OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Vandals mishandled

That the Georgia Tech Police Department decided not to take any official action against the students recently caught in the act of vandalizing a Buzz Around Town statue is a disappointment to the campus community.

Interviews with Tech police show that officers on scene had the legal authority to file charges against these students, but simply chose not to. The reasons given for this decision are weak and suggest a lack of forethought. Not knowing who the owners of the statues were, or what their exact worth was should not have been enough reason to let the students go despite being caught flagrantly committing a crime.

For one, as important members of the campus community, Tech police should have been aware of what has for some time now been a highly visible project—as well as a highly visible problem of vandalism. But even if they were not well informed on the details surrounding the sculptures, Tech police should have acted decisively, gathering the necessary information, filing the appropriate charges and even taking the students caught to jail.

Their failure to do so now implies that vandalism is acceptable and that no real consequences for this crime should be expected. In essence, their failure to act sends the message that vandalism is not a serious offense and is suggestive of an indecisive police force that failed to act on a crime that has plagued campus for some time.

The Buzz Around Town vandalism is an important crime with serious consequences. This ongoing destruction of property had a financial cost to the organizations that raised $500 each to build and design the statues, which were then to be auctioned to raise additional funds. Furthermore, the vandalized Buzzes hurt school pride and Tech's image, with each mutilated Buzz suggesting to visitors that Tech students are not capable of respecting a visually appealing display celebrating Tech and 100 years of the Alumni Association.

While the weak response given by Tech police was disappointing, the real disappointment lies with the students who felt it was "cool" to vandalize. Their acts are not comparable to cherished traditions like taking the T's around campus, or even to clever (and harmless) pranks made famous at other universities. Instead, their foolish actions demonstrate a brainless quality that does not belong at Tech.

Now that these students are being investigated by the Office of Student Integrity, all disciplinary measures available in Tech's Code of Conduct should be applied. Someone needs to send a strong message that sabotaging our school is completely unacceptable.

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

By Blake Israel / *Student Publications*

Let's talk education, inequality

"We should engage in a collective conversation...to ensure that every American child has equal opportunity..."

Naihobe Gonzalez
Opinions Editor

After finishing a lecture on U.S. competitiveness, this week my professor turned the question of America's future to the class. "What do you guys think is the most important issue for the new president?" he asked.

Perhaps surprisingly, the class's responses quickly focused on K-12 education and racial inequality. Years of neglect have left our K-12 system in shambles, worsening the inequality in opportunities and outcomes between whites and minorities.

As I listened to my peers, I couldn't help but think of a recent landmark in American history: the election of our first black president. Hours after the election, TV pundits asserted that it could mean the end of affirmative action. If Barack Obama could break the ultimate glass ceiling, then anyone could do it, right?

Wrong.

Without a doubt, Obama's win spoke volumes about the progress our nation (or at least most of it) has made, mobilized and empowered youth and minority voters like never before, and should serve to inspire a new generation of bright minds of any race or ethnicity. But to think that it is enough to undo decades of inequality is naïve.

Obama is an exceptional individual with an exceptional background, spending the most formative years of his life in Indonesia and later in Hawaii, where he was raised by his white grandparents. His experience hardly seems representative of that of many minority children today.

Rather than just pat ourselves on the back because we elected a half black president, we should engage in a collective conversation on what needs to done to ensure that every American child has equal opportunity to be anything he or she would like to be. Aside from constituting a grave injustice, this issue also threatens our nation's long-term competitiveness in a globalized economy.

So where to begin? It's been almost 50 years since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was passed, so institutionalized discrimination is no longer the issue. Rather than blame "The Man," I suggest we take a two-pronged approach in this discussion: K-12 education and culture.

During the years my mother taught at Atlanta Public Schools, a majority black inner-city school system, she shared many sad and shocking stories with me. Sometimes I couldn't believe how different my high school in Cobb County was from hers.

