

# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, June 30, 2000

## Quote of the week:

"If I could just say a few words, I'd be a better public speaker." —Homer Simpson

## OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

### Campus break-ins

Recently, our campus has been the victim of a string of break-ins, most occurring in administrative buildings. These break-ins are not happening because of a lax police force. On the contrary, GTPD is doing an admirable job of helping to keep campus safe. These break-ins are happening because we are being personally irresponsible.

We are propping doors and leaving them unlocked. We are allowing strangers without keys into buildings. We are leaving expensive equipment in plain sight. We are undermining our own security.

Everyone should be more cautious when securing dorms, offices, and academic buildings. If students and faculty take a few extra minutes each day to make sure all doors are locked and valuables secured, the number of break-ins will decrease.

### Missing student

Since the beginning of May, freshman Joe Morse has been missing, much to the surprise of friends and family. We sympathize with his loved ones and hope for a safe return.

### Summer conferences

Since their inception three years ago, summer conferences have contributed revenue that goes towards paying Institute debts that would otherwise be distributed over student fees. They have made efficient use of available campus resources in the summer. They have also helped create a good image for Tech.

In return, we should make some changes that could be made to better accommodate our guests. All buildings should be clearly labelled. Directional signs should be placed around campus to help visitors find their way around—this would also benefit freshmen and transfer students. On-campus transportation should be increased as well.

## YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

### Parking always a problem

The *Technique* always has such high hopes about the parking office and its "innovations." Nothing stirs up hate and discontent quite like the Tech Parking Office, and here you guys are supporting "improvements" that will only lead to more chances for the parking office to fail miserably. And of course, when they fail, we'll all get improper fines on our record, which will be even more difficult to remove.

In the parking office, the customer is always wrong. All of the sudden, parking meters taking away RO3 parking spaces are being enforced, without warning. We already pay \$300 dollars for a parking pass, and we're expected to pay a meter too? So now, students that had been promised that it was safe to park in front of those meters are hit with tickets. And when a student wishes to speak to someone besides the lady doing her nails behind the counter, he/she is forced to jump through hoops. To quote Al Corry (Assistant Director of Parking) directly, "Sure, you can talk to someone else, but you'll be wasting their

time." Wasting their time? They have an obligation to provide us a service—but all we get are excuses.

Last fall, my car was stolen from an A13 lot. The parking office spends thousands of dollars on Buzzcard readers and meters but can't even patrol the lots. It once took me 6 months to get a refund for a permit that I never received, and the parking office blamed it first on me and then on the post office. Cars get towed all the time from legal parking spaces with their permits clearly displayed—even towed outside of the "hours of enforcement" outlined in the parking office's rules and regulations.

Sure, we can appeal to get our money back. But soon we won't have to just deal with the parking office when we're wrongly charged (and we will be wrongly charged)—we'll have to deal with the Bursar and holds on our registration too.

MegAnn Powell  
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### Loss of advisor

Hoyt Coffee, the *Technique* advisor for the past year, passed away suddenly this Tuesday. We will greatly miss his guidance and editorial expertise. Our thoughts are with his family and friends.

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

### Congrats, Collier!

On Wednesday night, basketball player Jason Collier was drafted by the Milwaukee Bucks and later traded to the Houston Rockets. Congratulations, Jason, and good luck with your professional career.



By Laura Nathanson / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

# 'Blame the Greeks!' is solution to all problems

In a time when it has become chic to jump on the bandwagon and say that every person, group, and idea is okay, it is difficult to find an impetus for change. To provide something to push against, society has created the "easy targets": nameless, faceless masses that can be referred to in a few words, and it is easily understood that these groups are the enemy. You know the groups—the communists, the wealthy, and the religious, just to name a few. Each group has recognizable weaknesses, but none so overwhelming as to cancel out any redeeming qualities they may have. To bring this a bit closer to the home, focus on another group: the Greek system.

With even less in common on an individual basis than any of the aforementioned groups, fraternities and sororities have managed to frequently receive a more restrictive stereotype. If ever there was a cohesion of diversity on this campus, it is found in our Greek system, yet the stereotypes persist.

