

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, October 20, 2000

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

Focus on undergrads

President Clough's plan for putting \$250,000 towards undergraduate research is a step in the right direction. He is taking an important, beginning step to advance undergraduate education. However, he can't do it alone. Faculty and students need to take an active role in defining undergraduate education. Students should take a part in their own education, provide feedback, and get to know their professors.

They're not interested, you claim? Try them. Many professors would love to talk with you—they just assume you're not interested. Find one and ask them to join you at Take-a-Prof to lunch on October 31. Not only will you get to know a faculty member better, but it could come in handy one day when you're racking your brain thinking of where to get a recommendation.

Obey OSCAR

After the uproar concerning evening Physics tests, the Physics administration is working to have mandatory evening tests included in upcoming OSCARs. Whatever the Registrar's final decision, the fact remains that semester credit hours should accurately reflect hours spent in the classroom.

We have the best professors in the country—they should be able to write an exam that only lasts one hour. There is no reason to take punitive measures against students such as making tests longer and more difficult in order to coerce them into wanting an extra half-hour.

Congrats Mr. & Ms.

The 2000 Homecoming game featured more than just a Demon Deacon rout. Mr. and Ms. Georgia Tech—Rajiv Saigal and Jill Pollyniak—were crowned during halftime festivities in a celebration of Tech excellence. These two represent the best of Tech. Good job! Also, thanks to the football team for making Buzz do so many push-ups.

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

All accountable for hazing

Double standards are all around us. Clearly this is evident in Tech's recent crack down on hazing and the allegations surrounding Coach O'Leary. As I read last week's Technique I intrigued by the swift defense of George O'Leary's action, yet the lack of respect and understanding for Greek traditions. Respected Individuals such as David Braine, the Director of Athletics, were quick to justify Coach O'Leary's actions. Yet few come to aid of Georgia Tech's Greek system.

If this action would have occurred during initiation week and not on a football field, would these actions have been considered hazing? According to Tech's definition, unquestionably yes. In no way do I condone illegal activities. However, both a Fraternity and Georgia Tech Football are teams that aspire to a common cause. They are bonded together in a brotherhood and these links are what build and support Georgia Tech.

Furthermore, to be a part of an

organization there are things that one must endure and in all instances these things are completely voluntary. Individuals are welcome to leave at any time, as did Dustin Vaitekunas. In no way do I think George O'Leary was wrong in his actions. Nor do I think that the Greek system should be punished for reasonable acts of hazing such as physical and psychological tests, late or early clean ups, pledge projects, or deprivation of "normal" sleep. The above mentioned items in no way deviate from the typical hurdles of life and are applicable to various things like the courses here at Tech, and event planning, or stadium cleanup.

Lastly, where can we set the standards for what is considered "acceptable" behavior? Do we live by the quote, "that which does not kill us will only make us stronger," or do we strive for something else?

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Quote of the week:

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."
—Albert Einstein



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YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Dorm condoms encourage impulsive acts

I read incredulously the article regarding the request to place condoms in the freshmen dorms. The argument presented by Handleman and other supporters is entirely flawed, and it reveals an alarming trend that is unfortunately becoming more common in this country: a total lack of personal responsibility. Also, this proposal further denigrates sexual intercourse from a sacred commitment between a couple to merely an act to be enjoyed on a whim. The first sentence of the article states that "many students feel that not enough is being done to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases."

However, STD's are not easily spread, and unless someone is running around injecting people with

viruses while they sleep, these diseases pose no threat to anyone who chooses to avoid them. The only person at risk is the one engaging in risky sexual behavior. If such a person feels s/he is responsible enough to handle having sex, s/he should certainly be responsible enough to take the proper precautions beforehand. If not, maybe the experience of having a STD will provide an invaluable lesson in thinking before acting.

By passing an initiative to make condoms more readily available, the Freshmen Council is saying it encourages residents to act in an impulsive, irresponsible manner and to give in to "the heat of the moment," as the editorial board so eloquently put it. It seems the supporters

of this bill only want someone else to take care of what they are either too immature or too lazy to do themselves.

It is not the job of the government, Georgia Tech, the Freshmen Council, or even your parents to take care of you or make the decisions that most affect your life after you have turned 18. All of these sources could (and in many cases should) be consulted before making an important decision, such as the one of engaging in sexual behavior. However, the ultimate responsibility and the consequences that accompany it resides with the individual.

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Editorial Art Cartoon Corner



By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

3...2...1...we have lift-off! Why aren't you listening?