For weeks, enrollment in her class was so high that some students sat on the floor. She would often spend her own money to buy basic supplies. Arrests during the school day were not unheard of. During one of my visits, I watched a teacher talking on her cell phone in the hallway, periodically yelling at her rowdy class to "shut up."

School systems like APS suffer from a host of problems with no easy fix. An obvious start is to increase funding to ensure that students can learn in smaller classes, with adequate supplies and well-trained teachers who care. Critics may note that the U.S.'s K-12 education expenditure per student is among the highest in the world at the same time that our performance ranks among the lowest, or that compared to other metro Atlanta school systems, teacher salaries at APS are the highest.

Still, money is an issue. Under the current rates of teacher salaries, there is no incentive for someone who graduates with a major in physics or mathematics to consider teaching as a career, and let's face it—a B.A. in education is probably not enough to train the high-caliber teachers that our country needs.

Further, the current system places a large burden on professionals with specialized, non-education degrees to become certified. These barriers to entry can be lowered without risking teacher quality; on the contrary, this would increase it. Teachers also need to feel like they have adequate access to supplies and technology, and that their job security does not rest upon a standardized test.

The list of reforms that the K-12 system is in dire need of could go on, but another anecdote from my mother's years at APS gives me pause. When asked seriously what they wanted to do after graduation, a majority of her students chose careers in sports and entertainment.

Why weren't they aspiring to something different? An open discussion on culture needs to take place alongside that on education, and this is where I hope Obama's historic campaign and victory will have the greatest effect.

Let's start talking.

Holiday movie season disappoints fans

"It's that time of year when we should be full steam ahead for a slew of big Oscar contenders..."

Daniel Spiller
Entertainment Editor

Though the leaves have begun to turn the most vibrant and beautiful oranges and reds, and the temperature outside is not nearly as stifling as it was just a month ago, I can't help but feel somewhat depressed and ashamed of where this season is inevitably heading.

Could it be my lack of motivation in almost all of my classes that is bringing me down? No, I've accepted (and somewhat embraced) that. How about my intense diffidence and uncertainty of what life after Tech will be like? Well, that's more of a constant and ongoing ulcer.

No, this current problem is sadly out of my control—one that I am powerless over. As the holidays approach, moviegoers will arrive at theaters with faces aglow, giddy with anticipation that only the cinema can provide—and discover that there is absolutely nothing to see. It's that time of year when we should be full steam ahead for a slew of big Oscar contenders, and yet the horizon is looking rather bleak.

It was around this time last year when moviegoers were treated to the Coen brothers' instant classic *No Country for Old Men*. December saw the release of the quirky, crowd-pleasing *Juno* and the horrifying, arguably perfect *There Will Be Blood*. Is there anything coming up that looks as though it could even compare to these? Are *Twilight* and *Transporter 3* really going to carry the complex storyline of *Michael Clayton* or the style of *Sweeney Todd*?

All right, I know it's a little unfair to compare the complexity of a film aimed at teen girls about teen vampires to a film about a fixer in a law firm and the moral ambiguities that arise, but the point is that there doesn't seem to be anything on deck that really has that "Wow, I have to see that!" kind of appeal.

What makes it worse is that last year felt slow too. Honestly, movies like *Michael Clayton* didn't grab my attention at first. I put off seeing it until well after its release. A few films that ended up receiving stellar reviews and winning multiple awards didn't seem all that interesting in the beginning. So it could be that there are some hidden gems in what currently looks to be a rather slow upcoming season at the movies. But at least last year I was looking forward to some things. I wanted to see *No Country*. I wanted to see *There Will Be Blood*. I can't honestly say I want to see *Four Christmases*.

All hope is not lost, though. Today marks the release of the new James Bond flick, and if it's half as good as the previous installment, well…I guess it would be half of a really good movie. With action aplenty, *Quantum of Solace* should at least be a nice diversion. But will installment number 22 of the series really have something that awards-season moviegoers can sink their teeth into? It's not likely.

