

Very interesting and extremely well researched and documented. My only criticism is your tendency to write overly long, convoluted sentences.

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A Dichotomy of Modernism and the Victorian Era at the Georgia Institute of Technology

The Georgia Institute of Technology was founded on a desire to innovate life through technology, science, and business. Its founders saw a dire need ^{to} ~~for the establishment of a~~ Southern institution ~~in order~~ to rebuild and revolutionize the post-Civil War South. By establishing the school with a modern technological ^{RW} enterprise at the heart of its academic curriculum and strict religious and moral policies as the foundation of the school's social codes, the founders of Georgia Tech created a dichotomy between modernism and the Victorian Era. While this dichotomy reflects the philosophies of the school's founders, history shows that the Victorian influences needed to eventually be relaxed and abolished because the core of the school's innovation rests in its embracement of modernism. *Interesting*

Opening its doors in 1888, the school was established to bring economical independence to the Southern states by modernizing the remnants of the "Old South." By the 1880's, the South was no longer the flourishing agrarian society it had once been, and the Civil War left the states in an economically inferior position ~~to their northern brethren~~: cheap raw goods were shipped northward, and ~~completed~~ ^{manufactured} more expensive products were transported south. The South had a wealth of resources at its disposal, ~~but what it lacked was~~ ^{raw} the infrastructure to turn materials into a finished product. ^{of} Georgia Tech began as the brainchild of Major John Fletcher Hanson and Nathaniel Edwin Harris, two former Confederate Officers who dreamed of thrusting the South into modern economical competition. The two believed that what the South had lost on the battlefields of war could be gained "on the battlefields of industry and commerce" if the South

were to undergo modern industrial development (Hopkins Years). The intellectual movement with which these two men aligned became known as the “New South Creed” and had two essential parts, education and freedom from economic bondage.

Hanson, the President of the Bibb Textile Company and the Central of Georgia Railroad, was keenly aware of the economic benefit of modernization as well as the South’s need for knowledgeable workers in the technology business sector. By 1883, **Atlanta** was already experiencing rapid modernization with the number of industrial firms, workers, and investment capital in the technological sector doubling in the four years since 1879 (McMath 14). Hanson felt that education would naturally push this development into levels of competition that might one day ~~far~~ exceed the North. Hanson approached Harris, a local lawyer, with the idea of opening a technical school in the South. Harris, already a firm believer in the New South Creed, thought the school would be the perfect tool for fostering Atlanta’s rapid industrial development. Harris began pushing ^{the} legislature for the school in 1882 and eventually became the head of a committee aimed at investigating the proposition ^{to establish} of a technical school for the South. The committee visited several Northern technical schools including Cooper Union in New York, Stevens Institute of Technology in New Jersey, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. While these schools exemplified the teaching of technology in a traditional classical school setting, it was the Worcester Free Institute of Industrial Sciences in Massachusetts that made the strongest impact on the committee. Worcester’s institution was grounded in a shop setting with an apprenticeship education, ^{Furthermore, Worcester} and used their manufactured products to help pay the school’s operating expenses. The committee also felt that Worcester offered a solid model “for moral as well as practical reasons” (Hopkins Years). Hanson, who had run into problems with incompetent and indolent workers in his factory, knew firsthand the need to produce a generation of skilled and morally strong industrial leaders.

[With the plan of searching for the perfect blend of academics and apprenticeship,] \$65,000 *dm* was appropriated to build the institution. When the school was completed and began operation, a dichotomy of philosophies became quickly recognizable: the academics of the institution were pushing the boundaries of the modernizing culture, but the social life was founded on codes and morals of the Victorian Era. Even the architecture of the institution displayed this dichotomy through its Victorian style façade housing the most modern of equipment and technology (Hopkins Years).

Aiming to find a balance between academic subjects rooted in modernity and a desire to nurture students in Victorian social codes, Georgia Tech choose the perfect first President: Dr. Isaac S. Hopkins. Hopkins had previously tried to combine practical training with traditional classical instruction during his years as President of Emory at **Oxford**. His attempt at Emory failed due to the lack of **support** for technical teachings, and he eagerly left to shape the academic structure of Georgia Tech and experiment with the school's unique curriculum. Hopkins also brought with him a strong desire to further strengthen Georgia Tech's dichotomy between modernism and the Victorian Era. Schooled in "theology, medicine, natural sciences, Latin, English Literature, 'mental and moral sciences,' 'Biblical literature,' and industrial education," Hopkins himself exemplified this dichotomy (Images and Memories 11-12). Hopkins thought religion and moral structure vital to a man's character and required daily chapel and Sunday service attendance.

Where Hopkins enforced religious character, the second President, Lyman Hall, demanded very strict moral character from his undergraduates. A young man with a background at four military academies, Hall set out to not only expand the academics of the college, but also further the social regulations of its students. Discipline was what Hall demanded, and he achieved a regimented student body through the building of Georgia Tech's first dorms. Students were

required to live on campus and adhere to the stringent schedule that “began at 6:30 a.m. and ended with room inspection at 10:30 p.m.” Hall restricted the use of playing cards, demanded his students get permission to leave the school property, ^{and} insisted on ~~the maintenance of~~ cleanliness in the dormitories and bathrooms. Hall himself inspected each dorm room on Saturdays (Images and Memories 42-43). It was Hall’s intentions that “these regulations protect (the student body) from the evil influences of a great city” (Images and Memories 44). Ironically, these influences were wrought out of the rapid modernism of city life that Georgia Tech was designed to expand. Hall may have strengthened the Victorian Era’s moral groundwork in the school’s social life, but Hopkins’ s religious efforts began to relax during Hall’s administration, exemplified by his numerous battles with “churchmen over the alleged use of wine at social events by Tech students and faculty” (Images and Memories 38). In time the attractions of city life and modernism would lead to a breakdown of the Victorian social structure of the school.

Georgia Tech functions today under its original idea of blending academics with apprentice experience; the dichotomy of modern teaching with a classical moral structure, however, failed long ago. This is not to say that there are no longer institutions with rigorous moral codes akin to those of the Victorian Era; the Georgia Military **Academy**, where John Hall presided as President prior to his position at Georgia Tech, is a perfect example. So where did this transition to modernism in the social codes occur? One can see the apparent move towards modernism as early on as the fourth year of the institution when the shop building burned and its replacement “shed its Victorian ornament and tower and in its place a more harmonious, balanced and ^{P —}reposed classical spirit emanated.” The complete shift, however, likely occurred out of World War I as the American society as a whole relaxed its social codes and entered into a modernist era ~~in unity~~. The explosion of creativity and expressions of freedom that came of this relaxation of strict social codes carries through ~~into~~ today, and here at the Georgia Institute of Technology it ^{is}

is the city experience and the promotion of societal enhancement through modern technology that continues to establish Georgia Tech at the forefront of modernism and innovation. The founders of the institution were perceptive in their establishment of curriculum, but they failed to see that it was the thriving and ever changing culture of city life that would advance Southern industry to the level of their Northern brethren.

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