

FOCUS

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524,600 minutes?

Rent, playing through this weekend at the Fox, gets good reviews. If this is your season of love, take a date. Story on Page 21.

Find the luck o' the Irish

Planning on St. Patrick's Day in Savannah? The story starts here, but the listing of popular events can be found on Page 18.



Construction takes a toll on campus convenience

By Jennifer Lee
Contributing Writer

Clank. Bang. Boom.
It's hard to ignore the construction that is taking place all around the campus. Bobby Dodd stadium, the FE courtyard on East Campus, and Caldwell Residence Hall on West are under renovation for improvements. Earlier in the semester, construction often reduced traffic to one lane as cars squeezed by sites at the baseball stadium and the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences building near Atlantic Street.

And, to confirm that Tech is putting up new buildings like construction is going out of style, work has started on the long-planned SAC II.

With so many projects underway, students have begun to complain about the inconvenience.

Many of the issues depend on location. Rachel Rose lives relatively undisturbed in Montag. "It's probably a

lot worse on East Campus, but [construction] has never really [been] an inconvenience for me. I never hear it on West," she said.

However, just a block down the street, Marlon Mooney, a Folk resident, said of the Caldwell renovation, "Not only does the construction interfere with my sleep, but it's also caused the hot water to be unavailable a few times. And for what we pay for housing, that's unacceptable."

Indeed, sleep loss is probably the biggest complaint, especial-

ly for those that live near construction sites.

Although Marlon admits that construction is "hardly the most extreme of problems" at a school where sleep is at a premium, the loud construction makes life that much harder.

"I would come back to my room after classes, wanting to take a quick nap, but the noise of the drills and jackhammers made it really hard to fall asleep," said Nnenna Okeke, who lives on the basement floor of Harrison.

The construction of a new patio outside Harrison took place

literally right outside her window.

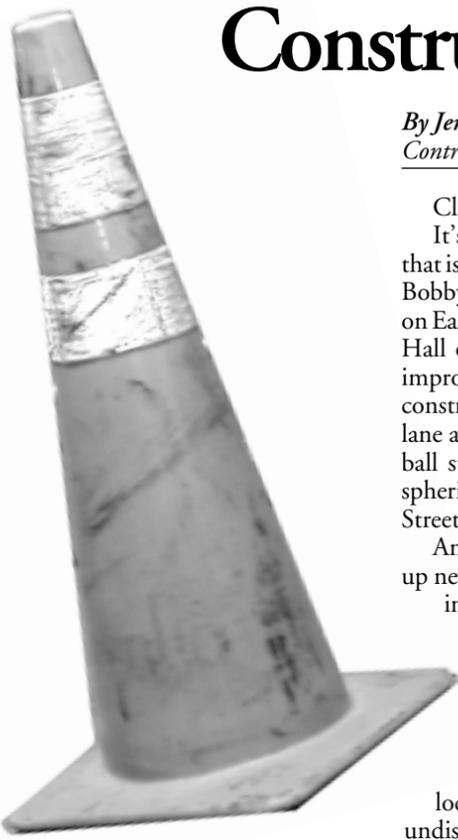
Most of East Campus is affected by the construction in some way or another, either by the FE courtyard or the stadium.

"That robotic jackhammer they had for a while over there was awesome... Though not quite so awesome when they started at some God-forsaken hour, like ten or eleven in the morning," said Harris resident Andy Holt with a hint of sarcasm.

Power outages pose another pesky problem for dorm residents. During one weekend power outage, students on East Campus had to find somewhere else to go if they needed electricity or computer access during an outage. Like many students, Holt trekked across campus.

"I went over to West, but

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"That jackhammer they had was awesome... not quite so awesome at ten or eleven in the morning."

Andy Hold
Harris resident

Bust your post-break blues with St. Patrick's Day in Savannah

By Josh Alexander
Contributing Writer

Are you having trouble bidding farewell to last week's Spring Break festivities? Still feel the need to party some more before you get back to school? Some students have found the perfect solution to the post-break slump: Saint Patrick's Day in Savannah.

Savannah, Georgia has established itself as the St. Patrick's Day festivity center of the South. The city hosts what is arguably the largest and most popular St. Patrick's Day celebration in the U.S. Yearly, the festivities draw visitors from across the nation.