If James Bond isn't your thing, Christmas might have the solution. David Fincher of *Fight Club* and *Se7en* fame now releases *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, a story about a man who ages backwards.

The prerelease buzz along with an excellent trailer put Benjamin Button as the shining beacon of hope at the end of the year. And for those who lack faith in Fincher, still thinking of him as that guy who just makes cult movies with no real substance, I urge them to go see his last film, 2007's *Zodiac*.

Although the movie season does look dull (with a few aforementioned exceptions), people seeking entertainment can hopefully find their fix through other mediums. For those who enjoy video games, take solace in what appears to be a golden age of gaming. *Fallout 3*, *Far Cry 2*, *Gears of War 2*, *Fable 2*, *LittleBigPlanet*, *Rock Band 2*, *Dead Space* and *Mirror's Edge* have all been released within the past couple of months, giving gamers plenty of options on how to empty their wallets.

This movie season might not currently be filled with as many homeruns as we may have hoped, but maybe the upcoming months will see the uncovering of some surprises. Until then, try to enjoy the young, brooding vampires and more of Jason Statham's ridiculous action sequences.

OUR VIEWS Hot or Not

HOT or NOT

Diversity days

With a theme this year of "a latitude adjustment," Diversity Week brought lectures on a number of hot-button topics like sexism and religion and science to campus, as well as performances by the GT Dance Teams and a training session for the LGBTQ community. Celebrating diversity is always fun, especially if it unites the Tech community and gets people talking.

Football failure

Tech football continues to take fans on a roller coaster of emotions. Following the historic FSU victory, which placed the team as a top contender for the ACC title, Tech suffered a sobering 28-7 loss to the Tar Heels. With Miami and Georgia left on the schedule, here's to hoping that the Yellow Jackets' roller coaster season ends on a high—unfortunately, an unlikely scenario.

Memorial maker

Michael Arad, whose design for a World Trade Center memorial was chosen from over 5,000 entries, spoke at Tech this week. Arad, a graduate of Tech's College of Architecture, shared his experiences with a group of budding architects and designers, inspiring creativity and ambition.

Online outage

Students going online Tuesday afternoon found themselves disconnected from the web. Although the outage, which was caused by a high volume of traffic, only lasted half an hour, Tech students used to being wired at all times were frustrated when they couldn't get their connectivity fix.

YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Gay marriage bans wrong

In recent years, gay marriage has become surrounded by controversy. Last week all four propositions concerning gay marriage succeeded in curtailing LGBT civil liberties, despite their unconstitutionality.

Through my studies I've examined a variety of societies, concluding that our most significant strength lies within our ability to agree to disagree, a strength that disheartens me to see compromised. Yet I have faith that America will prove its commitment to equality.

Strength is first compromised along the blurred lines separating church and state, due to confusion that the sanctity of marriage is threatened by governmental recognition of LGBT unions. However, the word 'sanctity," derived from sacred, or of God, is rooted in religion.

Since its context places the doctrine of one belief above another, government regulation is illegitimate for such conviction, reinforced by the 1st Amendment: "Congress will make no law respecting an establishment of a religion…"

Citizens should understand that through voting they are already making the distinction between the church and state definitions of marriage and that religious sanctity is not endangered.

However, should people wish to take governmental action, I indicate its illegality. The equal protection clause in the 14th Amendment states that "no State shall… deny to any [citizen] the equal protection of the laws." Any initiatives enforcing different laws based upon predetermined dispositions are unconstitutional.

Additionally, in 1954 the Supreme Court ruled through Brown vs. The Board of Edu-

See **Letters**, page 10

Letter Submission Policy

The *Technique* welcomes all letters to the editor in response to *Technique* content as well as general topics relevant to campus. We will print letters on a timely and space-available basis. Send your letter to **letters@nique.net** and please use your official Georgia Tech account if possible. Make sure to include your full name, year (1st, 2nd, etc.), and major.

