the way it is, the topsoil will be further plundered, unemployment will persist as populations continue to rise, agribusiness will become more centralized (the production power and wealth being confined to a small minority), and the food will suffer from the continued use of chemiculture and the drawing down of biological stock. Herman Daly reduces the current set of policies to three interrelated impacts:

*The commitment to productivity reduces the need for farmers and depopulates the rural area. The commitment to profit maximization, with prices not including social and ecological costs, leads to unsustainable use of the land. The commitment to free trade [for comparative advantage] leads to specialized production for export and, especially in the tropics, to the inability of rural peoples to feed themselves.*<sup>17</sup>

Specifically, there are four areas whereby the government has handed agribusiness the advantage, giving "impetus to the constant process of industrialization and corporate control: 1) agricultural support programs that encourage monocropping and off-farm inputs, 2) tax policies that subsidize capital investment in agriculture (which leads to non-farmers owning farms), 3) labor policies in the agricultural sector, and 4) the research orientation of the USDA and of the land grant colleges that reinforce current unsustainable practices and techniques."<sup>18</sup>

The question then becomes, How can policy be created that would enable the small farmer to operate an economically and environmentally sustainable farm?

Tax oil, as well as pesticides and

fertilizers, to include the externalities that industrial agriculture does not yet include. Pursuing a cheap food policy to the exclusion of other important goals cheapens the land and the community. Corporate farms would then have an incentive to discontinue or reduce unsustainable monocropping. Taxing oil would also promote the development of other technologies such as wind and solar power, and taxing chemicals would encourage increased use of on-farm inputs. The playing field, as it were, would be made more level, as comparative advantage would become prohibitively expensive, allowing the small farm to compete with agribusiness.

Farmer-owned cooperatives could also help level the playing field by providing access to information about sustainable farming, as well as access to markets, credit, and appropriate technologies. We can take a hint from some farmer-to-farmer networks, such as the Practical Farmers of Iowa, who have agreed to research and demonstrate sustainable technologies on their land. Promoting developments such as these types of networks will be valuable in educating the farmer — and, more importantly, learning from him or her. In general, offering low-cost credit to those wanting to establish owner-operated farms would help, instead of the federal government's current expenditures being focused on big farms expansion — expenditures which could be cut in half, according to Marty Strange.

*Lender-owned land taken from failed family farms should be put back on the resale market for small farmers to use. Congress has already established various programs to help facilitate this, but so far the programs have not been widely implemented.*

Incentives for monocropping should be abolished. The current federal farm programs support prices for a small number of crops such as corn and other feed grains, wheat, cotton and soybeans, receiving "roughly three fourths of all U.S. crop subsidies and account for approximately two thirds of cropland use. The lack of price supports for other crops

effectively discourages farmers from rotating their crops and from planting green manures. Instead it gives them powerful incentive to practice monoculture to achieve maximum yields and profits."<sup>19</sup>

Research conducted by land grant colleges and the USDA needs to be weeded of its agribusiness funding that reinforces the status quo. Up until now, research has focused on the development of chemically intensive technologies for perpetuating grain monocultures.<sup>20</sup> Research should revolve around sustainability issues, and there is a dearth of such research, although pockets of stalwarts such as Wes Jackson continue to increase the knowledge base.

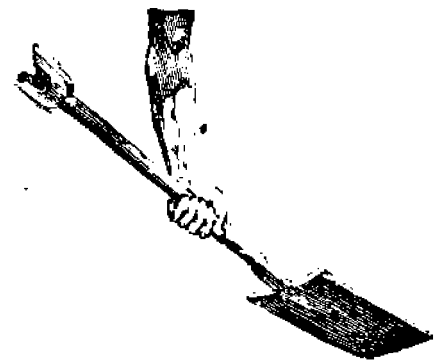
## The Culture of Agriculture

If food is a weapon wielded by agribusiness to destroy the small farm (and with it any chance of sustainable agriculture), then the defense may lie in new government policies that would encourage sustainable practices. Before that, however, Berry argues that there must be a spiritual revolution among individuals. He identifies our current agricultural malaise as fundamentally a cultural problem, with a cultural remedy.

*We are eating thoughtlessly, as no other entire society even has been able to do. We are eating — drawing our lives out of our land — thoughtlessly. If we study carefully the implications of that, we will see that the agricultural crisis is not merely a matter of supply and demand to be remedied by some change of government policy or some technological "breakthrough." It is a crisis of culture.*<sup>21</sup>

He is identifying the consumer's place and responsibility in all this. If we do not demand a change in the role of producers of food, we will be nothing but consumers, consuming labor, land, and eventually ourselves. There are two other obstacles to a creation of sustainable, small-scale agriculture, according to Berry: farming, like teaching, has a low level of social respect, and second, "after a half century of

industrial agriculture, farmers of any kind have become a tiny minority, and good farmers rare." But even then, argues Jackson, there are enough farmers out there doing good, sustainable farming that we already have most of the needed inspiration.