Trey Knight, a junior ME major, makes the annual Saint Patrick's Day pilgrimage.

"It's the best St. Patrick's Day celebration. It may not be the biggest, but it's definitely the best," he said.

Among Savannah's popular St. Patrick's Day festivities, visitors can

enjoy Irish food, Irish arts and crafts, live performances by Irish and Celtic bands and a St. Patrick's Day parade that rivals any parade in the country.

Old Savannah comes alive for this festive event with green water flowing from its fountains and green beer flowing from its taps. River Street, the center of the festivities, bustles with party-goers and the sounds of live Irish music provided by Celtic bands that perform throughout the weekend.

Of course, the main event of the weekend is the St. Patrick's Day Parade. The parade dates back to 1813, when members of Savannah's Hibernian held a St. Patrick's Day procession to their

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'Dance, Dance Revolution' game gathers popularity and spectators

By Jennifer Hinkel
Focus Editor

While some Yellow Jackets might still be playing Quake, a new form of video game entertainment has become the latest student addiction. With two gaming consoles in the Student Center Recreation Area and the ability to play the game at home, Dance, Dance Revolution's popularity has grown, not only a physically interactive video game, but even as a spectator sport.

Pat Reyes and Susie Rathmann say that they play the game daily in the Student Center; Reyes bought a dance pad so he can play at home. Nicknamed "DDR" by its aficionados, the dance game involves stepping on a console in time with music while a screen indicates dance steps

players must take. Different levels of play can accommodate the two-left-footed to the disco dancing expert, with complexity and speed of dance moves increasing depending on the song difficulty selected.

"It's pretty addictive," said Reyes, who started playing in an arcade before Tech bought the game in January. Rathmann also started in another Atlanta area arcade. Since learning to play two months ago, she now plays from three to five games almost daily at the Student Center.

"[The game] is good exercise," said Rathmann. "I actually went to class one time [after playing], and my professor said that I looked like I just ran a marathon." Although she plays between classes, Rathmann has yet to resort to skipping class in

favor of the dance game. Reyes joked that while they may not skip lectures for playing, they might sneak into class late after a between-classes dance-off.

While the line to play (and the watching crowd) grows during lunch hours with the Student Center crowds, Reyes and Rathmann have noticed that often the same players can be found dancing on a daily basis.

"I think a lot of people are afraid to try [playing]," said Reyes. While some students might be afraid of subjecting themselves to public dancing humiliation in the busy entrance to the Recreation Center, a second console in the back corner of the room might offer the curious and

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Move over, secret diaries, and welcome online journals—with completely public access

By Madhu Adiga
Staff Writer

Dear Diary... I've abandoned you for my computer. What's happening here?

In the midst of daily planners, music, and just about everything else going online, even personal journals have followed suit.

Keeping online diaries has become a trend for many Tech students, though the practice has existed for almost seven years now.

The Online Diary History Project, located on the web at diaryhistoryproject.com, is dedicated to compiling the personal reminiscences of these pioneers

of the practice.

Carolyn Burke, who started writing in January of 1995, had many reasons for wanting to start an online diary. Aside from the fact that she was going through many changes in her personal and work life and needed someone to talk to, Burke was also seeking a forum for the free exchange of ideas and communication that a web diary could offer.

"An online diary, a place that exposed private mental spaces to everyone's scrutiny seemed like a social obligation to me. I felt at the time

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"This revolutionizes homepages... A lot of people are now just using their blogs [weblogs]."

Student weblog user



Correction

In the March 1, 2002 issue of the *Technique* several errors were made in the Oakwood Atlanta listing of the story titled "The off-campus housing cheat sheet."

The prices listed were incorrect, the complex does offer broadband Internet access and the complex has no three-bedroom

apartments.

Additionally, the *Technique* mistakenly printed that "many of the tenants have had complaints about this complex," referring to only two complaints on www.apratings.com.

The *Technique* regrets the errors.

Diaries

from page 15

that I could give back to society something important: a snapshot of what a person is like on the inside," she remarked on the Diary History Project.

What started out as posting personal testimonies on web pages has now evolved into numerous websites dedicated to fostering communities of online diarists. **Blogger.com** and **LiveJournal.com** are two of the most online diary sites among Tech students.

