



OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Fight for your rights

Despite the ironic nature of a federally mandated celebration of Constitution Day, Tech organizers pulled off a surprisingly engaging and meaningful event in honor of the document that shapes our country's laws.

A congress appropriations bill forced the idea of Constitution Day onto the school, but instead of blowing it off as just another hoop to jump through to get federal funding, Tech organizers really took it as an opportunity to explore meaningful issues not normally talked about on campus.

A Free-Speech-a-Thon featured 18 students who delivered their thoughts on various concerns such as the right to protest, and Constitution Alley elicited over 400 student responses on constitutional issues our nation currently faces.

In a nation where many citizens do not even know where the Constitution was signed (the answer is Philadelphia), it was encouraging and exciting to see Tech students actively engaging in, discussing and debating about something totally unrelated to the Tech shaft, bad grades or video games.

Often decried as uninformed or apathetic, Tech students showed that we really just need outlets to express our political inclinations. Further events similar to Constitution Day can build on this trickle of political interest. Who knows? One day Tech students might fully exercise all of our constitutional rights.

Living up to the hype

Despite the limited publicity for the event before a last-minute mass email, the International Plan and Research Opportunities Fair had a great turnout of both students and faculty. Hosting the event on Skiles Walkway gave the event a high level of visibility, allowing students who had not previously heard of the fair to check out the assorted displays from different campus programs. The presence of President Clough added the necessary degree of prominence and showed the level of importance placed on the plan by the administration.

Two years of hard work on the part of the administration culminated with the fair, and the community's response displayed the excitement of the students at seeing the final result of the effort. At long last, the administration and the students are on the same page in what they want.

It remains to be seen whether the program actually lives up to its hype, but the fair's results are a promising beginning to what we hope will be a stellar opportunity for Tech's future.

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By Ting Cheng / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

8 a.m. classes zombify students

"I have an 8 a.m. class..."

It rolls off the tongue like a declaration of illness and elicits an outpouring of sympathy and well-wishing.

You might as well have just announced you had the flu or some other disease.

Maybe people will fear it's contagious and back away from you, as if they could get one just from being around you.

It may be debatable whether the flu or the 8 a.m. class is preferable. Unfortunately for me, the School of Chemical Engineering only lists Separations Processes at 8 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, but offers no alternative infection program. A pity.

More to the point though, just what do we as college students hate so much about 8 a.m. classes?

Duh. We have to get up early. That means less sleep, and I have it on good authority that sleep deprivation is bad.

This is where your father's advice comes in (usually in that "it builds character" tone of voice): why don't you just go to bed earlier?

Well, sure. After I finish my lab report and get to work on my eight hours of homework that I couldn't start sooner since I had classes during the day, not to mention [insert extracurricular activity here].

It's not a matter of poor time management or staying out too late at bars—especially not at a place like Tech.

When I work in the summer, it's comparatively easy to get up for an 8 a.m. job, and many others with whom I've spoken say the same.

Why? Because when work is out at 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. it's done. There's no more extra-long homework assignment or lab report to work late into the night finishing up.

At school, the hours are different for a student balancing class, work, extracurricular activities, research



"The answer could simply lie in the opposite direction—rather than eliminating options, make more of them."

Stephen Baehl
Development Editor

and homework. And by different, I mean longer.

It may not be surprising, then, to realize that college students do not typically go to bed early—and, in fact, have been the subject of multiple studies on sleep deprivation, all of which have called it a bad thing (hence the good authority from which I drew my earlier declaration).

A March 2003 *College Student Journal* study referenced sleep studies that indicated that "college students who attain less sleep are more psychologically maladjusted, have lower grade-point averages, are more anxious, less creative, more neurotic and more prone to hallucinate," adding that other studies have found college students who sleep less worry more.

Less drastic pronouncements have also been made regarding performance hindrance as a result of sleep loss. Hans P.A. Van Dongen, assistant professor of sleep and chronobiology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, said in a March 2003 WebMD medical news article that lack of sleep impairs reaction times, memory and thought.

Of course, there are far easier ways to see the effects of sleep deprivation than reading studies and health journals.