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response to both the apathy at Tech and also the general "bitchy" attitude of the student body, and how I think things can improve through the North Avenue Review. There are a great number of completely unproductive

attitudes at Tech which seem to clash with students' knowledge of some of the problems and even, from what I've found, a sort of contradiction since most students do wish that things here were better. Many people feel helpless and left out, so now here's your chance to express your views. Tech has so many diverse people, so why do we isolate ourselves culturally, ethnically, religiously and politically and then complain that we aren't able to meet other kinds of people? We as students don't have isolate ourselves, and we shouldn't. After working for NAR, I have found that it has helped me in solving this problem that we at Tech have become so famous for griping about, and I think it could help you too.

Apathy at Tech (from what I've learned) is at an all-time high. Students don't see what's around them, they really don't seem to care. People spend the majority of their time complaining about things that affect them in adverse ways but don't do anything about them, and I am just as guilty as the next person. People hide themselves in their dorm rooms with a computer or a bottle because there is nothing on campus that interests them, and that attitude MUST change. After working for NAR and writing articles about anything at all that interests me or bothers me at Tech, I have found that there are many wonderful opportunities at this school that challenge Tech's wide variety of students to get involved, and they would benefit from your own individual views; I urge the student body to take off the blinders they got in their FASET packs and look because there are opportunities out there. NAR is the perfect instrument for finding other organizations and people that you may have some common interests with, since its staff and readership has many diverse views and interests. And, of course, NAR is a great tool for allowing you as writer to express your most personal opinions and to share them with others who WANT to hear them.

# Get Involved Or Shut Up

an editorial by Michael Piasecki

The majority of Tech's students and the campus itself are generally considered to be conservative, and the fact that in the past NAR has been labelled a "left-wing rag," has deterred many people from this school from writing for it. Well, I am here to tell you that NAR urges people from ALL backgrounds and persuasions to write for it; conservatives have opinions, and NAR welcomes them with open arms. I dare Tech's conservative majority to write to NAR; its very simple: if you like it, then you should contribute to make it even better, and if you don't like it, tell us and HELP us change by voicing your opinions and ideas for change in it. We really do feel strongly about this, and we feel that NAR can be used as a stepping stone from just one publication that you may or may not agree with to many of the pressing things at Tech that affect you as a student and as a person. Possibly the favorite pastime of Tech's student body is to bitch and complain, and this worthless and unproductive activity must change. If students have the energy to see what bothers them, then we should channel their energy toward voicing these opinions to those who make the decisions. It's very funny and ironic that everyday I see and hear many intelligent people wasting valuable time complaining about things that are certainly within the reach of change and nothing is done. Simple complaining that "Tech sucks" just won't do - your college life is what you make of it, and if you wimp out by not getting involved, then your college experience will be an unattractive and unmemorable one. NAR is a publication which can open your eyes to many of the things at Tech that you may like but have never heard of, so I don't want to hear that "Tech sucks" any more. It's completely up to you.

The Olympiad is coming, and do you think that when all of these different people from a wide and diverse range of cultures come to this school they are going to appreciate the destructive and apathetic attitude that is occupying it? Many people will come here

and think that the students who created this monster are a bunch of red-neck ignorant Americans, rather than open-minded, and active Americans. Many students may not care what people think about this school, because many of you are only here to get your degree and get

out, but I care a lot and there are actually a good number of students who also care and want to show the world some of the things at Tech that make it worthwhile, like NAR. I only hope that students see the Olympiad as an opportunity to showcase this school, as well as learn from the experience of being exposed to many lifestyles that are very different from yours but quite possibly more appealing than the "boring" one you have enslaved yourself in at Tech.

So, in closing, I do feel that Tech may be the perfect place for students to close themselves off and not get involved with anything, especially a publication which serves your needs and allows you as an individual to still feel a sense of being a part of something. But that can change, all you have to do is want it to by getting involved. I and the staff of NAR welcome anyone to write for this magazine. It will help to open your eyes, enrich your life at Tech, and allow you to share with us what you think is special and different about you. I challenge, no dare the student body of Tech to get involved, because from what I've seen I don't think you are capable, so prove me wrong! There are some wonderful things happening at Tech that you don't see because you have blinded yourselves, and if you sit on your ass you will miss them and lose your College Experience while on the road to a degree and a job. College is about learning, experimenting and experiencing, and if you quit by locking yourself up with excuses, then you will not only miss out on the opportunity to enrich yourself, but you will lose the chance to share with the rest of us what things make you an individual, and then Tech will have meant even less than you complain about it to be.

**Editors' Note:** Mr. Piasecki is a writer for the North Avenue Review. His opinions are not necessarily the opinions of any other members of the NAR staff.