LiveJournal was started in 1999 by (wouldn't you know it?) a computer science student who turned a database-driven method to update his own personal journal into a web-based application his friends could use. Since then, over 400,000 people worldwide have been using LiveJournal.

Irene Gung, a first-year management major, has been using LiveJournal since October of 2001.

"It's nice because my hand doesn't get as tired as opposed to writing with a pen or paper on a journal."

Blogger.com is a forum founded by Evan Williams for blogging, or weblogging, which can consist of any-

thing from commentaries to fiction and creative writing efforts. Many people will post interesting links or their perspectives on various topics.

Many students at Tech, however, use **blogger.com** as another venue for their personal journal entries. Within the world of online journaling, Tech students have their own niche. Created by freshman Jennifer Lee, writers can find the Tech blogger group called Only at Tech.

The trend stretches into the celebrity world, as well. Wil Wheaton, known by Trek fans for his role on the TV show *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, keeps a weblog at **wilwheaton.net**, and gets many hits every day from fans and people who just enjoy reading his perspective.

So why do people who rarely write in personal journals bother to post online diaries? What's the appeal?

"[Weblogging] is nice because my hand doesn't get as tired, as opposed to writing with a pen or paper on a journal... Other people, when they're bored, can read what you've been up to."

Irene Gung

Management freshman and LiveJournal user

According to one student, "It's easier to type than it is to write, and there's so many cool things you can do with online journals, like include links to things you don't want to explain."

"Other people, when they're bored, can read what you've been up to. I don't even have to waste my time talking to them," added Gung. Also, weblogging and posting to online journals allow people a public forum for their thoughts and feelings while still being able to maintain their anonymity.

"You feel like you know the people whose weblog you're reading, and vice versa. But at the same time you don't have to worry about anyone harassing you or safety issues," said one student.

Students find weblogging a more convenient way of keeping in touch with people. Posting what you did during the day and what

has been happening in your life lately allows everyone to read about it rather than you having to tell a story ten times. Many Internet diary users find the method especially useful for trying to keep in touch with friends who live out of town or at different colleges.

One other notable feature of weblogs is that sites like **blogger.com** allow their users to personalize their blog pages.

"This revolutionizes personal homepages because a lot of people

are now just using their blogs for their homepages," commented one student.

"It's so much better for readers to see something dynamic that gets updated rather than your standard homepage that has your bio and such and is never maintained," said the student.

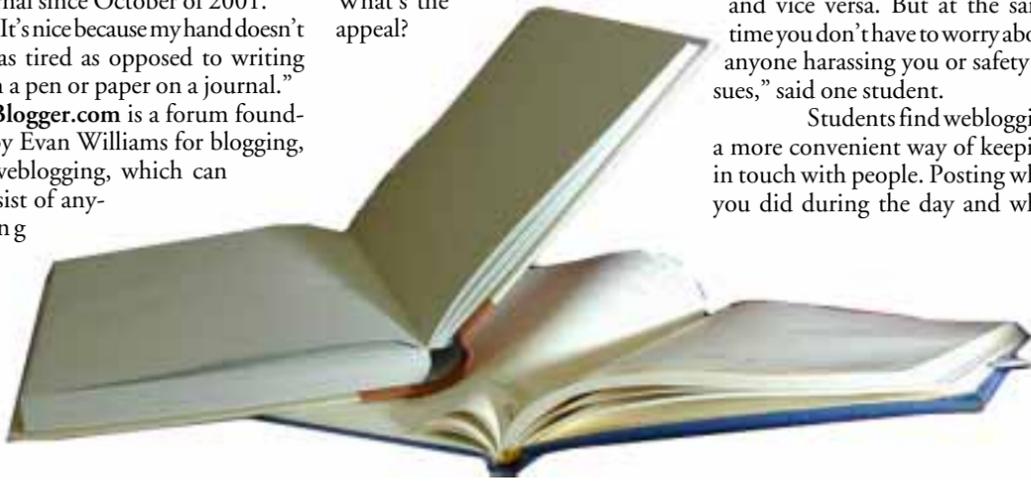
The trend is so widely known, in fact, that Blogger.com sponsors a contest called the "Bloggie Awards," akin to the Grammys or Emmys. The contest awards the best blogs in various categories such as Best New Weblog and Best Weblog about Politics.

