

# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, September 28, 2001

## OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

### Stadium safety

In light of the terrorist attack on America, Tech officials have announced that there will be heightened security measures at all home football games. This increase in security will help to ease the minds of Tech fans as they cheer on the team during this difficult and uneasy time for the United States.

While this advance in security could potentially extend the amount of time that people stand in line to enter the stadium, it will ultimately help to instill a greater sense of safety in the minds of game attendants. Fans will more confidently cheer on the players knowing that their personal security is being guarded more closely.

This new measure will further help to discourage people from attempting to bring any potentially dangerous and undesirable objects into the stadium, thus creating a more unified and trustworthy environment.

People who attend the games should be encouraged to refrain from bringing purses and bags of any sort into the game so that any hold-ups in the line will be as short as possible.

Though there may be a few minor inconveniences as a result of this increase in security, the Tech community will greatly benefit from the knowledge that its way of life is being preserved and protected.

### Cell phone policy

Cellular phones ringing in class has become an increasingly troublesome problem as more and more Tech students become equipped with the wireless technology.

To combat this annoying and distracting tendency, each Tech professor should create his or her own academic policy that reprimands students who forget to set their phones to silent. This will ultimately cut down and possibly eliminate the increasing number of cell phones that ring while classes are in session.

While many professors already detail cell phone policies in their syllabi, others are not as bothered by the issue and tend to ignore it. These professors should consider that even though they are not bothered by ringing cell phones, many students can lose focus and become distracted by the annoying rings, and they should create a policy addressing this issue out of respect for their students' desire to get the most out of their education.

Although professors should be allowed to design their own policies concerning this issue, the punishments administered should be consistent and universal throughout the entire campus community. One student should not be given a failing test grade while another only gets a slap on the wrist for committing the same violation simply because they are taught by different professors. A punishment for students whose phones ring in class should be standardized by the Office of the Dean of Students so that the punishment is fair and unbiased.

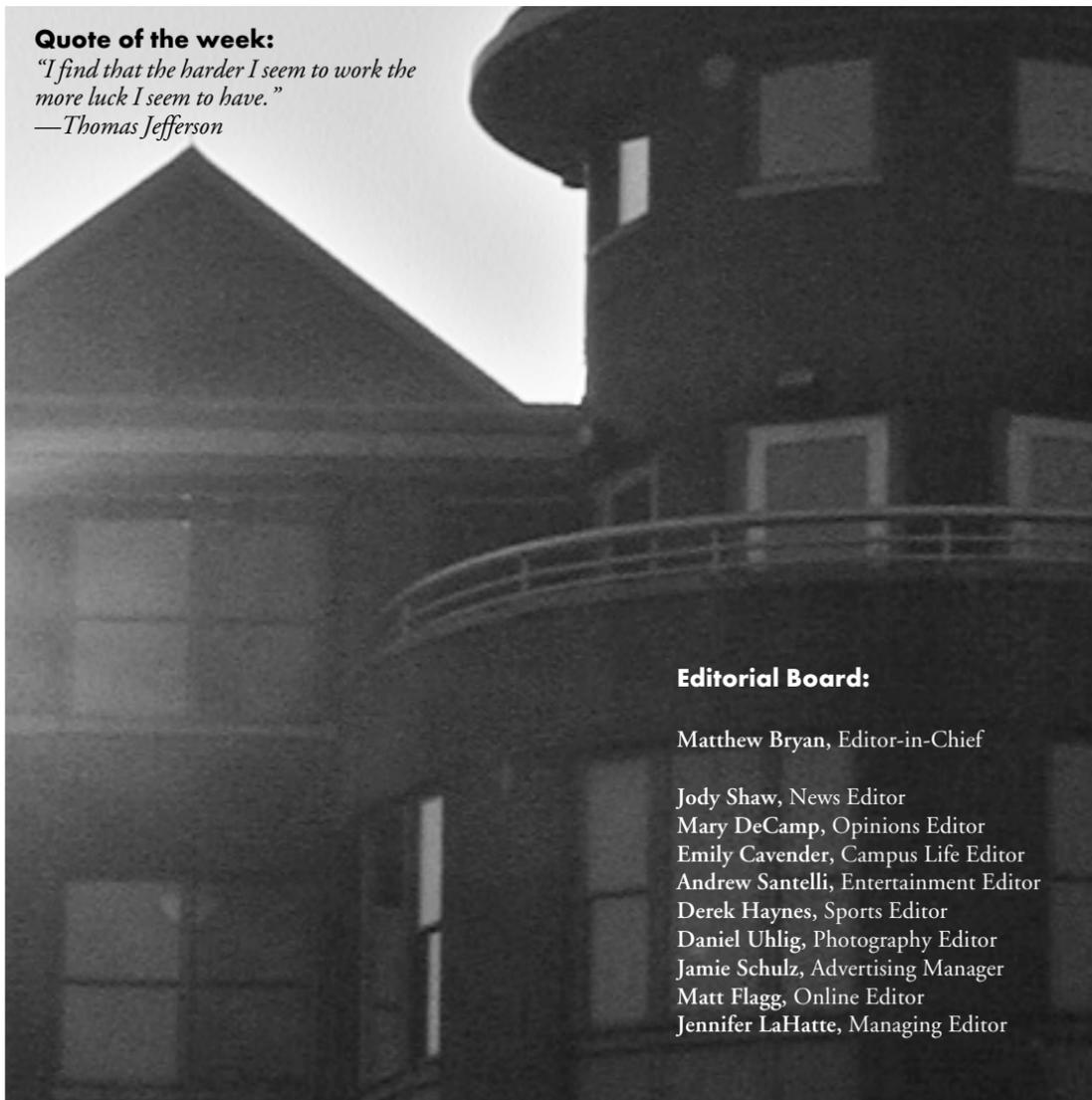
Anyone can make the mistake of forgetting to turn off their cell phone every once in a while, but it is simply not fair to other students in the class who are attempting to get the most out of their education. With the implementation of a standard academic policy concerning this issue, students will quickly learn to remember to turn their cell phones off before entering the classroom.