Just look around an early morning class at the dozing, zombie-like students, or the professor almost begging for feedback from his class,

finding them as responsive and intellectually engaged as cattle. That is, assuming the professor himself is awake.

Productivity is just not as high in early morning classes. Most students present get as much benefit from the class as they would have if they stayed in bed and merely experienced a strange dream about thermodynamics, falling through the air, and a walrus.

So what is the solution?

Duke tried eliminating 8 a.m. classes in April 2004 to mixed reactions. Students loved the idea, but valid questions of promoting laziness were raised. And besides, what was to keep 9 a.m. from becoming the next 8 a.m.?

Doing away with the early morning classes entirely only further limits students' options and tends to clump scheduling up more, which could lead to overcrowding in some classes.

What's more, I hear tell of the occasional student who actually chooses to wake up early for class.

The answer could simply lie in the opposite direction—rather than eliminating options, make more of them. Some schools, such as Chemical Engineering, only open one section of a required class each semester. And that section is typically open at 8 a.m., or, more rarely, 9 a.m.

If only one section is to be made

Ideological extremes propagates social tension

It has been on my mind quite a bit lately that people are mean and that they perceive the world as a place in which they are perpetually victimized as a mechanism to rationalize their meanness. (Why be civil to those who would oppress you, right?) This is not to say, of course, that all people are cold and cruel.



“the logical disconnect between the actual situation and the one presented is astounding.”

Evan Zasoski
Entertainment Editor

However, there does seem to be a fairly strong correlation between those that behave this way and those that have absolutely no business whatsoever in behaving this way. The irony is overwhelming, I know. Take by way of example the following two stories of mudslinging and woe (but mostly mudslinging):

The other day a friend of mine received, by way of his car's windshield, a flyer for the Atlanta Freethought Society wherein the good people of said society—who, it seems, are unaware that “free thought” is two words—provided a handy-dandy little chart detailing the differences or, in their humble opinion, lack thereof between Christians and crazy people.

The chart is composed of two columns, one for Christians and one for crazy people. For every kooky little thing that crazy people do, the Freethought Society has provided a rough analog of that behavior within the Christian community. My personal favorite is this little

gem: as it turns out, crazy people “talk to themselves” is answered in the Christian column by the word “pray.”

Now totally disregarding the irony of a group claiming to promote free thought going out of their way to say that one particular mode of thought is, in fact, wrong, that's just plain mean.

Though the cruelty in this debate—if that's what one chooses to call it when grown men and women sit around hurling childish insults at one another—is hardly one sided.

The Christians, or rather some of them, get in their barbs too. When one considers that most of the central tenets of their and for that matter my faith can, not unreasonably, be summed up as “Don't be a dick,” the whole situation hurtles headlong into the realm of the absurd.

The Reverend Jerry Falwell comes to mind as a prime example of this phenomenon. Specifically his remarks immediately follow-

ing the attacks of Sept. 11. This is what the good reverend had to say on the matter:

“I really believe that the pagans and the abortionists and the feminists and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People for the American Way, all of them who try to secularize America...I point the [attacks] in their face and say you helped this happen.”

Again, the logical disconnect between the actual situation and the one presented is astounding. Connecting a few dangerously misled terrorists, the ACLU and its analogs and the Ineffable Will of the Almighty (on which Mr. Falwell apparently believes he has the inside line) gives a whole new meaning to the idea of a leap of faith.

As a matter of fact, the fiery back and forth between the militantly religious and militantly secular in our or any society is so well ingrained in the public consciousness that it hardly bears

citation.

One can barely get through an entire day without hearing someone calling someone else either a hell-bound pagan or a backwards-looking sorcerer dangling some God-as-boogey-man figure over his followers.

Though, at this point, it should be noted that this eternal flame-war is being fought primarily by a very small subset of each group. Most people are happy to live and let live and have no great desire to spend their time hurling insults at those with whom they disagree. Basically, it's just a few bad apples ruining it for everybody.

So, how about this for a plan? Detente.

For those secular humanists out there, the next time Jerry Falwell or Pat Robertson are making asses of themselves on national television, just remember that they're both a far cry from speakers for the majority of Christianity and resist the urge to mock any of your openly religious acquaintances in retaliation.

