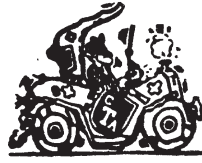


# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, February 24, 2006



"The South's Liveliest College Newspaper"  
**TECHNIQUE**  
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## Quote of the week:

"Man is the only creature that refuses to be what he is."  
 —Albert Camus

### OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

## Priority realignment

The proposal set forth by the ad hoc committee of administrators and student representatives on the priority registration system has the potential to greatly simplify a registration process that is often complex, somewhat arbitrary, and at times unjust, into a process that is fair and transparent.

Priority registration, has been a cankerous topic on campus, especially come registration time and especially amongst those who don't have it. The topic of frequent discussion is why some voluntary extracurricular activities can award the members with priority registration, while other, equally demanding and meaningful extracurricular activities can't. While most groups claim to have an actual need for priority registration so that members can schedule around obligatory time commitments, in reality the distinction is often given as an incentive to join. The slippery slope comes from the fact that all organizations have certain time obligations—who is to say which obligations are more urgent, rigid or important than others?

The number of organizations and activities wanting to get a piece of the priority registration pie is so great that currently approximately 10 percent of the student body has priority registration. And if all pending organizations are approved, that number would at least double.

When such a large number of students have the priority registration advantage, it almost becomes a disadvantage not to have it, causing the dispute between the haves and the have-nots that much more bitter.

The committee's proposal will effectively eliminate such problems by ending all perk-based awarding of priority registration and limiting the distinction to need-based groups only, such as handicapped students and in-season athletes. To further help ease the transition, the proposal will allow current recipients of priority registration to keep that distinction until the end of next year, or graduation, depending on how each group advertised their priority registration statuses.

This seems the most best way to fix the problems related to the priority registration program, with fairness and without picking who's "more important" or stepping on anyone's toes.

To further simplify the entire registration process, the registrar's office should considering implementing more standard procedures across majors when it comes to reserving certain classes for people of each major. A major-only registration phase for all departments would help students of all majors get the classes in their department that are necessary for graduation, instead of having to compete with students from outside majors looking for a fun elective.

*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 Lynn Deaton / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## New additions aid atmosphere

As a quick glance at last year's Princeton Review rankings indicate, it is apparent that many Techies feel that the atmosphere on campus is generally depressing. Tech was given three undesired spots in the 2005 Quality of Life category—number 15 in Campus is Tiny, Unsightly or Both, number 16 in Least Happy Students and number 15 in Dorms Like Dungeons.

However, there are signs of improvement. As recently as 2003, Tech ranked second in Least Happy Students. Although many feel that the rankings do not accurately reflect the opinions of the entire student body, moving down 14 spots in two years can be considered a solid accomplishment.

In the years before I entered Tech last fall, vast improvements were made in the area of student life; alumni who graduated in the years before these longed for many of the comforts that we now take for granted. And thanks to these improvements, it is now more difficult than ever for students to blame their unhappiness merely on the inadequacies of their surroundings.

Consider Tech Square for instance. The \$179 million state-of-the-art complex opened Fall 2003. Not only does it house the quickly rising Dupree College of Management and other academic units, it contains the beloved eatery with which some of my fondest memories of freshman year are associated: Tin Drum. Also with Tech Square came the Trolleys, which make travel convenient as they run more frequently than Stingers. And before long there will be a park on the 5th Street bridge, one of several projects taken on by the Midtown Alliance.

Consider the Student Center Commons (SCC), opened in March of 2004. Without the SCC, the Student Center would be (and it was) embarrassingly small. Rich Steele,



"Alumni who graduated in the years before these [improvements] longed for many of the comforts that we now take for granted."

**Nikhil Joshi**  
 Focus Editor

director of the Student Center, called the SCC "the social crossroads for the campus" in a *Technique* article published Aug. 20, 2004.