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

#### Quote of the week:

"I find that the harder I seem to work the more luck I seem to have."

—Thomas Jefferson



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## Guns on campus could decrease crime

*[Editor's Note: This letter refers to the article "Violent crime increases on campus" in the September 14 issue of the Technique.]*

The next time a Georgia Tech student, faculty member, or employee falls victim to a violent crime on campus, thank a Georgia legislator.

The Official Code of Georgia, Section 16-11-127.1, prohibits the carrying and possession of weapons "in, on or within 1,000 feet of the campus of any public or private technical school, vocational school, college, university, or institution of postsecondary education." Individuals prosecuted under this Code section can be fined up to \$10,000 and imprisoned up to ten years.

While the law provides exceptions for various public servants and civilians who travel near schools, its

net effect has been to disarm those who live and work at Georgia Tech and other downtown colleges and universities. The law creates huge "victim disarmament zones" where predators can terrorize whomever they please.

What better place to find unarmed victims than a sprawling downtown college campus where it's illegal for everyone who lives and works there to possess weapons for self-defense? Law-abiding members of the Georgia Tech community will disarm before they come to campus. Criminals will bring their guns and knives with them, law or no law.

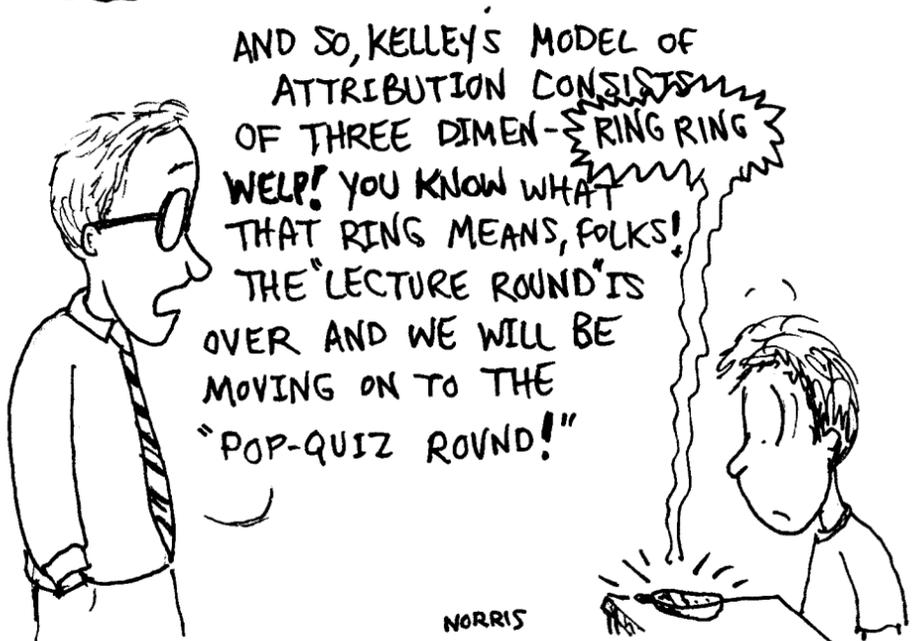
This wrongheaded law persists despite mounting evidence of the benefits of an armed citizenry. Researcher John Lott estimates that Americans use guns to deter crime

about two million times each year; furthermore, rapes decline about nine percent after states allow women to carry guns for self-defense. But Georgia law requires concealed-carry permit holders to disarm before entering school grounds. The crime rate in Kennesaw, Georgia, plummeted more than 80 percent after the city council passed an ordinance requiring a gun in every household. Criminals avoid Kennesaw because they know its residents are equipped to defend themselves.

Violent crime at Georgia's colleges and universities will continue unabated until our elected representatives at the State Capitol realize that disarming potential victims is not the solution.

Caroline D. Carden  
B.S. ChemE '98, M.S. ChemE '00

### THE SOLUTION FOR REMOVING CELL PHONES FROM THE CLASSROOM.



NORRIS

By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