I was shocked recently to hear someone suggest that fraternities should be required to attend the "Take Back the Night" rally, which addressed the issue of rape, because "they're the ones who need to hear it anyhow." Do fraternity men really constitute a disproportionate number of rapists compared to the general population, or is it just easier to think that?

Such generalizations about any group are unacceptable, but it doesn't stop there for Greeks. They are the privileged, the heavy drinkers, the elitist, the conformists, and the prejudiced, who have to buy their friends only to haze them. Why do we have this image? Because nobody is interested in seeing that there might

"If ever there was a cohesion of diversity on this campus, it is found in our Greek system, yet the stereotypes persist."

**Rob Kischuk**  
Sports Editor



actually be differences between over 2500 students in some 40 different organizations. The truly curious student could look more closely and see individuals. They'd see people who weren't born with a silver spoon in their mouth, who have to study to get good grades, who take six years to get out because they have to co-op to pay the bills. Some of them are the type of people you could be friends with, and some are not. You could find the same thing on your Freshman Experience hall. Still, we would rather lump them together when it is convenient, when one or two groups do wrong, and pretend that this image holds for all of them.

Certainly, each group, on a very regular basis, must exclude some interested individuals from its membership. This is not a new idea at all—we often praise our peers for joining honor societies, being chosen for FASET, and other such honors. On a regular basis, we as individuals exclude people we meet from becoming our close friends, and this is our right. As individuals, we are not asked to become lifelong friends with everyone, accept them as a potential roommate, or associate with them regularly. Yet this is exactly the standard we hold Greek organizations to when we decry their selectivity. It is fine for us to do these things ourselves, and in other

approved groups, but when it comes time for target practice, it becomes a point of contention. Some say Greeks buy their friends, but I have yet to meet a single Greek who has been paid to be someone else's friend. This money pays for housing expenses, house meal plans, formals, and bands for parties — expenses that no one member could pay for on their own. It's like you and your friends chipping in for movie night, but on a larger scale.

The alcohol issue is always mentioned, and this discussion would not be complete without addressing it. Certainly, many Greeks do drink, but many members of these organizations don't drink, and some of the organizations as a whole have dry houses. Yes, Greeks were the focus of many of the recent alcohol discussions, although I would venture that there are worse alcohol problems on this campus. While people squabble over details of how to supervise parties at highly-visible locations right on campus, other less-supervised campus organizations are having larger parties at off-campus locations. Here, kegs and open bars paid for by organizational funds flow directly into the thirsty mouths of students of all ages. If such a party were to happen under a fraternity roof even once, that house would have a guaranteed date with

IFC's Judicial Board.

There are many benefits that the Greek system has for the campus as a whole that are rarely recognized. People complain about the lack of social interaction on this campus. Greek organizations encourage many students to associate not only with members of their own groups, but also with students from other groups. Walk around campus on weekends and find the area of campus that is regularly active. I'll give you a hint—it's on the north side of East Campus. You say housing and parking are a problem on this campus? Consider now the hundreds upon hundreds of beds and parking spots provided by Greek houses that open up those dorm rooms and parking spots for other students. Some of the largest contributors to Tech's capital projects are Greek alumni. Fraternities and sororities have a lower attrition rate; keep in mind that student retention is a major issue on many campuses, and one which persistently drags Tech down in college rankings. Greeks are also extremely well-represented in the leadership of this campus, which is the result of organizations that bring in members and help them become better citizens, and we should not resent their influence.

It's easy to stereotype. Why not take an honest look around and evaluate every group on an objective basis? The Greek system has its problems, but so does every other organization on this campus; the difference is which ones are blown out of proportion. Every organization has its faults, but most also have strengths that can be praised. It's a shame that some groups with such overwhelming strengths can be maligned in the name of progress.

