

OPINIONS

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Quote of the week:
"Have patience awhile; slanders are not long-lived. Truth is the child of time; ere long she will appear to vindicate thee."
—Immanuel Kant

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Income matters

For some time, the Tech community has been aware of the Athletic Association (AA)'s dire financial situation. The AA has been accruing debt to the tune of \$3 million a year, and Director of Athletics Dan Radakovich has started to take steps to remedy the situation. Starting next year, season ticket holders will have to make a donation to the Tech Fund under the AA. Just as the flat fee increase was the better solution for the mandatory student athletic fee, this choice is better for season ticket holders than a flat ticket price increase would be, as the donation is tax-deductible.

While this decision may upset season ticket holders, it will be good for Tech in the long run as it helps keep the AA financially afloat. Currently, long-term donors keep prime season ticket seats without further donations, and it is difficult for the AA to get additional income through them. This way, the AA will have a constant source of annual income. At the same time, the AA should be careful to not alienate the alumni fan-base, as it may keep them from purchasing season tickets in the future. After all, there is a fine line between maintaining financial stability and keeping fans happy.

While the student fans may not be happy with their recent fee increase, at least this move will leave them feeling reassured that the students are not the only fans the AA is asking for money. The AA is sending a clear message that raising the student fee was not a quick fix but rather part of a larger, long-term solution.

Increasing costs for alumni and student fans is not the only solution the AA is investigating, however. They have brought up the possibility of finding a new sponsor for the Alexander Memorial Coliseum. Retaining the Coliseum's name as a tribute to the great coach of the 1920s to '40s is important. Still, the AA needs the money badly enough to seriously consider adding a new sponsor's name to the Coliseum.

If the AA could find such a sponsor, they would have to donate much more than the previous \$5.5 million McDonalds donated over 10 years, because the AA is obviously desperate for money—Radakovich leases out his personal box, which is meant to be used to entertain possible donors, for most football games at Bobby Dodd Stadium. Such extreme measures may serve only to further worry an already wavering fan-base.

Tech's fan-base is often fickle, but instead of condemning the AA for its attempts to bring the budget back into the black, it should support them in their efforts. Perhaps this year's excellent recruiting class will give fans even more cause to support Tech athletics.

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

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By David Chen / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Grade skipping has drawbacks

Public education is a bureaucracy known for its red tape. Between entrance requirements, student records, standardized testing, curriculum guidelines, assessment standards and much more, today's public education policies seem to be built on a foundation of paper—and lots of it. That is why it was so surprising to find out Georgia's third largest school system, Dekalb County, has just started to flesh out procedures for students to skip a grade—or accelerate, as educators call it.

Not that Dekalb has not allowed students to accelerate in the past; it was just a difficult process that had to be parent-initiated. Dekalb should be commended for fleshing out a grade skipping policy that is fair across all of its schools, but they and other educators need to consider whether they are advocating acceleration because it is the best thing for bright students or because it is the easiest, cheapest option for school administrators.

Currently Georgia education policy is governed by the national "No Child Left Behind Act," (a policy that has certainly added to that paperwork nightmare), which requires school systems to develop standards for core subjects and to test how well students meet these standards. Public schools have gone to great lengths because of this law to improve the services they offer to at-risk and low-performing students, but in return services to high-achieving and gifted students are sometimes lost. To be fair, with a limited budget it is hard to justify funding a robotics team over a tutoring program for students who can't read. Still, should schools allocate more or different resources to gifted students than they currently provide?

Proponents of gifted education argue that although it is important for no child to be left behind, reaching the needs of the top students is



"The reason I am concerned... is not that [grade skipping policies are] bad, but that the policy might be overused."

Amanda Dugan
Editor-in-Chief

just as important. Of the 1,553,437 students enrolled in grades K-12 in the state of Georgia for the 2004 to 2005 school year, almost 10 percent were enrolled in some type of gifted education. However, of the \$14,363,970,000 dollars allocated for education in Georgia that same year, less than one percent went toward gifted education. Like grade skipping, not all gifted services have to cost a lot of money, but some options certainly do.

According to the Georgia Department of Education, the type of programs that are provided to meet the needs of gifted students in Georgia range from completely separate schools to pullout enrichment activities for as little as an hour a week. Obviously, a separate school is going to be expensive, but even enrichment programs, which help foster creativity, are expensive compared to just moving a student forward in school. At the high school levels, most other gifted education programs are dropped completely by the eleventh grade with Advanced Placement (AP) courses or college courses being the only services offered, both of which are examples of single subject acceleration.