# HOUSE OF POLITICS

*A look ahead to the November election  
by staff members Tom Kemp and Joseph  
Stallings Cindy Crawford not  
included (Thank God)*

## Can "Slick Willie" Win in '92?

by Tom Kemp

"So, who you voting for? Really?! Yea, well, I was for Tsongas in the beginning, then I even thought about George Bush, for half-a-second, but then I decided that my only option in the 1992 race is Bill Clinton. Yea, I know; I don't really like him either; but come on, he's the only shot the country's got!"

Do these words sound familiar? To many Americans, this is exactly the type of sentiment that just may sweep Bill Clinton into the Oval Office. Yet, even as the Presidential frontrunner, Bill Clinton is still not the favored son of the American electorate. Why not?! Bill Clinton is a progressive, middle-class, moderate Democrat running against an incumbent President that America blames for her economic woes, her lack of dedication to education, and a host of other problems that has the American citizenry up in arms! Is Bill Clinton really such an undesirable candidate that the American public, and even many ardent Democrats, feel that voting for him is just the "lesser of two evils?"

No, Bill Clinton is an excellent candidate that many Americans recognize as right in step with their values and their vision for America. Then why is "Slick Willie" still known as the *slightly* better of the two choices (a term also attributed to Michael Dukakis during the 1988 Presidential Race)?

This stigma is not the fault of Bill Clinton, or even any of his PR wizards running his campaign for President. Bill

Clinton is the victim of an ugly mood that has swept through American with a vengeance in 1992! This is a mood that began in 1968 with the death of Robert Kennedy, the reelection of Richard Nixon in 1972, the failed Presidency of Jimmy Carter in 1980, and the end of the high-rolling, gun slinging times we called the 1980's. No one is satisfied anymore; the spunk and puke have gone out of Presidential elections. No one feels like they have a stake in the destiny of the country.

Now, I'm not saying that this trend in the American political mood is here to stay; on the contrary, I believe that the American public will hop on their favored handwagon again, yell giddy-up Silver (or Bill, or George, or...heaven

forbid...Teddy), and take the American electoral process by the horns. But for now, Bill Clinton and George Bush must live in the specter of a dying optimism known as the American democratic process. It'll be fun to see who has enough brass and balls to pull out a win in November.

Oh, and by the way; that first part I wrote about "Indecision '92," that's not the game for me. I've been a Bill Clinton supporter since August of last year. Go get 'em, Slick Willie! See y'all in the White House come this November!

*Tom Kemp is the Undergraduate Treasurer for Student Government, as well as being a "yellow dawg Democrat." Mr. Kemp may be reached for contact or comment by mail: 31142 Georgia Tech Station, Atlanta 30332.*

## Clinton or Bush? (or how I learned to stop worrying and look forward to the November elections) by Joseph M. Stallings

Before I begin, let me say that in this article, I am *not* going to tell you which of the candidates for the U.S. Presidency I will be endorsing in November. This article should not be seen as a *New York Times* op-ed, so you will just have to wait - in exalted anticipation - for the next edition of the *North Avenue Review* to hit the stands before I tell you why I'm voting for Bill Clinton (just kidding...or am I?). Instead, I'd like to give you some guidelines - some advice, if you will - as you prepare for the big decision you will have to make in November. For I know that many of you

have only recently turned 18 years of age, or that you were not old enough to vote in the Great Campaign of 1988. In November 1992, then, you shall have the chance to lose your election-virginity once and for all. And what a great race '92 is stacking up to be, huh?!

O.K., the basics first: **VOTE, VOTE, VOTE.** Like eating Quaker oatmeal, it's just simply the right thing to do. Why? Well, I can think of a number of pretty good reasons why you need to go to the polls: First, if you *don't* vote, you have no right to complain about your

government. Instead, you will be despised and viewed as belonging to that coveted group, the "apathetic masses." So even if you'd rather sit through reruns of *Gimme A Break!* for weeks rather than vote for any of the given candidates and/or their parties, you can at least cast a "no vote." Or you could write-in Dick Nixon. Or Otis Nixon. Or Dick Van Dyke. Just as long as you vote, I'll be happy.

Second, your vote *can* make a difference. Did you know that in 1960, John F. Kennedy defeated Richard M. Nixon by a mere 112,881 votes (out of nearly 69 million cast)? Do you realize that if only 4500 voters in Illinois and 28,000 in Texas had changed their minds and decided to vote for Tricky Dick, that there would be no Camelot? No Jackie O., or Oliver Stone? 98,721 assassination experts would be out on the streets looking for jobs (now THAT's scary), and my private library at home would be reduced to about four books (not including my Kissinger books - I never count works of fiction when counting the books in my library).

Finally, aside from going to church, it's the only noble way to skip out on classes and not feel guilty about it in the morning. Plus you get those neat little stickers that say I HAVE VOTED - HAVE YOU? Guys: put this dandy little sticker over your nostrils, point to it as you proudly stroll down campus, and appear well-informed by purchasing, and then sporting, a *USA Today* 1992 Election Handbook rolled up in the front pocket of your cut-off Duckheads. The girls go nuts!

