

OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

Noisy housing

For the last couple of weeks, the North Avenue Apartments construction work has left hundreds of student residents wishing they could move out into a quieter environment. While the loudest jackhammers will be turned off starting today, work will continue until the end of the semester, making students wonder if all the inconvenience could have somehow been helped.

When Tech acquired the Apartments, which were previously managed by Georgia State, the Institute was not aware of these and other problems that have cost millions to fix. The fact that in 11 years Georgia State had not performed adequate tests and maintenance speaks poorly of its thoroughness and concern for safety. While Tech acted quickly and closely followed standard procedure, there should have been more consideration for how students would be affected.

For one, Housing should have communicated with students as soon as it found out about the problem in June. Students should have been kept updated at all times, especially once it was realized that the solution would have to be implemented right away and would take several months. Instead, Housing waited until the second week of classes to announce the situation—at the same time that construction workers began to climb up scaffolds outside students' windows.

Given the magnitude of the situation and the potentially detrimental effects on students' quality of life and academic performance, Housing should also have offered students assigned to the North Avenue Apartments the opportunity to break their contracts without losing their deposit money. Since Tech would not be able to provide alternative housing on campus as it is filled to capacity, Housing should also have made an effort to provide support for students wishing to relocate to off-campus housing.

This type of response is not unheard of. In 2006 when Admissions misestimated the number of accepted students that would come in as freshmen, Housing had to place these students in triple rooms. Due to the inconvenience generated, the affected students were allowed to break their contracts. Such a choice would have been helpful to students who now feel stuck paying for accommodations that are severely falling short of their expectations.

When students sign up for housing, they expect to get what they pay for. Although there is no doubt that Housing had to act quickly to ensure safety and the integrity of the brickwork, more considerate gestures towards residents would have gone a long way in helping students find the home, sweet home they hoped and paid for.

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

EDITORIAL BOARD

Craig Tabita, *Editor-in-Chief*
Jenny Morgan, *Managing Editor*

Hahnming Lee, *Advertising Manager*
Siwan Liu, *Design Editor*
Jonathan Saethang, *Development Editor*
Daniel Spiller, *Entertainment Editor*
Reem Mansoura, *Focus Editor*
Vivian Fan, *Layout Editor*

Corbin Pon, *News Editor*
Blake Israel, *Online Editor*
Naihobe Gonzalez, *Opinions Editor*
Arcadiy Kantor, *Outreach Editor*
Michael Schneider, *Photography Editor*
Matt Hoffman, *Sports Editor*

Copyright © 2008, Craig Tabita, Editor-in-Chief, and by the Board of Student Publications. The *Technique* is an official publication of the Georgia Tech Board of Student Publications. No part of this paper may be reproduced in any manner without written permission from the Editor or from the Board of Student Publications. The ideas expressed herein are those of the Editor or the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Board of Student Publications, the students, staff or faculty of the Georgia Institute of Technology or the University System of Georgia.
First copy free. Subsequent copies \$1 each.



By Abhishek Jain / Student Publications

Infomercials cure TV boredom

Though at times it has its drawbacks, there are definitely some perks to being the Entertainment Editor. I can watch the latest batch of junk that television has to offer and claim to be working.

Yet ever since the mass movement towards “reality” shows, television has become more depressing. There are definitely still some shows worth watching, but for the most part it just doesn't feel like networks are trying anymore. Where's the fun? Where's the creativity?

Good news: it's not gone, it has just been hiding. In order to get the entertainment you've been seeking, you either need to tune in really late or really early, depending on how you look at it.

But what am I talking about? Where can you find this magic that is worth staying up or waking up for? Well, a lot of places, actually. In fact, multiple channels are host to this visual wonder. I'm speaking, of course, about infomercials.

While many TV shows have lost their charm, infomercials have upped the ante by becoming more ridiculous and hilarious than ever before. The products are zanier, the dialogue is worse and the music is more inappropriate. Infomercials have completely catered to my it's-so-bad-it's-good entertainment needs.

