

# OPINIONS

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**Quote of the week:**  
"You take your life in your own hands, and what happens? A terrible thing: no one to blame."  
—Erica Jong

## OUR VIEWS CONSENSUS OPINION

### Changes to the norm

Chan Gailey, Tech's head football coach for the past six seasons, was fired on Monday after yet another loss to the Georgia Bulldogs. Although Director of Athletics Dan Radakovich said the decision to let Gailey go was not based on his performance against Tech's arch-rival, the team's record against UGA under Gailey is indicative of a culture of mediocrity that Radakovich is seeking to eliminate.

Gailey's teams never lost fewer than five games in a season, leaving the Jackets to travel to relatively unimportant bowl games like the Humanitarian Bowl in beautiful Boise, Idaho. Furthermore, the team has not shown consistency in preparation, often losing to mediocre teams the same season that it pulled off major upsets.

The danger of consistent mediocrity is that fans will get used to a certain level of performance and begin to be apathetic about their team. Such apathy would lead to poorer attendance at home games, reduced donations and lower season ticket sales. All together, this could create a domino effect that would cause a significant drop in the quality of the football program. Radakovich's hope is to replace Gailey with a coach who has the potential to restore the excitement to the Institute's program and awaken the team from its slumber, thereby bringing more fans to the stands of Bobby Dodd Stadium.

Presumably the hope is that the extra fans will also offset the \$4 million Tech will pay Gailey for the remainder of his contract. While this cost, along with the inevitably large sum we will be forced to pay our new coach, seems unrealistic, it is unfortunately simply part of the cost of playing football in the NCAA these days. As such, we can only hope the replacement coach lives up to our expectations—students will not tolerate another hike in the Athletic Fee to pay Gailey for leaving.

### Ticketing troubles

The ticketing process for the UGA game left a number of students miffed, as many groups that camped out overnight were unable to secure tickets. In response to the vast quantities of ticketless students, the Student Government Association has formed a task force to investigate the situation.

We certainly hope the group is willing to explore all options for resolving the issues, and we hope to see them investigating other schools' distribution methods and adapting ours to integrate features from some of the more successful ones. At the same time, they must keep in mind the fact that the local reality at Tech is rather unique, and act accordingly.

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

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By Tim van de Vall / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## Online identity worth managing

It seems every college newspaper in the country, this one included, has written an editorial sternly warning students to mind their privacy and not put inappropriate pictures of themselves up on Facebook because employers are now using online sources to screen people.

The (undoubtedly few) students who listened to this sage advice probably changed some of their privacy settings and moved on with their lives. But I don't think they are really addressing the problem.

In my opinion, the rise of the all-knowing world wide web has dramatically shifted the concept of privacy. Social networks like Facebook, blogging services and other social websites are turning every person into a niche celebrity, with the niche made up of your friends and occasional random people.

A clever person with five minutes of time could learn quite a lot about me just by searching the net, including my home address and telephone number, some of the websites I visit frequently and other such 'private' information. I am not very stalk-worthy, so I am not too concerned. But for some people, this could be an issue. The problem is, once something is posted on the internet, removing it is virtually impossible—just ask the infamous *Star Wars* kid.

Essentially, I think that trying to maintain absolute privacy on the internet is an unwinnable battle, and one not worth fighting. More and more useful services require increasingly personal information to function, both about you and about your friends, and if you don't give up your information yourself one of your friends might (inadvertently) give it up for you. I'm sure many of us have gone through the "it's so inconvenient that you're not on Facebook, sign up" peer pressure.

This sounds like a pretty bleak assertion—are we now to assume that all of our private information is



"Trying to maintain absolute privacy on the internet is an unwinnable battle, and one not worth fighting."

**Arcadiy Kantor**  
Opinions Editor

available for anyone to view at their discretion? I think the answer is yes, at least to some extent this is the brave new world we're living in. But on the whole, I see this recently acquired niche celebrity status as more of an opportunity than a threat.

Rather than trying to hide our information and protect our privacy at all costs by not using the various useful services that are springing up, I believe we should actively work to manage the identity we present to the world via the internet.

We already do a whole lot of this in "real life," by carefully selecting the things we own, the clothes we wear and the people we associate with (okay, perhaps some of us do this selecting more carefully than others). Managing your identity on the internet is not much different—sure, it's a slightly more permanent record, but ultimately it involves a similar series of choices.

The shape this takes could vary dramatically, from what you choose to put on your Facebook profile to creating a professional website for yourself and doing search engine optimization so it is the first match for your name. But that is less important than the underlying principle: the internet gives people the opportunity to create a personal brand for themselves, and this is a fairly dramatic change from the past. The loss of privacy is the tradeoff we are forced to make in order to transcend our previous associations—companies, organizations,

etc.—and allow our own individual virtues to represent us.