# The Truth is Out: Not Everybody's "Doing It"

A random piece of news has temporarily restored my faith in my generation. Consequently, those of us raised on television violence, Barbie, Nintendo, and the information glut of the Nineties are not a lost generation. We may watch "Sex in the City" with increasing curiosity and let the crudeness of *American Pier* roll off our backs, but contrary to what many of us think, college life isn't mimicking Hollywood.

A recent survey of college and university students across the USA has shown that more than forty percent of students are not sexually active. Of the remainder who consider themselves to be sexually active, eight percent of those students did not have sex during the semester preceding the survey, and 72 percent were involved with only one partner.

Do the math with me, Tech students. On average, only twelve percent of college students have had sex in the past semester with more than one partner. No matter what Sarah Michelle Gellar's character said in *Cruel Intentions* ("Everybody does it, but nobody talks about it"), the opposite seems to be true. Not everyone is "doing it" these days, but mostly everyone is willing to talk about it.

We've come a long way from the free-love days of the Sixties. However, I would like to imagine that we are making our choices not out of fear of HIV infection or unwanted pregnancy, but because, as a generation, we are trying to be more

"American college students have gained a new respect for sex, and...for birth control, virginity, and relationships."

**Jennifer Hinkel**  
News Editor



responsible.

Has all of that sex education in high school actually had an impact on us?

This high school graduate thinks so. Most of us, as individuals, know more about HIV, birth control, sexual anatomy, and sexually transmitted diseases than our parents combined. Sex has little shock value when we deal with it every day on TV, in books, in the news, and in casual conversation. Sex has come out of the closet, but instead of making us irresponsible, promiscuous, or sex-crazed, it's made us responsible, educated, and able to make mature decisions.

Because I can talk frankly about sex in a newspaper editorial, because the word "condom" is as common as "pizza" in a dinner conversation, because most of the people I know could probably sketch a fairly accurate, if not textbook worthy, drawing of the life-cycle of HIV, because TV characters have sex and then experience all of the consequences—for these reasons, I can comfortably say that sex for my generation has lost its glamour and

mystique and, in doing so, made its consequences, seriousness, and significance clearer than ever before. American college students have gained a new respect for sex, and not only for sex, but for birth control, virginity, and relationships.

However, our generation can't claim to know it all. While college students seem to be making better choices, the teenage pregnancy rate is still skyrocketing in the US. Did any of these young mothers and fathers have the privilege of "Sex Ed" in their schools? How many of them finished high school, let alone have the opportunity to attend college?

If the key to responsibility and maturity is education, why don't we have more of it? For every TV show that shows the consequences of sex, there are probably three that don't touch anything more serious than having to catch a ride home the morning after.

I'm not sure what causes such statistics. I'm not a sociology expert; I am a college student who shared her coming of age with the Internet. However, I am sure that

the choices we make influence every aspect of ourselves and our surroundings. Hopefully, we are a generation equipped to make choices that will move our society in a positive way.

Whatever my personal convictions, whichever group of students I fall into, I feel that I have made good, informed decisions based on my education. I challenge my generation to do the same, not just concerning sex, but concerning the similar, everyday issues we encounter. If we are to become healthier, smarter, and more successful than the generation before us, we can only do so by affecting our own decision-making process.

These statistics have restored temporary faith in my generation, if only because I believe that more people are choosing to take what are, in my humble opinion, fairly responsible paths. If education brought us here, we must take up the banner and ensure that the progress proceeds. Our decisions can only be as mature as the information we base them on. I hope that this information only becomes more abundant, more available, and more enlightening for the generation to follow ours.

*Jennifer Hinkel is going to apply for Carrie Bradshaw's job when she grows up and Sarah Jessica Parker gets too old, although if she did, HBO would have to change the series title from "Sex in the City" to "Not Having Any".*

## TECHNIQUE

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The *Technique* welcome all letters to the editor and will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Letters should be hand-delivered, mailed to Georgia Tech Campus Mail Code 0290, or E-mailed to [editor@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu). Letters should be addressed to Chris Baucom, Editor. All letters must be signed and must include a campus box number or other valid mailing address for verification purposes. Letters should not exceed 350 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 quarter.

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