For students in classes entering during or after the fall of 2004, the SCC may not seem like an extraordinary luxury, but this is because we have never lived without it. We came to a Tech already graced by the magnificent Tech Square and indispensable SCC, somewhat ignorant to the fact that no such amenities existed a few years ago. In addition to the SCC, the Student Center Programs Council deserves recognition for bringing artists like Ludacris and this year's Big Boi for the annual Sting Break festivities.

In addition to increasing recreational space, Tech has shown that it is taking steps in the right direction towards improving the appeal of its library and academic buildings.

The addition of Jazzman's Cafe has supplied us with a greater variety of caffeine-containing beverages to aid us in our late night battles with calculus. When renovations on the library first floor are complete, we will have even more areas for group work and a movable theatre for presentations. In the past few years, the library has managed to hire a 24-hour staff and create the West Commons area as we know it today.

The new Whitaker Biomedical Engineering (BME) Building is another example of a stunning recent

addition to campus. The building offers comforts which make long hours spent there actually somewhat pleasant. The IBB, Earth Science and Technology and Whitaker Building house some of the most innovative research on campus. As a BME major, I feel honored that Tech is putting forth so much effort towards making these facilities attractive. The soon-to-be-opened Klaus Advanced Computing Building is also very impressive, far more so than the current building on Atlantic Drive.

And when we grow tired of studying, we have the CRC. The center, 300,000 square feet of recreational heaven, opened Aug. 16, 2004. It replaced the 90,000 square foot SAC, adding a 35-foot climbing wall among other equipment. There are about 190 cardio and weight machines total in the CRC. Having been to the Tate Center at the UGA, I find the CRC at least as good, if not better, in terms of variety of recreational activities.

"Our objective is to shape our outdoor spaces so that their calm beauty provides a counter-balance to the creative intensities in our labs and classrooms," said Institute President Wayne Clough in his State of the Institute address.

This inspirational statement sums up the direction that the Institute is headed. Before long, maybe Tech will even end up on the positive end of the Princeton Review rankings.



# Culture of blame hurts American society

President Bush, in his recent State of the Union address, said something I, at least, found very interesting, if not somewhat self-evident, about how the United States has become the greatest economic power on the planet: "Our greatest advantage in the world has always been our educated, hardworking, ambitious people."

That statement should not provoke argument. Looking over the history of American development one can easily see that education and hard work in the areas of science and technology are what put the U.S. on the map as an economic (and thus political) juggernaut.

Unfortunately, the statement amounts to little more than back-patting while the nation rushes headlong into what may turn out to be its greatest crisis yet: an increasingly prevalent culture of blame.

What do I mean by a culture of blame? Why, simply that here in the U.S. we're becoming increasingly desperate to avoid taking personal responsibility for anything.

Indeed, talking about our "hardworking, ambitious people" year after year becomes more and more of a false truth, repeated to convince ourselves that we are not slipping, that we are not rapidly being overtaken



"Here in the U.S., we're becoming increasingly desperate to avoid taking personal responsibility for anything."

**Arcadiy Kantor**  
Assistant Development Editor

by the rest of the world in all of the areas that count.

Ambitious people certainly do not shirk responsibility in work or in life; educated people don't need others to make all of their decisions for them. A hardworking individual will have no need to blame others for his or her own failings.

Meanwhile, in the States we sue McDonald's because our inability to control our own diet cannot possibly be our own fault. Evidently our weight gain is actually caused by secret, undiscovered chemicals created by those insidious McDonald's clerks that make us addicted to eating 1000-calorie burgers while patting ourselves on the back for drinking a Diet Coke.

At least we apparently still have ample ambition to try to get rich through doing nothing.

Our increasingly litigious

society is just one example of this responsibility avoidance. Just last week, the *Technique* published an article about one such shining example of Americanism, Michael Leahy, a speaker who came to speak here at Tech recently.