AP classes are a great option, but they do not meet all the needs of gifted students. Single subject acceleration does recognize that a student may be advanced in one or several subject areas, but not all. Dekalb administrators should remember that being gifted doesn't

mean being gifted at everything as they put the finishing touches on grade skipping policies. Because grade skipping is cheap (all the school has to do is move the student up to the next set of teachers), it could be easy for money- and time-crunched educators to push acceleration as the method to help gifted students, even though it may not be the best option to provide them academic challenge and continuous progress in their talent area, as well as to foster creativity.

The reason I am concerned about Dekalb and other school systems standardizing grade skipping is not that the policy itself is bad but that the policy might be overused. Georgia constantly earns high gifted education services rankings. Programs to identify gifted students and provide educational services for them are required in 24 states; however only six states, including Georgia, fully fund gifted programming at the state level.

This state has had a gifted education program since 1958 and defines "gifted" based on multiple criteria besides achievement on intelligence tests, as has historically been the case in the United States. Though things seem to be improving, the state is still near or at the bottom for most education rankings. It would be a shame to progress quickly and broadly with grade skipping programs that may jeopardize one of the few areas of education where we are recognized as the cream of the crop.

One four-letter word can change world

Joy of joys, I realize that that pink, red and white day is fast approaching—Valentine's Day, which annually manages to inspire more anxiety, plotting and division around the country than the average political campaign does.

Those without significant others either dash around scheduling dates with the hitherto-unacceptable-now-suddenly-interesting guy or girl or stage solitary sit-ins and strikes with friends in varying shades of despondent pessimism and outward, devil-may-care bravado. Even those with significant others are not without their own share of worries.

The purported day of romance has the dismaying side effect of bringing up uncomfortable questions a couple may not be ready for, all of which revolve around that powerful little four-letter word: love.

Are we in love? Do I have to say it? What if I am and he or she is not? What if I don't know how I feel yet? What is he or she expecting?

And of course, the ever-popular "crap, what is this going to cost me?" When hearts are on the line, the cost could be far more than the price of roses and chocolate.

All of this interpersonal stress and conflict is a far cry from the



"When hearts are on the line, the cost could be far more than the price of roses and chocolate."

Jenny Zhang
Focus Editor

original intent of Valentine's Day, which has its beginnings in both Roman and Catholic traditions. The day's direct historical connection is to a mysterious patron saint named Valentine or Valentinus, who, according to one story, was a priest during the third century in Rome.

Legend goes that Emperor Claudius II outlawed marriage for young men, believing that single men would make better soldiers than wedded men. Acting against the injustice of this decree, Valentine performed marriages for young lovers in secret. He was discovered and put to death, reportedly on the date of Feb. 14.

The Catholic Church later canonized Valentine to sainthood for his heroism and commemorated a feast day in his name.

Somehow, this evolved into the circus of pastel candy

hearts etched with sugary terms of endearment and all the incessant worrying and/or bitterness associated with that.

Maybe it is time to put away whatever sniping and griping we may have about Valentine's Day and remember why we celebrate it in the first place, most notably by following St. Valentine's example. Valentine lived a life of love, putting himself on the line and making the ultimate sacrifice for the good of others.

His love did not take the form of heart-shaped balloons or generic messages such as "Be mine" but embodied the true spirit of love that Valentine's Day is meant to celebrate—selfless love that is practiced through service instead of whispered in thoughtless sweet nothings.

The world could probably use more of this spirit of love instead of the narrow, rancorous I-don't-have-a-date or he-didn't-take-me-somewhere-nice

mind-set. No evil emperors have outlawed marriage, but there are still grave injustices and wrongs everywhere you look.

Violence and drug-related homicides have returned to the hurricane-devastated and increasingly neglected city of New Orleans, dubbed by the *New York Times* as "the nation's per capita murder capital." Codes of silence reign in neighborhoods where murderers run free in the streets, taking the lives of teenagers and youth in a relentless cycle of anger, hatred and killing that the ill-equipped police are helpless to stop. According to the Metropolitan Crime Commission, as little as 12 percent of homicide arrests end in jail sentences there.

In war-ravaged Lebanon, an estimated one million unexploded sub-munitions, or cluster bombs, left over from last summer's conflict between Israel and Hezbollah continue to kill and maim hapless citizens who have found the innocent-looking objects in their gardens, houses, streets and orchards.