Here are, in order of appearance, the infomercials I recently witnessed: a taser approved by World's Wildest Police Videos' John Bunnell, a workout plan that is delivered to your house on what seemed to be roughly 187 DVDs and finally, a sexual enhancement lubricant.

Unfortunately, I only caught the backend of the taser infomercial, but I saw enough to know that you need one. John Bunnell is worried about your safety, but now thanks to this amazing new



“While many TV shows have lost their charm, infomercials have upped the ante by becoming more ridiculous and hilarious...”

Daniel Spiller
Entertainment Editor

product, you can finally protect yourself.

The taser has refillable cartridges (I can't tell you how many times I've needed to shut down multiple nervous systems), and it is still effective through up to two cubic inches of clothing. This is particularly important for those scientists in Antarctica who have to wear thick coats but still want the opportunity to shock their friends. Scientists can be jokesters, too.

Next was the workout infomercial. Apparently after just 90 days of this rigorous program, you too could become a (wo)man-beast. The secret to the workout was “muscle confusion.” I'm not kidding. That is apparently the scientific term they have given the program.

The key to muscle confusion is that the program alternates every so often to work different muscles, thus “confusing” them into growing to watermelon-sized proportions. It clearly works, so start training using this method to gain muscles thick enough to stop John Bunnell's taser.

Lastly, we come to the sexual enhancement lubricant. Sporting a slogan of “More than a lube, it's love in a tube,” how could you possibly go wrong? By making the cheesiest infomercial with the most stereotypical “sexy” music and some of the worst writing this side of The Hills, you have provided glorious entertainment for me, the viewer, but you probably

aren't going to convince me that your cream, goo or ooze will cause euphoria.

I just feel sorry for the poor saps who give their testimonials about using the product. It was different for the people in the previous infomercial; they were ripped and able to point out how they were in much better shape than I was. I agreed with them.

Here we had people sitting around talking about their experience using the love sludge, looking distant and likely wondering where their check was. As you can imagine, the discomfort both they and I were feeling made for absolutely top-notch television.

What is it about infomercials that make them more entertaining than most other things on TV? Effort. Even when the product, idea, presentation, actors, writing and directing are absolutely horrible, it is still obvious that they tried. These people are trying to sell you something, and they are trying hard. But a tiny budget can only take you so far, and we the consumers rake in the resulting enjoyment.

So if you're tired of watching House hobble around the hospital, if J.J. Abrams' newest thriller just didn't cut it or if Dwight and Jim's banter is growing stale, don't fret. Take solace in infomercials. Their ridiculousness and profound ineptitude will be sure to brighten your morning, even if it is still dark outside.

On-campus smokers prove frustrating

A year and a half ago when I was a young, naïve senior in high school, I had narrowed down my future college choice to two universities: the University of Michigan and Georgia Tech.

While both were academically prestigious and culturally diverse, there was one factor that eventually gave way to my final decision. The choice came down to whether I wanted to be standing in Ann Arbor in the freezing cold in a throng of hazy cigarette fumes or walking through clean, fresh air in sunny Atlanta.

I have now noticed that my once seemingly solid reason to attend Tech is crumbling away. Perhaps it is merely the weather, the harder classes, or even my own heightened stress levels, but it seems that across campus, more and more students are taking up the awful habit of cigarette smoking.

I realize that smoking every once in a while (whether it be in the form of a Cuban cigar or some sort of unmentionable substance) can be interpreted as a cultural or celebratory activity. Yet, if someone is finishing off a pack of Camels in a week or even a day, that person has to admit that he or she has a problem.

Aside from the obvious health-related downsides to



"I'm going to launch this simple public service announcement: smoking is not cool!"

Vivian Fan
Layout Editor

puffing on a nice cigarette, I'm going to launch this simple public service announcement: smoking is not cool! As corny as it sounds, many people, including myself, find it to be quite true.