This crusader-du-jour's nemesis is the pornography industry. You see, Leahy seems to blame pornography for destroying his relations with his wife, children and even a business partner.

Leahy was apparently but an uninvolved observer as pornography took over his life, forcing him to watch enough porn to bring him to ruin. (He also claims there are twice as many adult bookstores in the U.S. as McDonald's restaurants, which is a statistic I'd love to see the source for.)

With whom does the fault for the end of these relationships lie, though? Do people really believe

the pornography industry is responsible, by virtue of *existing*, for someone's inability to control his behaviors and the impact they have on his life?

Leahy says he has kicked his 35-year porn habit. Of course, he blames God for that accomplishment.

Our nation's increasing support of legislating citizens' behavior further illustrates our increasing desire to not have to think for or about ourselves.

Take the outcry over some of the material that's airing on cable television. Shows like *South Park*, or shows that might (gasp!) show a breast or two on occasion.

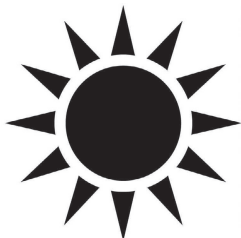
If a parent walks in on little Johnny watching a show that is probably inappropriate for him to see, does the parent take stock of the situation and actually take the time to check what channels and shows Johnny is watching in the future, or better yet, try to actually watch something *with* his or her offspring?

No, of course not. The proper behavior by modern American standards appears to be to whine to a legislator to pass laws that will take care of parenting the children and then plop one's behind down on the couch and watch more *American Idol*. That's how lovely ideas like subjecting

See **Blame**, page 10

## OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

### HOT- or -NOT



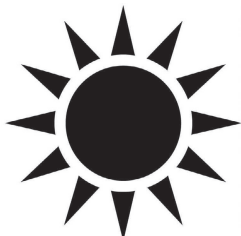
#### Co-eds on East

Finally, floor-by-floor co-ed dorms are coming to East Campus. With this move, housing is killing off two birds with one stone by simultaneously fulfilling student's wishes for more co-ed dorms and giving students incentive to sign up for the normally less than popular sophomore dorms Hanson and Hopkins. Perhaps an influx of females will help rid Hanson of its strange smells, too.



#### No day off

Add Presidents' Day to the list of holidays for which Tech students do not have the fortune of being off from school. While our younger friends and siblings got to enjoy a day off, we had trudge through the dreary rain to classes, as if the day in the middle of the respective birthdays of two of our most loved founding fathers meant nothing. With midterms fast approaching, we certainly could have used the break.



#### Double the gigabytes

In response to student input, OIT has doubled our online storage space to one gigabyte. With disk space that can now rival that of free providers like Yahoo we can keep all our emails, and between this and the recent introduction of aliases, Spectrum accounts are more useful than ever.



#### CMF disappoints

Tech came up nearly empty-handed after this year's Atlanta Campus MovieFest finale, winning only one award—the CMF Choice Award. After two straight years losing to Tech for the grand prize, Georgia State struck back this year, sweeping the top honors, including Best Drama and Best Picture awards.

## Decision hurts autonomy

Staff Editorial  
*The Daily Cougar*

(U-WIRE) U. Houston—The U.S. Supreme Court dealt another blow to college journalism Tuesday when it refused to hear a case questioning the authority of college administrators to shut down student newspapers that run articles critical of the administration.

That ruling lets stand an earlier decision by the 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that extended rules previously only applied to elementary and high school students and teachers to apply to college and university newspapers, as well. Simply put, college students in Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin (the three states in the 7th Circuit) are restricted in the same way as some first-graders.

A student newspaper that does have to deal with resistance from the administration should not fall silent on the issue. If they do, whatever corruption there may

be will be allowed to fester.

If a university fills some positions on political merits instead of real qualifications, it should be reported. If student groups are supported using unfair criteria, it should be reported. If an official dangles his power or threatens a reporter—even vaguely—it should be reported.