Many options exist for people wanting to try out weblogging and online diaries. The most popular sites offer simple interfaces and options that do not require HTML or web design knowledge to create a forum for personal expression without handwriting a single word.

If you want to get your blog on...

The following sites provide options for "blogging," or creating an online journal, or weblog, available to the public. Find one that suits your tastes or explore the diaries, journals and logs of others.

- **www.livejournal.com**
One of the most popular web diaries, LiveJournal offers open source code and options for linking to your friends' journals.
- **www.blogger.com**
Blogger's "instant publication" provides instant gratification.
- **www.movabletype.org**
This easily navigated site offers Blogger Awards for its best and most popular web logs.
- **www.metafilter.com**
MetaFilter creates a weblog community with several interesting features, including posts of interesting log excerpts on its main home page.



Tech Up Close

email: focus@technique.gatech.edu

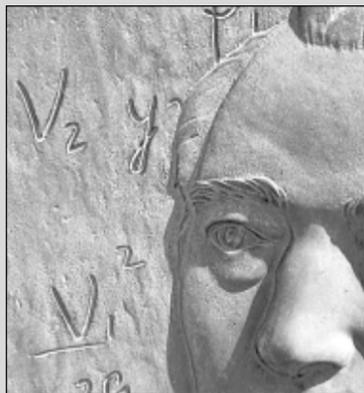
Winner of the Tech Up Close contest receives a *Technique* T-shirt and a coupon for free Papa John's pizza.

Last week's Tech Up Close:

Plaque for the Paul G. Mayer garden located at Skiles

Last week's winner:

Brian Leonelli



By Eric Auferhaar/ STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Irish

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church. To be held on Saturday March 16, the 2002 parade will host bagpipe bands, Irish dancing, floats, and many other performers.

"The Savannah nightlife on River Street, coupled with all of the St. Patrick's Day events, makes Savannah the only place to be," said one Tech student, "It's really a great atmosphere."

But don't pack your bags and decide to drive towards the coast just yet! Finding a room near Savannah for this St. Patrick's Day at this point would be a difficult—if not impossible—task. Reservations usually fill hotels to nearly ninety percent capacity for St. Patrick's Day weekend the weekend following St. Patrick's Day itself, meaning that hotel rooms for this year filled up in March of 2001. However, if you are willing to pay the price of roughly \$180 a night for a room located a ten or fifteen minute drive from the city of Savannah, plus the extra cost of a cab ride to River Street and back, you may still be in luck.

For those looking for a replay of a wild and crazy Spring Break, the street party in Savannah has a slightly different flavor. Revelers should ex-

pect plenty of fun, but in a clean, family atmosphere.

"I wouldn't expect to see the kind of craziness you might see on Spring Break," Knight said. "It's like fun for all ages."

In fact, there are some strict rules governing the weekend festivities; if you go, you should not expect Mardi Gras. For instance, all underage drinking and "indecent" are not only discouraged, but severely reprimanded. Ordinances pertaining to such activities are strictly enforced throughout the weekend to maintain safety for the thousands of visitors that pour into the city each March. However, even the underage crowd can find plenty of fun, even if they can't visit the pubs along River Street.

"I wouldn't be anywhere else for St. Patrick's Day," said Knight.

If you get to Savannah, even for one day, it will be worth your time, according to Knight and the others who travel annually to the Savannah festivities.

But if you can't, St. Patrick's Day in Savannah happens every March—book next year's hotel rooms starting Monday.

Savannah's annual St. Patrick's Day events

March 14 to 16: St. Patrick's Day on the River

Sponsored by the Savannah Waterfront Association, historic River Street opens in the city's traditional celebration of the Irish holiday.

March 14 to 18: St. Patrick's Day at City Market

This annual event features musical entertainment at Savannah's City Market stage throughout the weekend and into next week.

March 16: St. Patrick's Day Mass

Mass will be celebrated at 8:00 a.m. at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist.

March 16: 2002 St. Patrick's Day Parade

Savannah's 178th annual parade starts downtown at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. The stpats.savannahnow.com website offers live streaming video of the parade that morning for those who miss the real thing.

Savannah's St. Patrick's Day Web site also includes the history of Savannah's celebrations (find out when the Savannah River was first dyed green); a helpful FAQ for those planning to visit; a hotel, restaurant and bar guide; links explaining the religious, cultural and historical significance of the Irish holiday; and tips for the day after St. Patrick's Day, just in case you need to recover from an excess of revelry.