# National tragedy, childrens' book, spark life lesson

I know what a hero is. My grandfather was a hero. Or at least I always believed he was when he pulled me into his lap and somehow fashioned a pig from the construction paper cutouts of the alphabet that I used in daycare—an artistic miracle if you ask me. He would wedge his nose in the bend of my neck and oink and snort like a pig—as if that made the mangled ball of paper letters look any more like the Ol' McDonald farm animal. I remember how he smelled, how warm he felt, how safe, how the creases in his face looked like worn leather and how I believed he had all the answers in the world.

When he died I was devastated. It was the first time I ever personally experienced the profound sense of surrender that comes with losing a loved one. Looking back now I realize how lucky I was. I was lucky because I got to say goodbye. I understood what was happening to his body, why he was growing weak, why it was his time to go. And I had the opportunity to tell him that I loved him and that I would miss him terribly when he was gone. With his death came closure because I was able to stand beside him and hold his hand, to touch him one last time and say all the things that I meant to say when he was alive and healthy. And I told him.

I'm pretty sure my mom is a hero, too, or at least I thought she was when she'd tie a sheet around her neck and run around the living room dragging me and my sister behind her shouting "Faster, faster, or we'll never reach lift-off!"

I know what a hero is. I suppose some people think Michael Jordan, Emmitt Smith or Wayne Gretzky are heroes. Others

"An all consuming desire to give, an indelible ethic, an undying morality, a selfless endurance, a purist integrity, these are the qualities of a hero."

**Emily Cavender**  
Focus Editor



would suggest that historic icons like Martin Luther King, Jr., Mother Teresa and JFK are the real heroes.

Perhaps a hero is simply someone that people look up to, admire, or respect, someone that people can emulate or look to for guidance.

Although the word hero is loosely defined, it is supported by a wealth of images and ideas. Perhaps I never truly appreciated the importance of the term and the classification of the individuals that it represented. I wouldn't make that mistake today.

I have watched the events of the last few weeks unfurl with a complete sense of helplessness. I am a victim, like the rest of us right now, and I battle intense feelings of anger, resentment and retribution. Since the terrorist attacks I have been forced to stifle racist and discriminatory tendencies that I didn't even realize I possessed and then deal with the guilt that followed the ignorant and the hateful emotions. But more importantly, since that fateful day, I have been given a lesson in life.