In the past, even on campuses where the administration has no say in the content of a newspaper, student journalists have turned away from uncovering corruption because of the risks they would have taken in standing up to officials.

Giving the administration official power over editorial content is taking another step in the march toward censorship of the collegiate press that began earlier this month when two editors of an Illinois college newspaper were suspended after publishing six of the 12 controversial Muhammad cartoons.

That's two steps too many.

### 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](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu) or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Kyle Thomason, Editor-in-Chief.

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

### Advertising Information

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

### Coverage Requests

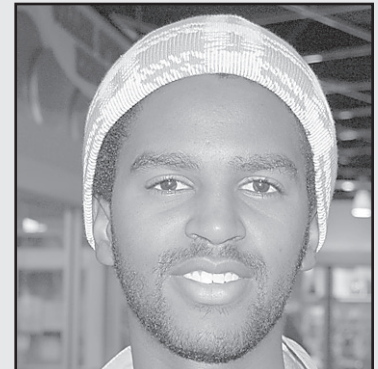
Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the editor-in-chief or to individual section editors. For more information, email [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu).

## BUZZ Around the Campus What was your favorite Olympic moment?



**William Garrity**  
First-year UEC

"When that snowboarder got his medal taken away because he was high."



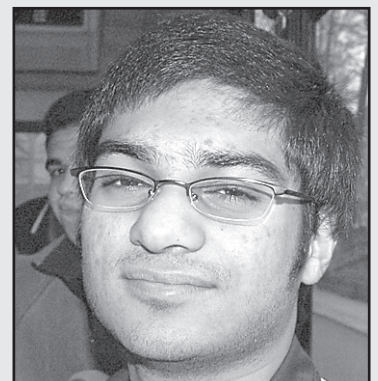
**James Holder**  
Third-year ARCH

"Whitney Houston's award-winning performance."



**David Jaffe**  
First-year UEC

"Watching the figure skating doubles falling down and trying to climb back up."



**Akshay Kashyap**  
First-year ECE

"I haven't really been watching."

Photos by Ben Keyerling



## Blame

from page 9

cable television to the same censorship standards as network television become bills that are actively considered in Congress.

While I could cite such frustrating examples for days, and while I can (embarrassingly) think of quite a few cases of myself shifting the blame onto some external factor, that won't address this nation's current issues.

The United States is losing its lead. Frankly, the other nations *want it more than us*. While Americans are continuing to grow lazier and lazier (and, according to quite a few studies, fatter and fatter) with more and more corpulent waste, active, more dedicated people elsewhere in the world are inventing the next technologies that will shake up the global landscape.

A university like Tech is hopelessly not as guilty of the same blame shifting much of the general populace is. But 10 or 20 years from now, we very well could be.

And it is then that it will be most important to remember some of the lessons that we do learn in college: That we are ultimately responsible for the grades we get, for the experience we get out of college, for the quality of our work. That we can accomplish amazing things if we try hard enough. That in the end, what we do with our life is up to us and not to anyone else. And if we, as the next generation, can successfully keep that in mind and take charge of our own fates, maybe the United States won't lose its edge after all.

## Existential ennui: to ignore or not ignore?

It's a shame, but no one likes Existential Ennui.

No, I'm not talking about some new hipster band, or that French guy in the back of your philosophy class who always wears black and keeps talking about Søren Kierkegaard.

I mean the feeling of listlessness you get if you read too much Albert Camus, or fail Calculus II for the second time, or spend seven years trying to get out of Tech.

(No one knows what happens if you read a lot of Camus *and* fail Calculus II for the second time in seven years, but I suspect it would be less like ennui, and more like that Dali painting with the melting clock.)

Of course, you don't actually have to do anything to get ennui. More often than not it happens when you're doing nothing.