Another golden rule, one that is far too often neglected, is the notion that when you cast your vote, you are not voting for a man (or soon, a woman), but a set of ideas, of principles. The faulty logic of the converse of this rule usually goes as such: "I support gay rights. Bill Clinton supports gay rights. Bill Clinton and I support gay rights. I am a one issue voter. Therefore, I'm voting for Bill Clinton - an ardent supporter of gay rights." O.K., but do you think *everyone* in Clinton's White House is going to be pro-gay rights? Let's be realistic here. Do you really think that the young Bill Clinton sat down one day and said, "Damn it! I've got to help the homosexuals. It's a shame the way they are treated in this country!" We both know that when Al Gore and Elvis get to the White House, they'll sit around late at night, chew the fat with their Washington huddies, and laugh

at all of the people who voted for them because they thought Clinton and Gore, as *individuals*, would make a difference. Does Clinton care about minorities? Does Bush care about the unborn? About the religious right? Of course not. This would imply that politicians have passions and moral convictions, which of course, they do not. If they did, they would be teaching high school in South Central or paving cement roads in Somalia.

So forget what the candidate said last Tuesday, or what the candidate did five years ago and instead take a look at the big picture. In what broader direction does the Bush *campaign* or the Clinton *campaign* want to take the country? What kinds of people are supporting either campaign? Are these the kinds of people that you tend to associate with? Do they like the same music that you tend to listen to. Are these the kinds of people who share the same beliefs and values as you do? That, my friends, is what really matters.

Finally, some incoherent closing thoughts: in my estimation, when you vote for George Bush, you are voting for conservatism, pragmatism, and gradualism. If you think, "hey - I like the direction America is going in - I'm proud of my president and my country - and I feel good about the future," then by George, Bush is your man.. Rah! Rah! Four more years! On the other hand, when you vote for Bill Clinton, you are voting for progressivism, liberalism, and activism. You tend to think, "hey - this country could be a helluva lot better, and I think we need change." Go Elvis!

So pay very little attention all of those nit-picky *New York Times* editorials that say George Bush can never be a great president because of his bonehead Vice-President, or because he is the only American President in history to have been spoofed in a major film *while he was still in the White House*, or that Bill Clinton would spend too much time on sax instead the affairs of state. Oh God, and please, no more of the tired "I didn't inhale" jokes. So Bill Clinton smoked doob in the 1960's. Who didn't? Who cares!? He probably thought Grand Funk Railroad and Manfred Mann were cool, too. Does this make him evil? I don't think so...then again, I voted for Dukakis in '88, so what do I know, right?

## Notes

Please do not misinterpret this as implying that you should vote three times for your candidate, which of course would be illegal. The U.S. Constitution provides one vote per person - no cheating allowed. O.K., so it may be true that in Daleyite Chicago, dead people rose from their graves to go out to City Hall and vote for the Democrats. But that was before 1968, when Dick Nixon cleaned up politics and made the profession respectable again.

2. More on this after you freshmen have had your first Political Science course (i.e., POL 1251), at which point you will make the leap into political adulthood by asking your POL professor, "why are Americans so apathetic when it comes to voting?" If your professor's reply consumes at least 20 minutes, and if your professor manages to use "apathy", "Reagan", and "Georgia Tech" in the same sentence, then it would probably do you well to make a point to attend every single class for the remainder of the quarter (and to treat your professor to Pero's at least once a month until you graduate).

3. Theodore H. White, *The Making of the President 1960* (Book-of-the-Month Club, 1961) p. ix

4. A similar misapplication of logic, analogous to the preceding argument, is what has been called the "Domino's Pizza Syndrome." For instance, a distinguished colleague of mine, who, incidentally, is an ardent supporter of the pro-choice movement, refuses to purchase a pizza from Domino's because the CEO of Domino's is a substantial contributor to the militaristic, pro-life group, Operation Rescue. But, again, this is faulty reasoning. You cannot attribute the Domino's CEO's position on one issue to be representative of the organization as a whole. I would wager, in fact, that for every 10 pro-lifers employed by Domino's, there are a hundred pro-choicers (this does not include the delivery boys, who don't know the difference between the two. Just kidding, I had!). Now I look at my colleague across the room, who because of his sincere but misapplied political sentiments, cannot have the Domino's pizza he wants so badly right now. Poor guy.

5. And when you read my articles, you are bombarded by words ending in "ism." And lots of needless footnotes, too.

6. This makes me laugh every damn time I think about it. Not even Reagan could pull off this feat. Imagine that! Incidentally, the movie in question was the box-office smash the *Naked Gun 2 1/2: The Smell of Fear*, starring Leslie Nielsen and Priscilla Presley. By the way, the actor who portrayed Bush in the *Naked Gun 2 1/2* is the same actor who stars as the dark, evil galactic emperor in *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return of the Jedi*. The irony is

stunning, isn't it?