Do me a favor. It's not hard, and it won't take long. All you have to do is something you'd do on your own anyway—watch TV. This Sunday at 2:05 p.m., turn to channel 18. Yes, that's the NASA channel, but don't start whining just yet. What you'll see if you do me this small favor might just amaze you: a flying brick will be coming back to Earth, carrying the future of the space program with it.

As you read this (assuming you read this before early Sunday afternoon), the space shuttle Discovery is whizzing overhead at 17,500 miles per hour. That's one entire trip around the planet, one sunrise and one sunset, every 90 minutes. And despite the fact that I live on a campus filled with people just bursting with scientific and technical knowledge, I'm willing to bet that the majority of you didn't know that the earth's population has been short 7 people for the past 10 days.

I even took an informal poll here in the *Technique* office the other night, and confirmed those suspicions—fifty percent of our staff was clueless! I must say I was extremely disappointed. And if you're one of the more informed, don't pat yourself on the back just yet. I still have plenty of questions for you.

Did you know that this mission marks a milestone in our country's space program? STS-92, the current mission, is the 100th space shuttle mission to fly. In the past 20 years, the shuttle system has launched 3 million pounds of cargo and carried nearly 600 passengers and pilots. Five different orbiters have

"The idea that mankind could have an outpost on the final frontier is becoming a reality, and the world isn't paying attention."

Sarah Graybeal
Entertainment Editor



amassed almost three cumulative years of flight time, and traveled more than 345 million miles.

It has supported two space stations and made three maintenance flights to the Hubble Space Telescope. It has launched planetary missions to study Jupiter, Venus, and the sun, and conducted hundreds of studies of the effects of weightlessness on materials, plants, animals, and humans. All that, and the vehicle is only a quarter of the way through its design lifetime! It's got years to go before the mothballs begin to call.

Do you know what the current crew is actually working on up there? Though the videos may lead you to believe it's all fun and games, traveling in space has never exactly been a cushy job assignment. Take one look at each crew member's schedule, and you'll see every second of every day planned to the letter, scientists and engineers squeezing everything they possibly can out of the opportunity to experiment in a foreign environment. Sure, those astronauts may have a minute or two over the course of a week to catch floating M&Ms in their mouths, but believe me, they're

working their fingers to the bone.

On-orbit construction of the International Space Station has truly—finally—begun; this week alone has seen the addition of the first major truss piece (soon to serve as the base of the station's solar power arrays), as well as a third mating adapter to make frequent and multiple dockings possible. Events in outer space have reached a welcome and much appreciated pace; if you blink for too long, you might miss the start of something entirely new.

Within a year, there will be an international crew overhead at all times. The experiments they conduct will teach us more about the so-called void (which isn't really a void at all) outside our planetary bubble, and about the environment we deal with here on the ground. And it won't be just the six or seven people flying above; there will be flight controllers working round-the-clock across the globe, aiding astronauts and cosmonauts in orbit, and analyzing the huge amounts of data they will begin to amass.

So what does the larger picture entail? The space shuttle has enabled our country (and others) to make unprecedented discoveries

about our planet, our universe, and ourselves. Without a space program, we might not have many of the things we rely on daily—cell phones, satellite television feeds, early warning weather radar, and various pharmaceuticals. You're sitting in Atlanta today because 500 years ago, some guy named Columbus thought there might be land over here. Sure, there were plenty of people who said it couldn't be done, or that even if it could, why bother? Maybe some even argued that the money should be spent fixing Spain's other problems, you know, like the homeless, or Social Security!

The point is that he did it anyway. And he was right, and it worked. So why do we today seem doomed to make the same mistakes that Columbus' naysayers did all those years ago? The wild and crazy idea that mankind could have a permanent outpost on the final frontier is quickly becoming a reality, and the world isn't even paying attention. Wake up! This is where our future lies!

My challenge to you is simple: be informed. Make it your job to find out what's going on in space. There's no excuse for anyone at this Institute to not know what's happening at the forefront of technology. If nothing else, be inspired! Space is cool! So open the paper and find out what happened in orbit yesterday. Surf NASA's website and watch a video of one of STS-92's four adventurous spacewalks. Turn on your TV this Sunday and watch the shuttle carry seven people not so different from yourselves back home. And thank them for a job well done.

Public access technology can keep getting better

Recently, I've noticed the high quality of publicly accessible technology at Georgia Tech. The ubiquitous Internet access on campus, ability to print without limit, and availability of top of the line applications are just a few of the things I'm talking about. I think that most students consider these resources as the bare essentials on a college campus, and for the most part that's true, but Georgia Tech seems to offer far more than the bare minimum.