For instance: you're just sitting back and relaxing when suddenly you realize that you haven't checked your email for twenty minutes; you ask yourself whether you really check your mail that often; you realize you're wasting valuable relaxation time thinking about whether you really check your mail every twenty minutes, then you realize you're wasting valuable thinking time relaxing, which leads you to wonder what exactly you're doing with your life.

*Poof! You've Got Ennui.*

At its most basic level, ennui isn't so bad—only a wish to make one's life more exciting and purposeful or, at the very least, boring in a dif-



"It's a shame no one likes Existential Ennui...despite its disadvantages, ennui can be a valuable signal that something in your life needs to change."

Andrew Saulters  
Columnist

ferent way.

But no one likes ennui because it's annoying and petulant, and it can prompt you to make abrupt, seemingly-reckless life-changing decisions, such as moving to Cambodia in order to study the Order of Light under Guru Ashlith Sun-Speaker. Or taking off on a cross-country trip with nothing but your car, a change of clothes and the willingness to do menial labor for food. Or, my personal favorite, dropping your present degree path to take up something completely different, like junkyard sculpture or high school English instruction.

Despite its disadvantages, ennui can be a valuable signal that something in your life needs to change. But the instinctual response, especially here at Tech, seems to be to "stay the course." Ignore it and keep on trucking.

Of course, ennui isn't always a sign from your subconscious and putting it off can be quite fun. So I offer this short list of excitingly purposeful projects designed to dis-

patch existential nagging, if only for a time:

1. Form a band named "Existential Ennui." Read portions of Jean-Paul Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* in a French-accented monotone with heavy bass accompaniment. Change the spelling of the band's name before every performance ("existençal en-oui," "X-is-tential &we," etc.) to poke fun at your continuing journey through uncertainty.

2. Invent a new dance step called the "Existential Ennui." Take your bad self out to a dance club and boogie-woogie the night away. (Funny word, that. No, not "away." "Boogie-woogie." Hmm...)

3. Investigate the etymology of the word "boogie-woogie." Seriously, this has confounded the finest lexicographical minds of the past century...H.L. Mencken, the editors of the Oxford English Dictionary. Even Al Gore. I mean, he invented the Internet but still couldn't figure out where "boogie-woogie" came from. What could be more exciting and purposeful than that?

4. Shoot an action/adventure/mystery movie about investigating the etymological root of "boogie-woogie."

Imagine it: Chuck Norris stars as Chuck Norris in "The Mystery of the Etymological Root of Boogie-Woogie." Costarring G. Wayne Clough as Mr. Chips, The Oxford-educated Scholar Of Archaic Literature.

Norris: "Now look here, Chips. We got to find that etymological root now. Or the world will explode."

Mr. Chips: "But it has primitive forms everywhere. See, there's even a form in early Low German! *Mein Gott!*"

Norris: "Then there's only one thing to do, Chips. We'll take those cognates down with our bare hands, one by one. Yaaaarrggghhh!!!"

5. Contemplate the daunting hilarity of the word "boogie-woogie." If you're like me, when those twelve letters and hyphen come together in that order, the resulting word has supernatural comic power.

Mostly because it makes me think of the Planeteers getting together to call out Captain Planet. ("With your powers combined, I am *boogie-woogie!*") In my mind, the hyphen is the little boy who got shafted with Heart.

But remember to play safe, folks! Think before you reject your next pang of ennui: are you just bored or do you really want to drop everything and move out to Arizona to make and sell pewter ninja figurines at a wide spot in the road?

## 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Career Fair for Georgia Employers

Wednesday, March 8, 2006

9 am - 4 pm

Alexander Memorial Coliseum

All Georgia Tech Students Invited!

Meet with representatives from outstanding Georgia employers.

Bring a copy of your resume and market your talents.

Co-op (undergraduate & graduate), full-time, & intern positions available.

\*\*\*If you are seeking co-op employment, you must be registered with the Co-op Division.\*\*\*

For additional information, contact the Cooperative Division (894-3320) or Career Services (894-2550).