Letters should not exceed 400 words and should be submitted by 7 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. We reserve the right to edit for style and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

Advertising Information

Information and rate cards can be found online at **nique.net/ads**. The deadline for reserving ad space and submitting ad copy is Friday at 5 p.m., one week prior to publication. For rate or billing information, or to place an ad, please e-mail our Advertising Manager, Hahnming Lee at **ads@nique.net**. You may also reach us by telephone at (404) 894-2830, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The *Technique* office is located in room 137 of the Student Services Building, 353 Ferst Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0290.

Coverage Requests

Requests for coverage may be made to the Editor-in-Chief or to individual section editors. For more information, email **editor@nique.net**

BUZZ
Around the Campus

What would you do to improve T-Square?

Atita Shirwaikar
Grad ECE

"One thing is the wiki—somehow that is not the most useful. Also, I don't receive notifications if something has been uploaded."

Vikram Krishna
Grad ECE

"There are a lot of old courses that were on WebCT—those courses were not shifted to T-square. I cannot access lectures or notes anymore."

Chima Umeakunne
First-year BME

"I would improve its reliability, because every now and then it stops working, which is inefficient."

Adaeze Ejiogu
First-year BME

"I don't like T-square—I would get rid of it. I know it's not green, but I like handouts so I can write on something."

Photos by Ben Keyserling

Love drives student choices in products, organizations

"A friend of mine told me that she likes her iPod a whole lot because it 'makes her happy.'... That's a Lovemark."

Arcadiy Kantor
Outreach Editor

Recently I've been reading a rather beautiful book called *Lovemarks*, written in 2004 by Kevin Roberts, the worldwide CEO of Saatchi & Saatchi.

Roberts describes what happens when an individual forms a relationship with a brand beyond one of "I buy it because it is adequate and cheap." Throughout the book he discusses a way for companies to create that invaluable tie: one of loyalty beyond reason.

A Lovemark, according to Roberts, is a few levels above trademarks and brands: where a brand conveys information, a Lovemark creates a relationship. A brand is generic, while a Lovemark is personal. And while a brand might make a statement, a Lovemark tells a story.

There are some easily identifiable Lovemarks that many in our peer group have. Perhaps the most obvious example of loyalty beyond reason is that pinnacle of mp3 player design, the iPod. For years the iPod cost more and had fewer features (as a student journalist, the lack of voice recording was always a deal breaker) than competing players, and while it had the lead in ease of use and design for a while, a number of other manufacturers have been producing very competitive products for some time now.

Still, if you board the Stinger and look around, you will see that 90 percent of the students have the tell-tale white headphones. Why? Apple has done a fantastic job of making the iPod the player to own. Its commercials are an instructive exercise in storytelling, from the unique visual style to the musical choices. Furthermore, Apple's ability to deliver a complete experience, including an application component and music store, before its competition allowed it to form even stronger ties with its customers.

Better yet, Apple's ubiquitous product provides the soundtrack to its owners' lives: people who love music—a huge group—almost universally love their iPods. A friend of mine told me that she likes her iPod a whole lot because it "makes her happy." A piece of electronics that makes you happy? That's a Lovemark.

There are a number of other Lovemarks we as students surround ourselves with. Facebook, Skype, bands we like—all of these are Lovemarks for different groups of us. But one of the things that I've been wondering about while reading the book is whether these strong relationships also exist between students and some of the things associated with Tech, whether it be traditions, establishments or student organizations.

I truly care about the organizations that I have dedicated my time and effort to, and I know many students feel likewise. But it seems like membership is a prerequisite for that relationship, which makes me question the status of any student organizations as a Lovemark. Have you ever heard of a student who was excited about attending an event just because it was put on by a certain organization? I haven't.

And yet every student organization tries hard to get people to attend or participate in its projects and take an interest in its causes. Wouldn't every one of them want to create a deep, lasting relationship with all the people that are in their constituencies, whether they are members or not?

As the Outreach Editor of the *Technique*, I wonder what it would take for an organization to build that relationship with the students. What could we do to make the *Technique* a Lovemark for our community and the students, faculty and staff who make up our reader base?