# Must Reads.

*Although we are losing the war between high-tech visual media and print media, we faithfully present here a compendium of selected books suggested by members of the Georgia Tech community. Each reviewer was asked to profile three books that meant a great deal to him or her. Dig in.*

## Winnie The Pooh

A. A. Milne (Decorations by Ernest H. Shepard)  
E. P. Dutton & Co. 1926

Whatnots and Elceteras: These stories contain a Silly Old Bear With No Brain At All, a cocky Rabbit, a Grey Curmudgeon Of A Donkey, the Wise and Grand Owl Who Could Spell, the Cowardly And Hyperactive Piglet, and the Omnipotent Little Boy (Young Mr. Robin). They remind one surprisingly of various characters in the Here And Now. Some folks are Pooh-like, others are Donkey-ish. I have some Rabbit-ish friends and some Owl-ey ones, too. I will look forward to reading Winnie to my kids, and by then the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles will be long gone. TP

## The Book Of Laughter And Forgetting

Milan Kundera  
Penguin Books 1980

One must grow weary, this election year, of hearing people complain about 'politics', that supposedly distasteful activity that only the neurotics or the powermongers engage in. These non-politicals fail to realize that it is a luxury to not have to pay attention to issues of governance. They also fail to acknowledge that political dynamics are at work in the pulpit on Sundays, in the bed with loved ones, in the aisles at the grocery store, in the car on the highways, and on the playground at the day care center. The main message of this book, a subtly conceived theme, is that politics is personal. The first page has Mirek saying "the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting." Kundera explores concepts of history ("the fleeting novelty of today's media portrayals"), existential dread (lost - "a state of torment caused by a sudden insight into one's own miserable self"), love ("based on unwritten conventions rashly agreed upon by the lovers during the first weeks"), youth ("they are not united by a march, like soldiers...they are united by a dance, like children."), and much more. Best of all, Kundera does this with the mid 20th Century Czechoslovak political turmoil as a backdrop. The centerpiece is the politics of interpersonal relationships, both real and imagined. It's fiction of very high caliber. TP

## Work Of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st Century Capitalism

Robert B. Reich  
Alfred A. Knopf 1991

Robert Reich, a political economist at Harvard, has synthesized the neo-liberal analysis of our economic woes and offered some important remedies. Through his masterful writing and insightful statistical analysis, he convincingly delivers a thesis that has Bush advisors dropping by his office for guidance (New York Times date) - yes, Reich, the old friend of and advisor to one Bill Clinton.

"What's good for GM is good for the country." Or so goes the the 1950's cliché. Reich explains the importance and validity of the 'global economy' concept and points to the demise of economic nationalism. An excellent example is the Pontiac LeMans automobile. Of the \$20,000 one pays for it, 6,000 goes to South Korea for labor, 3,500 goes to Japan for parts, 1,500 to Germany for design, and 1,400 goes to Taiwan, Singapore, Ireland, Britain, and Barbados for small components, marketing, and data processing. 8,000 goes to Detroit. It's not so clear that 'Buy American for America' means Honda or Pontiac. The transition from high volume (steel, plastics, chemicals, textiles) to high value has forced specialization, a change from mass production to customized production. It is this widely agreed upon observation that suggests the U.S. must develop its permanent resource - people - because capital and technology are mobile. Reich suggests that we ought not to compete with Singapore or Thailand in low wage labor, rather, we ought to maintain our skilled sectors by way of a strong education system. *Work Of Nations*, thankfully, offers the sound reasoning behind the sometimes perceptive Democratic economic plan not available in superficial campaign literature. TP

## The Conquest of New Spain

Bernal Diaz  
(1568) Penguin: 1963

This is a much ignored classic of European literature. It tells the greatest adventure story in history: the conquest and destruction of an empire of 20 million people by a band of 500 Spaniards. It gives meaning to the phrase, "truth is stranger than fiction." JLT

## The Open Society and Its Enemies

Karl Popper  
(1943) Princeton University Press: 1971, 2 vols.  
An intelligent defense of the West and Western

ideals without the snivelling of D'Souza and the "family values" gang. Should be read after making the acquaintance of Plato, Aristotle, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche (at the very least). JLT

**My Traitor's Heart**  
Rian Malan

I haven't decided whether Malan is merely a racist or a liar too, but this book contains extraordinary information about tribal violence in South Africa. How you interpret it depends on how much of a racist or liar you are too. Test yourself. JLT