Compiled from stpats.savannahnow.com



Construction

from page 15

since it takes fifteen minutes to walk there, I only spent about ten minutes there before I came back because I heard the power was on again. It just seemed like a lot of hype.”

Even the threat of a power outage can be a nuisance. Harrison residents were informed by their hall council newsletter that construction would cause power to be out the Thursday before Spring Break from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

In preparation for the outage, Onisha Laurence turned off her computer.

“I had my computer turned off, and I was in bed reading, having resigned myself to not getting any work done while the power was out,” said Laurence.

The power outage never happened, but nevertheless, “I could have been doing homework in the hour or so that I was expecting the power to go off.

And plus,” Laurence added with a sheepish grin, “When I finally realized that there wasn’t going to be a power outage, it was so hard to motivate myself to get back to work.”

Judy Kuo, another Harrison resident, put a positive spin on the construction. “It’s really good to see Tech building new things to improve the campus.” However, she admitted to some inconvenience. “On the other hand, it’s annoying that just so much construction is going on all at one time.”

Also, regarding the new patio outside of Harrison, Kuo is doubtful of its purpose. “It’s so... unimpressive. It just looks like they put down a bunch of concrete. Maybe it’s not quite finished yet, but I don’t

see the point of building it; I don’t really use it the way it is now.”

Tina Denq voiced similar doubts regarding a different East Campus construction project. “I have no clue what they’re doing at the stadium. It’s just a very distracting form of progress,” she said.

Logistical inconveniences and distractions have been an ongoing effect of the construction projects.

Some FE students felt that the FE courtyard—surrounded by dorms—provided a little isolation from the cityscape as one of the few green spots on East Campus.

During the Harrison patio construction project, however, the courtyard was sectioned off and filled with concrete blocks, bulldozers, and mounds of dirt. Besides the obvious inconveniences of having a dorm exit blocked off (for Harrison residents), or having to walk

an extra couple of feet around the courtyard instead of across it—some Harrison residents felt the project ruined the courtyard’s atmosphere.

For those who wish that Tech had more trees and picturesque places to study, the clanking of machinery and the mud filtering onto the streets is an ugly reminder of campus’ urban location.

Stacy Farah, who lives in Montag, joked, “Today I was trying to walk out of the student center and in the middle of my usual path, BAM, they put one of those railing things. As if I don’t trip enough.”

But then she says, as an afterthought, “But, you know, I miss walking on sidewalks sometimes.”

“Today I was trying to walk out of the student center and in the middle of my usual path, BAM, they put one of those railing things.”

Stacy Farah
Montag resident

DDR

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timid a chance to play without an audience. However, according to Rathmann, the second console takes four tokens per player, unlike the one in the front of the room, which takes four tokens (a total of 80 cents) for up to two players.

Still, both Reyes and Rathmann found the game’s concept easy to learn, although “there’s a learning curve to it,” said Reyes, much like learning any new game. The physical interaction adds another dimension of learning to the less coordinated.

“You just have to pay attention to the music,” said Rathmann. “It’s more like line dancing.” Additionally, players can adjust the game so that two people can play simultaneously but at different skill levels.

According to one of the more

popular DDR websites, DDR Freak (www.ddrfreak.com), players can find at least twelve game machines in Georgia, including one at the

“You just have to pay attention to the music... [Playing DDR] is more like line dancing.”

Susie Rathmann
Computer Science senior

Mall of Georgia. California has 299 consoles, but even Alaska’s one machine has garnered enough of a following to spur several websites for

the Alaska DDR scene alone. DDR has fans worldwide; the DDR Freak site has a “machine locator” for Europe and Asia as well as the States.

“We’re supposed to get Fifth Mix—most people have Third,” said Rathmann, speaking on the possibility that Tech’s arcade will soon include a newer console. As of yet, DDR Freak lists no Fifth Mix machines in Georgia.

DDR fans go as far as downloading the game’s musical mixes and creating trick dance moves. Other players organize tournaments for DDR competition or attempt to set records for hours of continuous play.

Even for non-players, DDR can provide hours of spectator fun watching other students dance through their lunch breaks. According to Reyes and Rathmann, the largest crowds of both players and spectators gather between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.