Roberts defines five core principles of brands that move to the next layout and become Lovemarks: they are passionate, involve customers, celebrate loyalty, find, tell and retell great stories, and accept responsibility.

Over the course of our existence we have done better at some of these things than at others. We have not involved others in our newspaper as much as we should, and we have not rewarded reader loyalty. Most notably, though, there isn't a story associated with reading the *Technique*—except that of "I picked it up, read the Slivers and did the Sudoku."

Ultimately, every organization should strive to build that loyalty. If they succeed, maybe we will have a campus of less apathetic, more engaged students.

Letters from page 9

cation that having separate institutions for education was inherently unequal, with this situation being no different. These propositions are enacting separate terms to define identical rights between two communities.

Lastly, arguments that 'democracy has spoken' transgress the nature of our government. The Bill of Rights and Constitution were established to protect individual rights from the ruling elite.

Our founding fathers foresaw that pure unlimited rule by the masses was no different than a dictatorial mob, where groups use superior numbers to bully the few, slavery being a simplified example. They installed safeguards, seen in the documents cited above, protecting us from this discrimination.

Our country's strength lies within our ability to disagree. Founded in our rights, every citizen is protected, majority or minority. I write to plead with the population to uphold this ability to work beyond differences.

Stop tearing rifts and cleavages into society by erecting barriers. Instead, vote for diversity and against division. Vote for us.

Adam Weiss
Fourth-year INTA

Campus laziness

I was surprised when I picked up this past edition to find Jennifer Aldoretta's editorial on student laziness ["Irrational laziness plagues student body," Nov. 7]. I completely agree with her critique of most students' habits and have often found myself asking the same questions.

Why do students feel so compelled to rush and use the Trolley or Stinger shuttles when they could just as easily walk? Why do they insist on cramming in like an over-packed can of sardines, even though they can clearly see the bus is already full? And why do they then sit down on their lazy rear ends and wait for the next one, when they get shut out from the previous shuttle?

After taking a year off from the ME grad program, I found myself back on campus and for the first time relying on MARTA and the shuttles to get to campus. It's too expensive to waste the money on a parking pass.

I was once again leading a very sedentary lifestyle, and after just one semester I had packed on 20 pounds. Beginning last spring I started going walking to incorporate more physical activity into my life. At first I hated it because of the time it seemed to add to my travels. But I stuck to it and lost the weight I'd gained.

Eventually I realizes that with the unreliability of the shuttles, it didn't really cost me any more time by walking. Now I only use the Trolley when I'm really running late. Most days as I walk through campus and see people running to catch those rolling sardine cans to just get two blocks up the road to Tech Square, I laugh. Maybe that freshman 15 wouldn't hit so hard and fast if people just used what the good Lord gave them, their own two feet.

Aaron Lee
ME grad student

sliver

www.nique.net

postmodernism is unrealistic... ha, ha, an Eng. joke...
yo mama's big black booty band
love.me.linear.
...yeah, i haven't slept in days
resolve
absolve
we broke the elevator.
bones!
Taylor Swift doesn't get Romeo & Juliet at all.
swoon baby swoon
face
you need to grow thicker skin
it is all man-love
erm that came out wrong
test your enormous game
lets bust out of this popsickle stand
I prefer my guitar to your company. sorry.
sketch girl, you don't even say hi anymore.
you blind?
cold weather means people start dressing with dignity
holloween was the last chance to dress slut-nasty
Pelican't
I saw an owl catch a mouse, I didn't know how to feel, so I just watched.
sliver run.
Too much, too much.
Ambivilance breeds uncertainty.
egg. gross
spazz
I'll admit, I used to listen to anti-Flag
I could use a date, it has been a while.
Tech girls are still crazy :/
All slivers go to heaven.
Why did the chicken cross the road?
Because your mother's a whore!
Good god, will people stop throwing carrots at me?