Walking through campus past four or more smokers on separate occasions makes up by and large the most irritating moments of my day, seeing as I have to hold my breath just to escape the threat of these poisonous vapors from entering my nasal cavities. Even afterwards, I feel haunted by the remnants of ashy smell lingering through the air.

I'm sure many of the die-hard students who support lighting up a nice Marlboro or Camel have their fair share of reasons for why they partake in this activity. For example, smoking relaxes people or makes them seem sexy and mysterious. Yet, is there a way smokers can look sexy and re-

lax without making themselves a health risk to everyone else around them?

There ought to be some way for one to escape from the stressors of a life at Tech other than inducing oneself into a nicotine-influenced sense of calm. I would suggest finding a hobby or watching television. While the activity may start off as a one that only happens once in a while, nicotine addiction will take over. I understand that addiction is a tough thing to stop, but look at it this way: whatever doesn't kill you only makes you stronger.

In addition, I acknowledge that certain studies have indicated that smoking can have health benefits, such as the lower prevalence of Parkinson's disease or schizophrenia, but to a much higher degree smokers put themselves at risk for rapid heartbeat, heart disease and oral cancer.

Most of all, there is nothing

more unattractive to me than a group of good-looking guys parked outside of the library exhaling out a storm of smoke. A handsome guy with a good personality, but who smells like an ashtray still just smells like an ashtray. I'm sure it's hot and mysterious if Brad Pitt does it in *Fight Club*, but one has to realize that it's the real world. The last time I checked, the black lung is not a very sexy attribute to have.

I write about this not to be snarky, pretentious or even whiny. In fact, many of my friends are and have recently become smokers. Instead, I say this as a plea to those around me, friends and strangers, that this activity (although trendy for now) kills and is incredibly detrimental to everyone.

Yes, I may be exaggerating, but at least this one last bit is true. Over 500,000 deaths per year in the United States are caused by smoking-related diseases. Second-hand smoke causes 38,000 deaths per year, 3,400 of which are related to lung cancer in non-smokers.

However, if the sheer exhilaration of slowly smoking yourself to death is too difficult to pull away from, I have one piece of advice: lock yourself in a room while you smoke. At least that way you won't kill the rest of us with you.

OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

HOT or NOT



Volleyball victories

Tech's volleyball team had a winning streak last week, beating both Clemson and Florida A&M. Outside hitter Talisa Kellogg scored an attention-grabbing 42 kills over the two matches. Prior to beating Clemson, the conference's top team and chosen favorite, Tech was picked to finish second. The Yellow Jackets now have a 9-2 record and are expected to take the title home.

Fraudulent faculty

One of two former Tech professors accused of drawing paychecks from the Institute and the University of Minnesota at the same time resigned from his position in Minnesota's Academic Health Center. He and his wife were accused of fraud and are still under investigation by the state Attorney General's office, which has so far revealed about \$100,000 in questionable activity.



Six Flags fun

Georgia Tech Night at Six Flags brought out over 7,500 students, faculty and alumni last Friday, providing a much needed and affordable mid-semester break. Discounted BuzzCard ticketing, free shuttle service and free return passes made the yearly event an all-around fun deal.

Campus spam

Last week we wrote that the large number of megamods being sent undermined efforts to spread the word about the presidential search forum. This week, even more trivial emails were indiscriminately sent out, cluttering inboxes and diminishing the value of this important communications tool.

YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Block ticketing

I recently attended the game against Mississippi State. I arrived an hour early as I always do to watch warm-ups from the front row of the South End Zone Student Section. About 15 minutes before kickoff, one person told me they had the first three rows in a block and that my friends and I would have to move. I assume them to be members of a fraternity.

Most of this "block" hadn't shown up when the teams were taking the field. I guess they're bigger fans of partying than they are of Yellow Jacket football. A few groups of students began to move down to the open bleachers [and] were met with threats of violence.