And Christians, don't get your panties in a wad every time a group of nut jobs who don't know how to separate the words “free” and “thought” on their letterhead decide to be jerks.

And definitely don't let it get to you so bad that you go out and write an editorial about the whole mess. Because that's just silly.

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT- or -NOT



Strong opening act

Redshirt freshman Taylor Bennett played a strong game last weekend against UConn, subbing for the hospitalized Reggie Ball. Showing no signs of stagefright, Bennett hurled a 42-yard pass to Calvin Johnson for a touchdown on his first pass. Though not amazing, Bennett's performance was solid for a first start. He deserves props for keeping the Jackets undefeated for our first 3-0 start in four years.

Questiona-Ball

After a string of 27 consecutive starts, Reggie Ball might still be out of commission tomorrow as he recovers from viral meningitis. Released from the hospital Monday after a weekend at the hospital, Ball's playing status is still questionable for the Virginia Tech game. Ball's experience may make the difference against the No. 4 Hokies, who will be the toughest challenge the Jackets have faced thus far.



Back in the money

After completing a phase of renovations, the Student Center has replaced the Wachovia and Bank of America ATMs on the first floor. Customers of these respective banks no longer need to cross busy streets and wander into the real world to access their money.

Where's the family?

Maybe our parents don't love us anymore, or maybe it was because the UConn game wasn't riveting enough to warrant the trip. Either way, the number of attendees at Family Weekend this past weekend dropped significantly as compared with last year.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Aarohi fills needed niche

I find the article in *Technique* bemoaning the plethora of different organizations a little amusing and mostly amateurish (“Redundant organizations cause redundancy”).

The author has pointed out that a student coming from a U.S. high school has 10 clubs to choose from and here at Tech he or she has 367.

The simple reason for this is that the student is not in a high school any more.

Tech is a thriving public university of international repute. The ethnic, cultural and international diversity of this school makes it inevitable, in fact desirable to have a multitude of organizations catering to different interests.

The author has given the example of India Club, which admittedly is a big organization catering to varied interests of a huge Indian student population. Aarohi is a niche organization (sadly Indian classical music

has become niche these days!) founded by graduate students from India who collaborate with Indian Classical Music Society of Atlanta to organize concerts on the Tech campus.

Just because “India Club” has the word “India” in it does not mean that every activity remotely associated with India is their responsibility. It is not a practical proposition at all for various reasons. Suggesting otherwise is akin to saying that since Microsoft is a big software company, they should make all the world's software.

It may be a little bewildering for a student to have so many choices when he or she comes to Tech, but ultimately it is a good thing as it enables him or her to make more focused choices and discover his or her passions more easily.

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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 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.

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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's your favorite coffee shop?



Wei Feng
First-year UEC

“The Caribou Coffee near Lenox.”



Nick Ward
Secibd-year ME

“The Starbucks at Barnes & Noble.”



Marissa Wronka
Third-year PHYS

“The one in the bottom of the CoC.”



Farhana Abdullah
Third-year STaC

“The Borders Cafe on Ponce.”

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Homepark loses ride home

Tech in general and GT Transportation in particular have been providing a number of helpful services for the students.

As students, we sincerely acknowledge these services.

The Stingerette Shuttle service especially has been a boon to several graduate as well as undergraduate students. However, recently the Stingerette Services have stopped service to the Homepark area, located to the immediate northwest of the Tech campus.

Generally, it is the case that a service is stopped due to a lack of demand for it. However the situation here is exactly the opposite. Several students, probably a majority from the Home Park area (which has not been very safe in recent times) depend each day on the evening and night shuttle to transport them home safely.

Most of these are international

students and are highly dependent on this service, the absence of which is definitely causing a serious inconvenience.

New services like the Midtown Trolley loop are definitely giving GT students a value for the student fees they pay. At the same time, in our opinion, necessary services should not be discontinued, definitely not without considering the opinion of a major part of the student community that is dependent on these facilities.

It is a humble request to GT and the Transportation administration to consider this matter and make a decision that favors and reflects the opinion of a majority of GT students.

Prashant Jain
Secretary, Chemistry Graduate
Student Forum
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a.m. section, or, dare I mention it, an afternoon section of the class?