By John Jewell / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Anthony Ritz looks on as two Dance, Dance Revolution players take their turn at the arcade console. Some Tech players hope that the arcade will soon incorporate a newer version of the game named Fifth Mix. For now, the game’s popularity has become evident in the crowds it attracts during lunch hour at the Student Center.

An Untitled Perspective

The Superman Illusion: why the high school ego is out of style

“Egotism is the anesthetic that dulls the pain of stupidity.” —Frank Leahy

By Joshua Cuneo
Contributing Columnist

When I return to my twenty-five year high school reunion, I'll most likely have forgotten those classmates with whom I had only a distant association.

The memory of others will undoubtedly stay with me because we ventured through those trying years of academia together. A rare few are unforgettable, however, due to their arrogant and egotistical blockheadedness that soured certain aspects of my high school years.

I remember one student, for instance, who bided most of his time upon the proverbial high horse, behaving as if he were the supreme entity of literature. His writing reflected this haughty, holier-than-thou attitude, and he repeatedly sacrificed content for a pseudo-Victorian professional style.

Furthermore, I sensed that he was in direct competition with the brightest students in the class. He had an inherent need to respond to many of the most brilliant comments, analyses and proposals issued throughout the course, a practice that he carried out in a competitive rather than intellectual manner.

I believe that some students have yet to relinquish the pride they obtained from their easy high school successes.

Joshua Cuneo
Contributing Columnist



With these, he often included half-witted asides that were comical at times, but otherwise inappropriate.

He was a victim of what I call the “Superman Illusion.” We’ve all had our fair share of experiences with these people. These are the pretentious blowhards who sit idly in class, ignoring their notebook and often the lecturer, deceptively believing that they are capable of absorbing and retaining all of the required information to pass the course.

Their smug attitude betrays their conviction that their mind is so keenly sharpened that any additional effort on their part is a waste of time.

They come in a variety of flavors. I could relate anecdotes of classmates whose egotistical arrogance is betrayed only through their body language and speech.

But, of course, the more troublesome ones are the outspoken and immodest, those who have an incessant hunger to announce, without provocation, every accomplishment and success in their resume. I remember another classmate who instantly balanced every failure with noisy announcements of one or more recent successes in an attempt to make that failure appear insignificant by comparison.

The Superman Illusion is particularly dangerous in college. We’ve transgressed beyond the days of high school when our classes were a simple regurgitation of facts. Now everything requires analysis, comprehension and composition.

The very foundation of our society is based on application, and application doesn’t come easily. Those who think they can breeze through their courses are delud-

ing themselves.

Multivariable calculus, advanced thermodynamics, computational theory and the rest are new to us, all of us, and these subjects can’t be mastered without a great deal of practice. Academic experience is bound to be quite unpleasant without a few dozen hours of intense weekly study, especially at Tech.

I emphasize this point because I believe that some students have yet to relinquish the pride they obtained from their easy high school successes.

I myself have been forced to adapt to the idea that clarity of the material doesn’t always come easily. It’s not a sign of idiocy to consult with professors and TA’s and even other students after hours to gain a better grasp of certain concepts.

A firm understanding is all that courses care about—how you go about it is irrelevant. Tech does have its share of “slack” classes, but I could count those on two hands. Furthermore, while expressions of conceitedness are understandable in health or psychology, when I observe a student conveying these same expressions while my professor explains for the first time how to compute

complex integrals in n-dimensional space, I become a little suspicious.

Of course, students may fall victim to the Superman Illusion for understandable reasons.

For instance, often enough, arrogance is a passion-driven compensation for personal problems. In other cases, it may be a weak attempt to conceal character flaws. But mostly, it’s generally a response to failure, for failure invokes a sense of inferiority, the single most detestable emotion.

The desire to escape this miserable feeling and reclaim superiority has been the driving force behind a millennia of wars. But we are of a more enlightened age, and as such, this egotistical drive must end.

Milder cases may simply require a slap in the face from a friend. More serious cases require personal help and attention. But in all cases, the victims of the Superman Illusion must resolve their behavior or risk their own social damage. We may condemn failure and strive to overcome it, but to deny its existence is a self-reinforced delusion.

These egotists need to shift their personality to acknowledge inferiority. They need an attitude adjustment.