Despite restrictions requiring warring states to refrain from endangering civilians in their munitions usage (translation: people, don't bomb innocents), at least 30 people have died and

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OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT- or -NOT



Tennis love

We all know that the women's tennis team boasts some of the most attractive women at Tech—and apparently some of the most talented too. Not only did they take their first indoor title recently at the UTSA/ITA National Indoor Team Championship, but they also became the first ever Tech women's team to claim a No. 1 national ranking. Now if that's not hot, then we don't know what is.



Another headache

Maybe we just like to complain, and course tools systems are one of our favorite topics. We hate WebCT, we hate BuzzPort and we don't expect to feel differently about Sakai. CETL has been piloting the system in a number of classes for two semesters, and the number of unresolved issues remains formidable. We just want something that is easy to use—is that really so much to ask?



A little pick-me-up

Tech will host the NCAA Final Four this spring. CBS needs to get ready, so men's basketball will play UConn at the Georgia Dome this Sunday. Students won't be stranded on campus, however, as there will be a shuttle to the Dome. Hopefully fans will take advantage of the free ride to cheer on their Jackets.



C for sustainability

Yes, we do know that sustainability starts with an S, but Tech's report card read "C" in a recent study by the Sustainable Endowments Institute. The grade was largely a result of Tech's financial mismanagement. We would hope the Institute could set a better example of financial responsibility to its future alumni.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Government must avoid legislating morality

I am writing in response to the incident involving the theft of the College Republicans' abortion awareness display.

I do not condone the theft of the display, but I would like to present a perspective that the College Republicans and other like-minded students may not have considered.

My husband and I are expecting our first child next June. I believe abortion is immoral and I cannot imagine how any woman could do it. That being said, abortion should not be a political issue.

First of all, I do not believe in legislating morality, although my personal morals probably closely agree with those of the College Republicans.

Secondly, what are the consequences of making abortion illegal? By giving an unborn baby (medically, a fetus) rights, are we taking away the mother's rights? Ideally, the best interest of

the mother is also the best interest of the unborn child, but we all know that the world will never be ideal. If my unborn child's rights trump my own, who makes the medical decisions regarding my pregnancy?

It so happens that Georgia is one of about 25 states that does not have a licensing system in place for direct entry midwives (these midwives attend home births).

There is currently a bill floating around in the Georgia legislature addressing this, and during the committee meetings, I listened to several over-zealous doctors talk about how women should be forced to birth in hospitals.

Obstetricians do not like babies to be born at home (they can't make money if they don't have patients). Obstetricians have more political power than midwives.

If the law makes it illegal to abort a fetus, that law is effectively

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Letter Submission Policy

The *Technique* welcomes all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters may be mailed to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Code 0290, emailed to editor@technique.gatech.edu or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Amanda Dugan, Editor-in-Chief.

All letters must be signed and must include a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by 8 p.m. Tuesday in order to be printed in the following Friday's issue. Any letters not meeting these criteria or not considered by the Editorial Board of the *Technique* to be of valid intent will not be printed. Editors reserve the right to edit for style, content and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

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Information and rate cards can be found online at www.nique.net. The deadline for reserving ad space and submitting ad copy is noon on Friday, one week prior to publication. For rate information, call our offices at (404) 894-2830, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Advertising space cannot be reserved over the phone.

The *Technique* office is located in room 137 of the Student Services Building, 353 First Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0290. Questions regarding advertising billing should be directed to Nancy Romero at (404) 894-2830.

Coverage Requests

Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the Editor-in-Chief or to individual section editors. For more information, email editor@technique.gatech.edu.

BUZZ Around the Campus

What is your favorite book?



Michael Nolan
Fourth-year ChemE

"*Origins of War.*"



Carlin Bright
Second-year AE

"*100 Years of Solitude.*"



Mike Smith
First-year ChBE

"*Lamb.*"



Patrick Linton
Second-year AE

"*The Book of Acts.*"

Photos by Ben Keyserling

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giving the fetus rights, which will effectively give obstetricians all the decision making power during a woman's pregnancy.

I believe it is imperative that women retain their right to control their bodies. If some women use that right to have an abortion, that is better than the alternative: taking away the rights of all other pregnant women to make their own decisions regarding their pregnancies.

Please consider the external ramifications of making abortion illegal before supporting it just because you agree that morally, fetuses should not be aborted. Mixing morals, especially those regarding personal freedoms, with the law, can be dangerous.