This is a freedom that should not be underestimated, and, as illustrated by the many cases of inappropriate pole dancing pictures leading to revoked job offers, carries with it a certain amount of danger. It is certainly instructive to check the major search engines and see what matches they turn up for your name and any other easily-determined online identities you may have, as you never know what sort of interesting things lurk in Google's index.

Since we already know our online identities are increasingly being investigated by companies, I think instead of treating these tactics as a risk we should aim to take advantage of the opportunities they bring.

When a company looks at a resume, they no longer have to evaluate us just by our university or the companies we have worked for—certainly, this is still important, but a well-written, thoughtful blog that shows a deep understanding of an industry can seemingly compensate, at least in part, for a low GPA.

All this doesn't mean that I've run out and started a blog where I write long, insightful analysis pieces on current computing issues in an effort to get hired by Google. Besides, a blog written solely to promote the writer is rather unlikely to be worth reading.

But whenever I do start a blog, you can be sure I'll be keeping all of this in mind.

# Teachers deserve punishment rights

Pillow talk is a divisive issue in most relationships. Any man will tell you that there are only two reasons that a man gets into bed: one is to sleep, and the other one also happens to start with an s. Does talk start with an s? Then it shouldn't be done in bed. But this will invariably be a problem when it comes to your significant other. While lying down increases blood flow to certain parts of the male anatomy, with women the blood seems to go straight to their heads, virtually forcing them to start talking. And woe unto he who tries to make her stop. You'd be better off telling her the truth about those pants she's always asking you about. So most of the time, pillow talk is a fact of life.

I was in this very situation the other night. As usual, as soon as I got into bed, my wife decided to start telling me about her day at work. We had been together for at least the past four hours, and she waited until that point to bring up the daily events. It's usually not that bad, though, because she's a high-school teacher and often has humorous stories about chasing down gigantic football players trying to skip school. That doesn't require more than an affirmative groan from me every now and then.

On this specific night, however, she told me that she took up



**"When has telling someone that they're misbehaving ever been a form of punishment?"**

**Kenny Baskett**  
Advertising Manager

a note from one of her students. The note was to a friend and was about how Mrs. Baskett was "blathering on about nothing." When I asked her how she punished him, she responded, "I gave him a verbal warning."

A verbal warning?! When has telling someone that they're misbehaving ever been a form of punishment? Where I come from, you're told what you're doing wrong exactly five seconds before you're punished for it.

"So you're telling me that you didn't make him write 'I will not write notes in class' 500 times, or at least make him stay after school to clean your windows?" I asked. "We're not allowed to make them write sentences," she replied. "It's considered cruel and unusual punishment." That was just about the most ridiculous thing I had ever heard. Carving 'I will not write notes in class' into your forearm is cruel and unusual punishment; writing it

on the board 500 times just gets the point across.

"You should have read the note out loud to the class, then," I said. "That's public humiliation. That is not allowed as a form of punishment," she stated. Correction; that was the most ridiculous thing I had ever heard.

Remember the hazing rituals that were permitted at my school in the name of "tradition." For the cheerleaders, it was particularly humorous. All the new members of the squad were forced to dress up in ridiculous outfits. The older cheerleaders wrote things on their faces with lipstick and then forced them to crawl down the hall on all fours. Now why can't we use that same logic for our punishments? Public humiliation is generally the most effective way to punish high school students, and it continues working until you're old enough to not care what anyone thinks or says, like my Grandpa. It's kind of like the

punishment that keeps on giving. Not only do you get the initial effects during the humiliation, but then the student's peers help you out by making fun of the student afterwards. What's not to like? Besides, if someone has a mental breakdown because you read their note out loud, they're not cut out for society anyway and there's nothing anyone could have done about it.

So what punishments does my wife have available to handle the disruptive behaviors that occur every day in the classroom? The list begins with the verbal warning mentioned above. On the second offense, she's allowed to call the student's parents. Ooh, scary. After that, she's authorized to give a 15-minute detention. When I was in school, I hung around the school at least 15 minutes every day waiting for traffic to clear out. The funny thing there is that the first time a student refuses to serve a detention, she's supposed to give him a verbal warning.