It is nearly impossible to accommodate the strange sleep schedule of college students with rigid class scheduling rules. But opening up more options must certainly be a viable alternative.

I find it hard to believe that, for four semesters straight, the only time slot available for the only section offered of a class that everyone in a major is required to take has been 8 a.m.

Just opening up more choices for students can go a long way to helping them fit their class schedule to what is most conducive to their learning needs.

My 23 favorite math expressions

I am an Ivan Allen liberal arts student to the bone. I know the contours of DM Smith's halls like the back of my computer mouse. The smell of aging books has all but sunk into my marrow. The basic structures of sentences are as familiar to me as basic arithmetic.

But don't let my liberal arts background fool you. Mathematics is a useful and important tool in many aspects of my life.

I did complete college level calculus successfully, and I will display my stunning skills below.

Listed here are my favorite mathematical concepts to show how very much quantification has taught me about life. Behind these variables and digits you will find the universality of the mathematical language, and perhaps even the meaning of life itself (see #18).

1. $E=mc^2$. I don't know exactly how to apply this, but it's a classic.

2. $\ln(e) = 1$. I scored points with my boyfriend last week for knowing this. So ladies and gents: never hurts to know this one, especially on dates.

3. Buy one get one free. No explanation needed.

4. 70% Male + 30% Female = you know the answer to this one. Just think real hard about it.

5. Quadratic. All I remember are lots of a's, b's, and c's—all of which correspond exactly to the grades I would ideally like to obtain here at Tech, if I'm lucky.

6. $\pi * R^2$ = area of a circle and a really dorky way of calculating pizza payments by the slice among your hall mates.

7. Credit Card + College Student = average of \$2,748 debt upon



"I did complete college level calculus successfully, and I will display my stunning skills below."

Alexandra Pajak
Columnist

graduation

8. UFOs and their connection to Stonehenge. (A 22-page mathematical proof that aliens existed. Pamphlet obtained at Little Five. Too complicated to discuss here. Involves some tasteless ravaging of Scharzchild's wormhole theory)

9. Einstein's theory of relativity. As much as you think you know about life, it will never make any sense at all no matter how! @#\$%ing smart you think you are.

10. \$1.75 = Way too much for a subway fare.

11. 3-2-1 Contact = Way cool TV show when you're seven, or 22 and feeling nostalgic.

12. 26 = number of episodes of Nickelodeon's Salute your Shorts.

13. 22 = 22 too many episodes for a bunch of desperate housewives who don't act like moms, wives or normal people in houses.

14. \$6 = someone in the gas business is ripping you off completely.

15. 30. The age I'll never be.

16. Joan Rivers + daughter = end of American society.

17. One retired Supreme Court Justice + one deceased Supreme Court Justice = a sunrise upon the United States or the coming of the apocalypse. Take your pick.

18. 42 = the meaning of life, the

universe and everything. Thanks Douglas Adams, I owe you one.

19. 666. The number people in Rome, Ga. that were fearful to receive on their tickets at the screening of Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*.

20. 69 hours + 48 minutes = longest time anyone has ever watched television. Also may = sign you need a job and/or ABC is in desperate need for publicity.

21. 15 = the supposed number of minutes between Stinger stops.

22. 15 = the amount of minutes it would take me to walk there myself.

23. 1. The other person you'll love more than anyone. You'll know when you find him/her. I can't plot out the rest for you, sorry, even on x, y, and z-axes.

So there are my favorite equations. I hope I've enlightened you and helped you quantify the world in a way that is orderly, logical, objective and therefore easy to manage.

If anyone learns how to break the space-time continuum and manages to skip class and also attend class simultaneously, please invite me along for the ride. Same goes for the question to the answer of the meaning of life. Also, anyone got spare change for gas?

8 a.m. from page 8

available, why not schedule that section at a time that is more suitable to a greater number of students?

Something that could suit the schedule of the guy who's up until 1 a.m. working on labs and homework as well as the (possibly mythological) student who enjoys rising with the sun would be more ideal. It would also aid in student-teacher interaction, helping everyone gain more from the class overall.

Of course, if staff and resources permit, the ideal solution would be to at least offer alternatives to the 8 a.m. Why not include a 10 or 11