Michelle Stille
Fourth-year ME
michelle.stille@gatech.edu

Alcohol bill will not benefit all Georgians

Though I can understand the opinion of the editor not wanting Governor Perdue making decisions on his behalf ("Perdue misuses

elected position," Feb. 2, 2007), I challenge that if one were to look at Senate Bill 26 in its entirety, SB26 is not in the best interest of all Georgians.

This bill only includes beer and wine sales, not all alcohol, which on any other day of the week is legal to sell.

In the state of Georgia, grocery stores are only allowed to sell beer and wine; they are not allowed to sell liquor. Most liquor stores are mom-and-pop shops that already have trouble competing with larger grocery store conglomerates.

If SB26 were to pass as it is written now, it would negatively affect these independent stores. The sale of beer and wine alone would not be enough business to warrant these stores being open on Sunday. SB26 leans heavily in favor of big businesses here in Georgia.

Furthermore, regardless of Sonny's opinion on the bill, the Legislature can overrule an executive veto; therefore if SB26 manages to make its way out of both Chambers, Sonny cannot single-handedly make the decision on behalf of the citizens of Georgia, as Mr. Clarke seems to believe.

I urge the students of Tech to not take everything they read from local

newspapers to heart and do some research of their own before blindly forming their opinion, especially in the case of the article written by Mr. Clarke.

Elizabeth Serafine
Third-year INTA
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Display theft reflects poorly on Tech

Tech is supposed to be an Institute of intelligence and diversity. We are a configuration of many cultures, backgrounds and orientations. With this, there will be personal conflict, but it is our tolerance and acceptance that make our situation above most others.

When something like the theft of the pro-life display happens, it is an insult to everyone in this Institution. Whoever has done such a thing should be ashamed. The only thing that this individual has accomplished is caused an outrage and more conflict within the student community on already a sensitive issue.

The GTCR and its supporters will not stand for such injustice. However, they will not fall to the same level. If there is an issue they feel

strongly about, they will not destroy displays. Rather, they will engage in adult political discussion.

In lieu of all this, I would like to commend the GTCR for their class in handling this situation. Most other student organizations would fight and be fickle and demand retribution, taking it too far.

I am sorry that such a situation has happened, and I hope that we, as a collected body of students, can make sure this is the last incident like this we will ever see.

Tallulah Passyn
Third-year PTFE
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Technique should run terrorism advertisement

It has come to my attention that the *Technique's* editorial board recently refused to print an advertisement from the Terrorism Awareness Project, a national organization dedicated to educating college students about the terror threats we face (<http://www.terrorismawareness.org>).

I have reviewed the ad and concluded that it contains many important facts and allows readers

to arrive at their own conclusions. Tech students are wise enough to be able to review the information included in the ad and make their own judgments about its content, without the need for someone to censor any material that is viewed as objectionable by a select few.

Furthermore, the ad is very relevant as it relates to a vital issue in modern America. Violent Islamic extremists present a real threat to the American way of life, and Tech students are not immune to this threat.

The *Technique's* action of censoring this ad exhibits a lack of commitment to free speech, and worse, an implicit defense of Islamic Jihad and their goals and methods. The ad is not hateful, and the only individuals that would take offense to the ad are violent extremists.

This ad presents significant information that will enliven discussion on campus as we examine the salient challenges of our world. I urge the *Technique* to reconsider its decision and allow the ad to run for the sake of free speech and open expression.

Chris Dempsey
Fourth-year MGT
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Love from page 9

180 have been injured by a cluster bomb situation in southern Lebanon that a United Nations Mine Action Service manager calls "the worst I've ever seen. [It's] unprecedented and unbelievable."

There are, of course, no easy

answers to these and other terrible situations.

The U.S. is still struggling to move out of a radically unstable and dangerous Iraq, as the "sectarian violence" there approaches civil war (38 more people were killed in a rash of bombings across Baghdad this past Monday) and the death

toll of American soldiers continues to rise.

Closer to home, cities and states are looking for answers to high rates of poverty and homelessness and dwindling funds for education, health care and welfare programs.

It would be far too simplistic and naïve to suggest that the world's

problems could be solved by love, but it certainly couldn't hurt to try either.

If we entered into the difficult problems, issues and relationships in our world with the same spirit of love that St. Valentine showed—instead of acting out of bitterness, intolerance, bigotry, hatred, partisanship or

spite—those same problems, issues and relationships might just become that much less difficult.

Perhaps for this Valentine's Day, instead of just sending cards or dining out, we could honor the day and its martyred saint by actually practicing in our lives more of the love we are trying to celebrate.

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