Finally, on the fourth offense, she can schedule a conference to let the student's parents know what a brat their little angel is. The fifth offense earns the student a 30-minute detention. Again, unless you have the kids' ears hooked up to your car battery during

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## BUZZ Around the Campus

**How did you react to the emergency alert?**



**Pooja Mahjunatha**  
First-year BME

*"My phone was on silent; I slept through it."*



**Dershan Bryner**  
Graduate Math

*"I said 'it's probably a fire drill.'"*



**Mike Randel**  
Fourth-year AE

*"I promptly fell asleep."*



**Kaleah Lambert**  
Graduate City Planning

*"I went and got my eyebrows waxed and my brake pads replaced."*

Photos by Colin Ake

### OUR VIEWS HOT OR NOT

## HOT- or -NOT



#### A great start

The Tech women's basketball team beat Iowa in the Big Ten-ACC Challenge last week, getting off to a 5-0 start for the third time in the past five seasons. We hope the good start bodes well for the team, which has made great progress under fourth-year Head Coach MaChelle Joseph. The great start will also hopefully get students out to the games to support the team, something that hasn't always happened.

#### Missing the target

The crosswalk between the East Campus dorms and the North Avenue Apartments has been the site of a number of dangerous pedestrian-motorist situations that almost resulted in injury. The police's solution of strictly enforcing traffic rules against jaywalking, however, is completely misguided—students need to pay attention before crossing, but drivers hold just as much responsibility.



#### Get competitive

The second annual IMS Research Competition had its kickoff celebration on Thursday. The partnership with AT&T and Nokia Siemens Networks has provided Tech a \$5 million lab with industry-level Internet multimedia equipment and tools. Students are competing for \$45,000 in prize money.

#### Unlucky seven

The Jackets lost to UGA for the seventh-straight time last week, matching our longest losing streak of the long-running rivalry. The loss, by a 14-point margin, will likely leave Tech playing in minor bowls, either in San Francisco for the Emerald Nuts Bowl or in Boise for the Humanitarian Bowl.

### YOUR VIEWS LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Bill covers up real issues

The November 9 *Technique* printed a letter to the editor defending House Bill 154, or the cleverly named "Intellectual Diversity Act." In this letter, the author relies on a number of populist values: "driven by people at the grassroots level," "all about accountability," etc. to assert that this bill under consideration is necessary to secure the free exchange of ideas that lies at the heart of higher education. However, this bill would monitor and control what can and cannot be said in the classroom, in effect doing its best to subvert, not safeguard, the free exchange of ideas in public higher education.

In the United States, we have often recognized and criticized as corrupt and undemocratic the actions of foreign nations when their respective governments artificially influence their educational institutions. Aren't we guilty of those same

offenses when we insist our own institutions of higher education are accountable only to partisan politics and no longer to truth? Don't we owe the taxpayers of this state a commitment to the discovery and production of new types of knowledge rather than a reinforcement of a view that breaks the world down into alienating binaries?

I reject the notion that we need government regulation of the frontiers of human thought; to abdicate any sort of fidelity to truth in favor of an artificially imposed commitment to the status-quo does a disservice to the public for whom this institution has been built.

Furthermore, proposed legislation such as HB 154, far from being "driven by people at the grassroots level," instead is a cynical attempt by many wealthy elites to divert concern

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#### Letter Submission Policy

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](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu) or hand-delivered to room 137 of the Student Services Building. Letters should be addressed to Matthew Winkler, 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 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. Editors reserve the right to edit for style, content and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

#### Advertising Information

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The *Technique* office is located in room 137 of the Student Services Building, 353 First Drive, Atlanta, Georgia 30332-0290. Questions regarding advertising billing should be directed to D. McCall "Mac" Pitts at (404) 894-2830.

#### 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](mailto:editor@technique.gatech.edu).

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that time, detention is as useless as a Tech quarterback. It's not until the sixth offense that she can move on to harsher consequences.

How can a teacher ever hope to command authority in the classroom when the only tools available to them are effectively neutered? Administrators are so afraid of their school getting sued by bleeding-heart parents that the effective punishments have all but been outlawed.

I'm not asking principals to dust off their trusty "board of education" or anything like that. I'm just asking that teachers be given the discretion to dole out worthwhile punishments which fit the crime. I'm sure many students here at Tech share my desire to have children in the future, and I hope most of them would like those children to do well enough in school to get into a college slightly less sadistic than Tech.

If my child, or any other, defaces a desk, I want his teacher to be able to assign a punishment ensuring he won't ever do it again. Make him clean all the desks in the school with a Q-tip, and I assure you that you'll never see "Little Kenny wuz here" anywhere again.

The simple fact of the matter is that a child will use your love for it like a weapon in any way possible. If a teacher says your beloved little Timmy or Susie was misbehaving, they are very rarely completely innocent, regardless of what they try to make you believe. So, in the future, stop suing your schools, support your local teachers and give them back their punishments.