The block had finally filled up about midway through the first quarter. I'm glad these "true fans" decided to show up and cheer on their team. Most of the game they talked or yelled obscenities instead of paying attention to the ac-

tion on the field. By the fourth quarter most of them had left.

I believe the football block ticketing program at Georgia Tech is flawed. These frats can be given block tickets higher up in the student section where they can converse, show how "hard" they are, pass their flasks around and leave early all they want.

Instead, the Athletic Association allows big empty holes at field level during kickoff for a televised game. I'm sure it looks really good to a possible recruit watching the game at home. It also brings up the issue of UGA fraternity members being in our student section for last year's game.

The true fans that are cheering from kickoff to the final snap should be close to the field where they could most effectively support their team.

Nathan Denison
Fourth-year ME

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@niquette.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 niquette.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@niquette.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@niquette.net

BUZZ

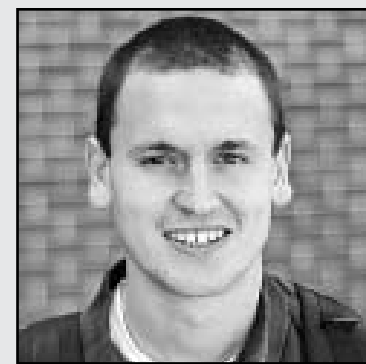
Around the Campus

How do you deal with the stress of exams?



Yuley Cardona
Grad EAS

"Study hard...and then I go outside."



Adrian Smith
Fourth-year CMPE

"I try to watch some comedy and laugh it off."



Katie Hites
First-year BMED

"I run."



Matt Flascher
Third-year CS

"I stay organized and keep myself to a schedule."

Tradition encourages insomnia

Students at Tech want three things: sleep, good grades and a social life. Unfortunately, you can only have two of the three.

I learned that refrain long before I ever enrolled at Tech, thanks to the gift that is having two Tech alumni as parents. As a current Tech student, I like to think that I make a fighting effort at all three, but compared to many of my friends at other schools, I know my idea of success in a class or with a friend is considered failure by many others.

I never would have believed it, but study abroad students have an even harder time managing all three. This summer my LBAT friends and I, when posed with the dilemma of skipping class, missing amazing cultural events, not seeing Spanish-language concerts or not sleeping, always chose to omit the latter. We even developed the phrase “I will sleep when I am in America.” This phrase has held true as I begin my semester in Granada and learn that in Spain the average eight-year old sleeps and whines less about it than me.

This week has been particularly trying for us budding insomniacs of American origin as Granada, the city where I am studying, has been *en feria*, or “in festival” since last Thursday. *En feria* is a concept that is hard to explain, except to say that it means everyone between the ages of two weeks after conception and 124 is out in the streets. While they are out in the streets they participate in an activity that is a cross between a death metal concert and a county fair,



“Spain has been training its children to function on a Georgia Tech sleep schedule since birth...”

Emily Chambers
Columnist

with occasional religious significance tossed in.

The rock part of the feria comes from the *feria de Zaiden* or “de rock,” as my increasingly adorable Señora calls it. When my friends and I showed up at 1 a.m. the first night of the fair, it was dead. Not because it was too late. Oh, no.

An hour after midnight is apparently the appropriate time for 12-year-olds to arrive, grandparents in tow, and anxiously stand in line for bumper cars while their older siblings shadily skulk around the back allies purchasing illegal and intoxicating substances. These 12-year-olds were not replaced by persons of a legal age until after 3 a.m., when hordes of black-clad, leather-bearing Spanish boys showed up. Did I mention that this was on a school night?

That’s right, ladies and gentlemen. Spain has been training its children to function on a Georgia Tech sleep schedule since birth and doesn’t allow them to develop any sort of regulated sleep habits until death. The concerts there don’t end until 7 a.m. and because this culture is truly sadistic, they still expect you to be up and at class by nine the next day.