Georgia Tech is clearly interested in constantly improving and adding to public access technology on campus. For example, the Library provides a network jack at almost every study table throughout the building. Have you noticed the recent changes to the Rich cluster? They've provided fast machines for digital video editing complete with VCRs, TVs, and the computer hardware and software needed to use it. Anyone with a buzz card can bring in their favorite home video, open up Adobe Premiere, perform non-linear editing, and re-record it. High quality HP scanners are also available in the same lab, as well as in the Student Center cluster.

These are deluxe resources that exceed the necessities of a college campus (even a tech school) and extend into the area of "nice to have." Most students use the public-access clusters for printing and for Internet access, and Tech covers these needs sufficiently.

Although Tech does a good job of fulfilling our basic technology needs and even provides the extra goodies discussed before, it's im-

"It's important to continue to improve the quality of our public access technology!"

Matt Flagg
Online Editor



portant to continue to improve the quality of our public access technology. The following are some realistic technology ideas that would really set Georgia Tech apart from other technology schools. Imagine wireless networking across the entire campus. Although most students currently wouldn't be able to make use of it without the proper wireless Ethernet cards, it would be a cutting edge novelty that no other college campus currently has, to my knowledge. The Apple headquarters in Cupertino, California has this capability throughout its campus and it's interesting to see the employees sprawled out in the grassy yards doing their work on laptops. If Tech required students to have laptops as many other universities do, it wouldn't be too much to also require the wireless cards needed to use the wireless network. More than just a cool thing to have, wireless networking could solve some of the congestion problems our public access clusters get during peak hours of the day.

Along with the luxury of wireless networking, it would really be great to have a digital video equipment facility where students could check out camcorders and cameras.

By imposing penalties that would be easy to enforce, such as buzz card deactivation and registration holds, equipment theft and overdue return could be prevented. The ability to schedule time on a supercomputer would also be an incredible publicly accessible resource. I'm sure there are plenty of students who would love to be able to use this for their own personal research projects or recreational ideas. Rendering a complex 3D scene or movie would be a perfect use of this facility. Even less probable, but still realistically possible, a basic Robotics lab stocked with tons of Lego Mindstorm sets would certainly be popular. This would be the perfect creative outlet for engineering students who feel as if they have no creativity or artistic talent.

Although most of these ideas are too much for a public university to seriously consider, it's definitely worthwhile to discuss them. In the near future, things like wireless networking will become more and more commonplace. Here are some unrealistic ideas for the distant future. What if Tech built a recreational technology center where any student could use full body 3D scanners, CNC milling machines, model

digitizers, and high quality printers for posters? This would be heaven for the Industrial Design students. For the biology majors and medicine-focused students, there could be MRI machines and personal gene mapping tools. Feel a slight pain in your elbow? Have a look at it with an MRI. For the amateur filmmakers and video game programmers, blue screen stations and motion capture equipment would sure come in handy. This actually doesn't seem too far off from the digital video editing workstations provided in the Rich building.

Far from being necessities to the average Tech student, these ideas are certainly overkill. The quality of public access technology on a college campus really does influence the decision of which university to attend, however.

One of the most exciting parts about going off to college is the new pool of resources available. This especially appeals to the bright kids who are self-motivated and truly excel in these types of environments. Georgia Tech is doing the right thing by exceeding the expectations of public access technology on campus.

If it continues to improve, more high-caliber students will definitely be attracted to our school and current students will be proud with the idea that their campus is actually state-of-the art and lives up to its reputation as a leading technology institute.

Online editor writing about technology. Coincidence, I think not. Matt is the cutest teen idol that has ever sat in the niche office.

TECHNIQUE

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MORE VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Christianity not about condemnation

It discouraged me to see the blame of the GALA event promotion defacement fall on being in the "Bible Belt". "He [Brandon Meredith] realizes that because many Tech students live in the "Bible Belt" they may not have been exposed to homosexual views in their hometowns." While I agree that culturally the "Bible Belt" may be slow to accept new or different peoples and practices, I would like to separate this culture from Christianity.

I thought it ironic that having a more Bible-based or Christian morality is what caused the defacement because we, as Christians, are commanded to love our neighbors as ourselves. To deface the chalkings would be to destroy our own work.

As Christians, we view homosexuality as sin, but do not think of homosexuals differently from our-

selves.

We all have a spirit of selfishness and have all sinned. In that respect everyone is alike. Even though we have this spirit of selfishness, we love ourselves despite of it, and so should we love our neighbors regardless of their selfishness and sin. I am sure that not all Christians practice this to perfection; certainly, I do not myself.