**Gravity's Rainbow**  
Thomas Pynchon  
(1972) Bantam: 1975 ??  
GTEC: PZ4 P997 GR

Physically demanding. A chronicle of the nuclear age's birth from the psychosexual womb of the human male, this voluminous novel has been embraced as one of the century's groundbreaking works, on the same level as *Ulysses* or *Moby Dick* — although it's also been criticized as an unreadable pornography of history. The main storyline with which the book is obsessed follows xxx on a cross-continental journey at the close of the second world war's European theatre, in search of a new German secret weapon, the V-2 rocket's logical extension. The human penis? Or the ICBM? Ahem. The novel would remind us, in possession of those small voices deep inside our minds, "What's the difference?" With such an ambiguous, stream-of-consciousness prose, any interpretation could be wed to a supporting argument, even if it is a shotgun marriage. Luckily, the reader gets to play the marriage counselor, or the adulterer. SJD

**St. Manuel Bueno, Martyr**  
Miguel de Unamuno

A saintly priest harbors a deep secret in this short story from turn of the century Spain. A visiting cosmopolitan atheist and the small-town priest engage in debate, with the secret finally revealed. So what is it? The idea of God is more powerful than God could ever be. SJD

**Bread and Wine**  
Ignazio Silone  
(193x; revised 195x) Time: 195x  
GTEC: PZ3 S5855 BR2

A young, legendary Italian revolutionary goes underground (disguised as a vacationing priest) in a small Abruzzi village to avoid Mussolini's fascistas in pursuit. My favorite novel. It involves the immense landscape of which the current of human life is concerned: love, youth, Catholicism, socialism, fascism, patriotism, peasants and farming, individuality, collectivity and co-operation . . . in sum, the bread and wine of experience. SJD

**In Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Redefinition of Culture**  
George Steiner  
Yale University Press 1971

Perhaps the most important book I've read in a long

time. *In Bluebeard's Castle* is an extraordinary intellectual examination of the nature of Western culture and its future. It is in some ways a response to an extension of Eliot's *Notes towards the Definition of Culture*. The wit and wisdom of Steiner's analysis, based upon an encyclopedic knowledge of history, literature, music, art, politics, and philosophy, are astounding. Also the book serves as an introduction to Steiner's other work, which is just as brilliant and insightful as *Bluebeard's Castle*. In an area where it is impossible to have read everything, Steiner seems to have done so; he can serve as an intellectual model for all of us. RA

**The Autobiography of Malcolm X**  
as told to Alex Haley  
Ballantine Books 1965

It is now possible to reflect upon the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and evaluate its important successes and seemingly inherent shortfalls. The anger and impatience of many younger African-Americans increasingly reflected in the widespread distribution of Malcolm X paraphernalia. Because Malcolm X is a figure associated with the movement who instills fear and in middle-class white suburbia which misunderstands and remains ignorant of him, it is exceedingly important that everyone read his story to understand this historical figure. Before he died Malcolm X said that the American press would demonize him and distort his views after his death, leaving him with a place in history and in the mind of white America that he did not deserve. Judging from the response of most people I know the recent popularity of the man and his writings, he was right. RA

**Howards End**  
E.M. Forster  
Vintage International 1910

Forster is one of the most brilliant English novelists of our century, and *Howards End* is an appropriate introduction to his several and varied books. A call to people of different backgrounds to "connect" emotionally, the novel critically examines English social conventions and the bankruptcy of Edwardian morality. The recent film, although directed masterfully by James Ivory, cannot do justice to Forster's masterpiece. RA

**The Autobiography of Malcolm X**  
as told to Alex Haley  
New York, Ballantine, 1973

If Malcolm X survived the fatal attack made on him in Harlem's Audubon Ballroom in 1965 he would only be sixty-seven years old today, a year younger — it's worth noting — than the current president. There may not be much point in lamenting what might have been had Malcolm X lived, though it seems almost impossible to avoid. That Malcolm X's life and philosophy was often disturbing and sometimes contradictory was something he was deeply aware of. In fact the compelling reason for the *Autobiography* is that, as an African-American, he felt that his life could hardly have been otherwise. His accusations and his language are deliberately strong and his views, particularly about women, are sometimes troubling. But those who choose to make the details of

his life and language an issue, are avoiding a more significant concern: that in 1992, so many of his observations are still on the mark. AR

### **Tess of the D'Urbervilles**

Thomas Hardy

London; Osgood, McIlvaine, 1891

When I first read *Tess* I was a first year biology student with no inkling that I'd end up teaching English literature. While I may not have fully understood the book, it was an enormously powerful work that taught me the value of fiction. Hardy's insight into the victimization of a woman by social forces, institutional norms, and accidents of time and place cannot help but move the reader. Most readers are aware that *Tess* is stigmatized for having been the victim of rape, but Hardy wants his readers to understand *Tess*'s dilemma in even broader terms. *Tess* wants to keep her "maiden" name, Durbeyfield, but in order to comply with social standards, must give it up when she eventually marries. By taking her husband's name — and becoming *Mrs.* D'Urberville — *Tess* relinquishes her identity as an individual entirely and thus is ultimately lost. AR