**Bill** from page 9

and criticism away from the real issues impacting the general public with respect of higher education: affordability and access. Proponents of bills such as HB 154 are notorious for manufacturing a problem on campus where none exists; so instead of having a genuine public debate on how to make public higher education more affordable we are forced to waste time and intellectual energy with these non-issues.

If supporters of HB 154 were as committed to real diversity on campus, the real intellectual diversity that comes with interaction between peoples from vastly different socio-economic backgrounds, I daresay public higher education would be an institution more citizens could be proud of—a testimony to the values of equality that at the heart of any democracy, and not an institution that furthers the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

Todd Reynolds  
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LCC Postdoctoral Fellow

**Parody issue betrays nature of joke writers**

Before I comment on last week's "To Hell With Georgia" issue of the *Technique*, I want to make it clear that I dislike UGA as much as the rest of our school. Just like everyone else, I am tired of losing to Georgia Thanksgiving after Thanksgiving. Furthermore, I realize that Tech has higher academic standards than UGA, and that students in Athens

can probably be drunk four nights a week and still graduate with a 3.5 GPA.

With that disclaimer, I am embarrassed to admit that last Tuesday's *Technique* issue confirmed many of the stereotypes that people have, not about the University of Georgia, but about Tech. In this publication, various *Technique* writers bash UGA students for drinking (page 5), for NOT reading (10), for listening to country music (15), and even for driving pickup trucks (cover). I understand that we often resort to making fun of UGA students for being intellectually inferior to us. However, articles such as "Reading may cause cancer" (10) do less for pointing out UGA students' lack of intelligence and do more for making the world realize that we really might be the nerd school that they all say we are. If I were a UGA student, I would not feel insulted in the least if I were made fun of for "not reading."

And when did beer, country music, and pickup trucks become bad things? It's almost as if the *Technique* writers were attacking mainstream southern college culture. I would expect this type of article from an ignorant writer who thinks that everyone from the south is...well...having sex with animals and marrying siblings, as the "Dixie" article indicates (17). However, since over half of our student body is from the state of Georgia, I am surprised that our school newspaper finds southern culture a thing to ridicule.

I am not making the age-old mistake of taking a joke too seriously. Instead, I am pointing out that the nature of a joke often reveals

much about the joker. Last week's *Technique* revealed that our writers resorted to jokes that were either self-deprecating (the reading jokes) or not specific to UGA (country music and drinking). I suggest that the writers think a little harder and write more articles like the Herschel Walker article (24), which was actually funny.

Keith Hearon  
KHearon@gatech.edu  
Third-year MSE

**Frequent paper plate use should be encouraged**

The Nov. 16 article, "Dining halls go tray-less," mentioned paper plates as a way to conserve water. However, all of the suggestions restricted the use of paper to certain conditions, such as the time of day or a trade of plates for trays. I see no reason why paper use must be tied to other events. It would be more complicated for the dining staff to use paper during a certain time of day and then switch to ceramic during another time. Furthermore, there is no need to give up plates for trays. If we save water by not washing trays, then we can save even more water by not washing plates and silverware.

I emphasize that paper must be used, not styrofoam. Paper is far more biodegradable than Styrofoam; therefore its use will not substantially hurt the environment in the long run. What's more, paper is not carcinogenic, unlike styrofoam.

Alex Yang  
ayang7@gatech.edu  
First-year MGT

**Federal supremacy invalidates fee policies**

In a letter titled, "Policies follow state law" (Nov. 9), Mitch Keller accuses Malhotra and Sklar of failing to understand the law regarding mandatory student activity fees and Tech's policy. Sadly, Keller represents a large majority of students who do not understand the Supreme Court's position on these issues.

Keller claims that the funding policy "compl[ies] with Georgia law and U.S. Supreme Court rulings." However, recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings have required public universities to distribute funds in a viewpoint neutral manner.

It is important to note that Tech's revised SAF policy is just as unconstitutional as the prior one, because prohibiting "proselytizing" is a clear example of viewpoint discrimination. Proselytizing isn't unique to religious groups. To proselytize means "to recruit or induce someone to join one's institution, cause, or party." Therefore, if SGA applied the policy fairly across the board, no student group would get funding. Can you imagine the devastating effects this would have on campus life?

Keller's assertion that students bring concerns to administrators is fine, but change is unlikely to occur when the Institute's agenda is the problem. Instead of attacking fellow students, why hasn't Keller expressed outrage at administrators violating the law and students being detrimentally affected?


Jessica Smith  
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Biology '05

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