You may call myself and other Christians hypocrites, but every Christian is to some degree. Christian was actually a derogatory term given to the followers of Christ by the Jewish religious leaders of His time, which means "Christ-one". No one is perfect as Christ was; therefore, to some amount we are all hypocrites.

If anything, homosexuals should find the most acceptance and love

from Christians because the theology of Christianity explains that everyone is equal in God's eyes and teaches the "Golden Rule".

Selfishness is selfishness as sin is sin. These are the only things that separates us from Him. Jesus Christ, being perfect, bridged that gap.

We alienate ourselves from others that are different from us because it is uncomfortable to be around them.

Again, Christ came to enable us to overcome these prejudices and love our neighbors as ourselves by personifying unconditional love, in spite of the state of our hearts. I hope you will consider these words before blaming the Bible or Christianity for your persecution.

Mike Morrow
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SGA's purpose to fund campus groups

Recently, a student criticized SGA in an article to the *Technique* for what he called "a misuse of Student Activity Funds." The student was referring to a bill passed by SGA, funding an appearance at the Ferst Center by Jeff Foxworthy and Brett Butler, in which the two stars gave their religious testimonies. The event was hosted by Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC) and was free to all students and faculty.

The first reason the author disagreed with the bill was that it violated the principle of Separation of Church and State. Secondly, the author struck out at the notion of his student activity fees going to fund a religiously affiliated event, and not something intellectual. To end, he stated that religious and political groups should not get SGA

money because they "exclude or alienate large groups of students."

SGA stands for Student Government Association. They are a group of elected students whose mission is to support on-campus organizations and the student body in general, both financially and administratively. Because SGA gave money to a religious organization, it does not mean that they are endorsing that religion. They are fulfilling their mission of supporting the students. SGA would give money to any on-campus religious organization simply because they are students and pay their Activity Fees.

Whatever the reason the author chose not to attend the Foxworthy/Butler presentation, whether based on religious views, laziness, time conflicts or otherwise, he chose not

to. In no way was he, or anyone else excluded by CCC or SGA from attending. The presentation was free and open to anyone who wanted to see it. To state that an organization or event is "excluding or alienating" solely on the basis that not everyone from every religious or political view would chose to attend is absurd. If SGA worked on this principle, no bills would be passed.

Do I agree with all bills passed by SGA...No! Do I support all groups given money by SGA...No! Do I think that all recognized student organizations on campus, religious, political, or otherwise are entitled to their share of SGA money...Definitely!

Andrew McCown
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Keep road names unchanged

The City of Atlanta just can't seem to keep their hands out of renaming streets for short-term political objectives. They have renamed Techwood Drive "Centennial Olympic Park Drive" in hopes of creating a better image for the city to spur redevelopment. If the city were not so image focused it would realize that street names in this city have great historical significance, and by changing them it cheapens rather than improves the city's image. The idea to rename Marietta Street "Ivan Allen Jr. Drive" after the former mayor is well intentioned but that street name goes back over a hundred years. Fortunately former mayor Allen declined the honor realizing the impact the street name change would have on the Atlanta tradition, what little we have. Stewart Avenue is now Metropolitan Parkway. I don't see that having any effect on the quality of life of people who live or work near Stewart Avenue nor the City's image.

Now that they have renamed Techwood Drive the City has messed with our history here. Ask any City Planning major and they will tell you renaming the street has nothing to do with redevelopment. I hope that the Atlanta City Council gets a clue and stops messing with history, our history. Atlanta has been and remains the City too busy for history, I am afraid. We bulldoze our history and tradition here, in a failed quest for image improvement that comes out as cheap gimmick marketing.

If we had an actual sense of history or tradition here, then years down the road, when Atlanta has a revitalized downtown (which will happen, is happening) street names like Techwood and Marietta could be equated to Atlanta like Broadway is to New York. But no, we have Centennial Olympic Parkway, change your stationary again.

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Vote for the environment

The next president will likely select two, three, or even four Supreme Court Justices. We ought to consider the effect these selections will have on our ability to enjoy a safe and healthful environment.

In the recent case *Friends of the Earth v. Laidlaw*, the Supreme Court upheld the right of citizens to seek relief from a facility that committed over 13 violations of its mercury discharge limit.

Two Justices dissented and would have dismissed the suit against the

illegally polluting facility. These dissenting Justices are Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, the two Justices whose views Governor Bush has frequently vowed to reinforce in the Supreme Court.

If you're an undecided voter with an interest in preventing illegal, toxic pollution, please join me in electing a proven environmental champion, Al Gore.

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HAPPY 21ST LIZ!

technique

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