### **Animal Physiology: Adaptation and Environment**

Knut Schmidt-Nielsen

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975

Good textbooks are very rare. They are part of a genre of writing that is, by turns, derided, disdained, dismissed and discarded. Inevitably, the victims of textbooks are students who generally pay too much for books that offer far too little. Schmidt-Nielsen addresses this problem in his preface and goes on to offer a textbook that is engaging and exciting. *Animal Physiology*, though "only" a textbook, asks students to recognize organismal complexity and interdependency. The book succeeded in the way that all textbooks should: it sought to strengthen my analytical skills in a way that went beyond any one discipline. Nevertheless, it is a textbook, so readers may want to turn to Schmidt-Nielsen's *How Animals Work* for a condensed and more popular treatment of the subject. AR

### **The Machinery of Freedom, 2nd Edition**

David Friedman

Subtitled as a guide to radical capitalism, the author describes his political outlook as anarcho-capitalism. If you want to know how the FDA is killing you, why government controls, protections, and social welfare programs do more harm than good (and usually hurt the poor most) and what you could do about it, this book offers some important insights. FAIR WARNING: *Republicans, Democrats, and other proponents of state socialism may not be happy about it.* CM

### **Ethical Issues In Sexuality and Reproduction**

Margot Joan Fromer

Analyses of various aspects and issues regarding sex, sexuality, and reproduction according to the principles of rational ethical theories commonly employed in bioethics. More thought-provoking than definitive, but that was the author's goal. If you are unaccustomed to thinking about ethics, I believe it is time you did. The first two chapters discussing what ethical theories are and how they apply to sex and reproduction are probably the most important for encouraging you to consider your ethical relationship to others. CM

### **The Persistence of Vision**

John Varley

A collection of loosely related short science fiction stories by John Varley: 1) they're good stories; and 2) they take account of the fact that social institutions are products of their times too, so that in radically different times, places, and situations you will find radically different societies, customs, views, and relationships. So much for "traditional" family values. CM

### **Gumby: The Authorized Biography**

by Art Clokey

Harmony Books

Perhaps the most shocking, scandalous text of the decade, this pulp goes one step beyond detailing the behind-the-scenes mayhem of America's favorite TV show! RATING: 5 stars out of 5. JL

### **Parliament of Whores**

P.J. O'Rourke

Atlantic Monthly Press

QUOTE: "God is a Republican, and Santa is a Democrat." For a further explanation, and a guillotine TV dinner good time, read this book. RATING: 5 stars out of 5. JL

### **Book of the Subgenius**

J.R. "Bob" Dobbs

Simon and Schuster, Inc.

More powerful than a legion of Jim Bakers with Marital Aids, this book has already changed your life. AWAKE! Read about the One True Religion, before it's too late. RATING: 5 pipes out of 5. JL

### **The Fever**

Wallace Shawn

Did you ever see the movie *My Dinner With Andre*? It had two guys sitting at dinner, talking for two hours. Remember the weenie guy Wally — the one who was having the dinner with Andre? Well it turns out that Wally is really Wallace Shawn, and he's no

just a wennie after all: he writes really good plays. The script of his most recent play, *The Fever*, is out now in book form and it's absolutely worth getting. *The Fever* is a one-person two hour play. (So it's only two hours of reading).

To give you a sense of what a knockout book this is, six months ago I saw a woman read *The Fever* out loud to an audience as sort of religious service, in a Quaker meeting house. She explained that she'd seen Wally Shawn perform it live and was so moved that she actually felt religiously called to perform the play. Think about it — this woman, who had never read in front of a crowd before, had a life changing experience due to this play. I don't know of any higher recommendation than that. JC

### Ceremony

Leslie Marmon Silko

*Ceremony* is so good that I've kept it on the most prominent place of my bookshelf for about two years now. It's a novel centering around the crisis faced by a young Navaho vet named Tayo, who's been discharged from the army after WWII. Tayo suffers from shellshock triggered by seeing his brother die during the war, but it's clear that the effects of another, more crushing war are being confronted, too — the war with the United States fought only 80 years earlier. Tayo reluctantly seeks a Navaho man, who's living in the hills overlooking Gallup, New Mexico. The ceremony he undergoes to heal himself is the spiritual focus of the story.

Leslie Marmon Silko, one of the two or three foremost Native American writers alive today, writes beautifully and clearly. Her points in *Ceremony* are made more by coaxing and example than by hitting the reader over the head with the obvious injustices done to Native Americans. But as smart as her writing is, I come back to this book over and over to see the six most terrifying pages I've ever read, in which the medicine man Betonie tells the story of how "witchcraft" set the modern age in motion. It's a pretty fine metaphor for this era of genocide in Yugoslavia, famine in Somalia and racial bitterness just about everywhere.