There are many benefits to this insomniac culture. I have become prolific in my emailing, and almost every single person on my program has started a journal. Since dinner isn’t until 9 p.m., everyone goes and exercises in the afternoon, and *la siesta*, that beautiful two or three hour nap after lunch that makes it physically impossible to digest food or do anything other than dream and hope that when you wake up all of your grammar exercises will be done, lives on.

In fact, I think that the Spanish live on *la siesta*. Napoleon proved you can’t live without sleep, and if it wasn’t for *la siesta*, no one would get any. The only downside to the new sleep schedule is that it is new. Personally, I still find it exhausting to go to bed at three, wake up at seven, and sit through five hours of grammar class. My roommate and various other new friends seem to be taking to it quite quickly though, so I still have hope.

And if I don’t, I only have 15 more sleepless weeks to walk through in a daze until I get back to the states. I can always sleep in America.

PETA milks the media

By **Naihobe Gonzalez**
Opinions Editor

“The breast is best!”

These are the words of the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, who recently sent a letter to Ben & Jerry’s urging the company to replace the cow’s milk they use in their ice cream with human breast milk. When I heard the news, I was overtaken by disbelief. Does a desire to improve the treatment of our furry friends warrant a complete loss in rationality?

Apparently PETA got this bright idea from a restaurant in Switzerland that began making its soups, stews and sauces with breast milk from human donors who were paid for their milk. In statements following the controversial letter, PETA’s executive vice president said, “The fact that human adults consume huge quantities of dairy products made from milk that was meant for a baby cow just doesn’t make sense.”

Does it make more sense that breast milk “meant” for a human baby’s growth—not for producing millions of pints of ice cream—should become part of a commercial venture? While pictures showing how milking cows are treated can be disturbing, the image that comes to mind of women arriving to work, connecting a pump to their breasts and collecting a paycheck at the end of the week is far more disturbing.

What’s also disturbing is that anyone would propose such a ridiculous alternative in hopes of helping animals. That small Swiss

restaurant may benefit from the ensuing publicity and be able to obtain a steady supply of breast milk for its creamy recipes, but relying on human breast milk for a company with yearly sales of over \$300 million is a ludicrous idea that should not have made it past the thought bubble stages.

It baffles me that people take an otherwise legitimate issue to such lengths. Animal rights is without a doubt important, but once we lose sight of the problems that humans face and warp reality to an extent where we would rather use lactating women than lactating cows to make the ice cream we eat, there is a serious problem.

Clearly PETA’s letter was intended more as a publicity ploy than a sound business proposition, but just the idea of placing the rights of cows above that of humans through a complete disregard for mothers and their bodies is irrational and downright offensive. While PETA supporters may argue the same is true for cows, somewhere along the way we have to agree on the hierarchy of both our species and our values.

Amazingly, PETA’s proposal is getting more media attention than other pressing issues affecting our *human* friends around the world. In a time when over 1 billion people live on less than \$1 a day—much less than what a pint of Ben & Jerry’s Cherry Garcia costs, and certainly much less than what PETA’s members spend on bumper stickers and t-shirts—I am reminded of how distorted our priorities are.



INTERNING WITH US ISN'T ROCKET SCIENCE. THEN AGAIN, MAYBE IT IS.

The U.S. Air Force is looking for electrical, computer and environmental engineering students who want to work with some of the most advanced technology in the world and at the same time get paid well to do it. If all this sounds intriguing to you, contact AFROTC and learn how you can spend your summer on the cutting edge.

Pay is \$4,500 for 10 weeks

Round-trip airfare, lodging and living expenses

Rental car

Students who complete the program may be offered AFROTC scholarships.

Pays 100% of tuition and fees

\$900/year for books

\$400–500 tax-free monthly stipend

Call 1-404-894-7386 or visit AFROTC.com.

Think you can draw?

Have something to say?

The 'Nique is looking for dedicated cartoonists and columnists with opinions and talent.

opinions@nique.net

Advertise with us!

Visit **nique.net/ads** for information