The book itself is arranged as a ceremony; Silko mixes a few pages of narrative about Tayo in with pieces of Navaho legend. During the storytelling part it's like someone is chanting to you, repeating stories that are a thousand years old. This structure made Tayo's ceremony much more personal, because she had set up the book to take readers on the same healing path. If you're interested at all in Native Americans, with the American Southwest, or with a really sharp conversation about what's going on in this world on Columbus's 500th anniversary, *Ceremony* is a great book for you. JC

### Backlash: The Undeclared War Against Women

Susan Faludi

1991

An intelligent and well-documented chronicle and analysis of events in the 80's which illustrate the backlash against the women's independence and equal movements of the seventies. Faludi interviews politicians, filmmakers, and writers behind the backlash, as well as documents histories of the organizations which evolved to promote the backlash. Faludi presents a strong argument, all with a w sense of humor and amazing ability to expose hypocrisy through contrast. SJ

JC. Jeff Cardille received his Operations Research M.S. from Tech in 1991 and now writes book reviews for low-life rags such as this.

SJD. Stephen Danyo is a graduate student in Technology and Science Policy, which doesn't actually exist any more. He enjoys taquerias, jazz, bicycles and coffee.

SJ. Stacy Johnson is an Undergraduate in Computer Science.

AR. Alan Rauch, LCC Assistant Professor, received his B.Sc. and M.A. in Zoology before obtaining a doctorate in English from Rutgers University.

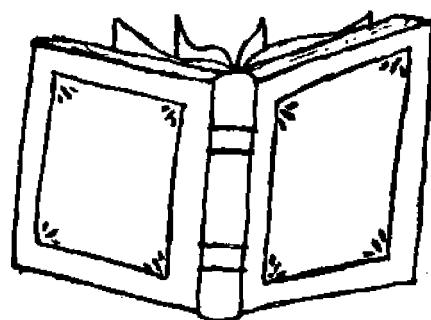
JL. James Lake is a recovering Gumby addict with this Kissinger quote: "Even paranoids have real enemies."

TP. Thomas Peake is a fifth year double major studying the social sciences and humanities here at Tech (History, Tech, and Society & Science, Tech, & Culture). He is also 1992/93 General Manager at WREK 91.1fm, the Georgia Tech student station.

RA. Rob Abdelal is a Senior Economics major.

JLT. John L. Tone is an Assistant Professor of Modern European History.

CM. Cary McKeown is a veteran NAR writer.



# Population and Armageddon

by Jay Wynn

The following article is based on readings found in *The Population Explosion* by Paul and Anne Ehrlich, both of Stanford University.

open discussion and education with regards to sex, and most education that has been approved is due, sorrowfully, to the growing spread of AIDS. Linking birth control with population control seems to be common sense, but the inflammatory nature of the first subject has led our leadership to practically ignore the second. To quote from *The Population Explosion*:

*Even the National Academy of Sciences avoided mentioning controlling human numbers in its advice to President Bush on how to deal with global environmental change. Although Academy members who are familiar with the issue are well aware of the critical population component of that change, it was feared that all of the Academy's advice would be ignored if recommendations were included about a subject taboo in the Bush Administration... After all, the Office of Management and Budget even tried to suppress an expert evaluation of the potential seriousness of global warming by altering the congressional testimony of a top NASA scientist, James Hansen, to conform with the Administration's less urgent view of the problem.*

(If you doubt the truth of that last statement concerning the suppression of free speech, please refer to *The New York Times*, May 8, 1989 for an article concerning the incident).

This disturbing quote brings us to the question of "why?" What possible motivation could there be for the continued encouragement of national and world population growth? I believe it to be inherently the same concern at both the individual and the societal level — economics. It becomes a question of financial survival and age-old economic theories. Both citizens and countries often view the future only in the short term, with a dangerous lack of foresight. Growth

at both the family and the national level offers a wider array of human resources from which to draw, but without consideration for the environmental ramifications of expanding populations. Unfortunately, the benefits of security in numbers and economies of scale are far too immediate to be challenged by the more distant prospect of future suffering due to previous population expansion.

So now we have done three things — identified the problem, examined the current solutions, and questioned their failure (or lack of existence). The next step is action. What can we, as students and faculty, so to make a difference? Most immediately, recognize the fact that every American child born to a middle class family will place a greater stress on the environment than numerous children in an underdeveloped country, due to our exorbitant exploitation of world resources. Just think of yourself environmentally — the amount of electricity you use, the amount of trash you throw away, the amount of food you eat every day — and compare yourself to the citizens of any other country in the world. There simply is no comparison to Americans. So limit your family to one child, two if you must. It is socially irresponsible to have more. Also, write to your congressmen and women to let them know that you are concerned with the problem of overpopulation, and request a reply detailing their efforts to confront the issue. Don't get discouraged if you receive a standard form letter — continue your mailings until your questions are answered. Don't forget that ours is a government of the people and by the people. If it is not only your privilege to demand this action, but your responsibility as an educated American. Together we can make a difference.