Because I know what a hero is. An all consuming desire to give, an indelible ethic, an undying morality, a selfless endurance, a purist integrity, these are the qualities of a hero—these are the people who sac-

rificed their lives in an attempt to salvage the wreckage that mercenaries inflicted upon our country and our people.

I keep playing the events over and over again in my head. I imagine what the firefighters and policemen must have been thinking as they rushed up eighty flights of stairs into an inferno of hell in order to rescue innocent civilians. I picture them hurrying people down the stairs, the floor beginning to waver, but their determination remaining steadfast, a Herculean effort.

I know what a hero is.

I think about the families who can do nothing but wait, who at this point are praying, no longer for survival, but for confirmation, so that they too can have closure. I weep for them, and I am sorry. I am so terribly sorry that they never got to say good-bye. I am sorry that they were robbed and raped by faceless strangers and were never given the opportunity to touch or smell or hold their loved ones one last time. These families were given no warning; they did not have time to prepare. *They didn't even get to say goodbye.*

I know what a hero is. Shel Silverstein's "The Giving Tree" opens with the following:

"Once there was a giving tree who loved a little boy. And everyday the boy would come and play swinging from the branches, sleeping in the shade laughing all the summer's hours away. And so they love, oh the tree was happy. Oh, the tree was glad." But soon the boy grew older.

Throughout the poem the boy asks more and more of the tree, picking her apples for profit, stripping her branches for wood and finally chopping down her trunk to build a boat to sail away. The boy leaves the tree, which he once claimed to love, with nothing save a stump. Yet every time the boy asked more of the tree, and every time the tree relinquished a part of herself for the boy, "oh the tree was happy, oh, the tree was glad."

After reading the poem for the first time I remember being alarmed at the selfishness of the boy, making a mental note to refrain from reading it to my children. Yet in wake of September 11th's tragedy, "The Giving Tree" comes back to me.

It is not the boy that I should concern myself with. In life you encounter countless individuals who can do little more than take.

It is the selfless trees in the world, those willing to sacrifice everything, even their very lives to save others, to give back and to give life, that we must honor and remember.

So I say thank you. Thank you to all the individuals who sacrificed their lives to save those in need. Thank you for your fearlessness, your bravery and your sacrifice. And most importantly, thank you for reinvigorating hope and love and pride in our great nation. And now, when my children ask me what a hero is, I'll know exactly what to say.

# Overwhelming life decisions prompt introspection

The world today is shaped by focus groups and surveys. Reality-based television shows are our entertainment. In this spirit, I suggest the ultimate in reality be presented to the focus group that is the Georgia Tech community. I offer you, the students, faculty, staff and friends of Tech, this opportunity to plan my future.

Let me give you some quick background. I was born in Lakeland, Florida, I had an average childhood and ended up at Tech the same way most students did, I did well in school and spent my free time involved somewhere. Now that I'm here I'm majoring in Electrical Engineering and making pretty good grades, I'm also involved in some organizations. Oh yeah, I graduate in Spring.

I guess I'll also indicated some preferences I have for my future, just to give you some kind of box to work in: Graduate school in EE would only require another year of school, so that's an option. What about a Ph.D.?

Leaving to work immediately is an option. I guess I could work for a big company, but I like the environment of a small company.

Maybe I should switch gears entirely and go to business school, get an MBA. I could be the CEO of some Fortune 500 company.

I'd also consider teaching high school physics or calculus and coaching the school's crew team, summers off, that sounds fun.

I could spend a few years as a missionary in some foreign country before I decide what I want to do. Learning another language is an in-

"It used to be so clear. I was going to be a helluvan engineer and marry my high school sweetheart. Well, things aren't really the same anymore."

**Matthew Bryan**  
Editor-in-Chief



teresting challenge.

I could get a graduate degree in journalism and run a newspaper in smalltown America. Maybe my brother, a history grad from Florida, could help me, make it a family affair.

Oh yeah, owning my own business would be great. I could work really hard to get it off the ground and then sit back and watch the money roll in.

Wait, I really want a family, that's a priority, so it should shape whatever you do with the choices above.

Most people think this is crazy, why should I ask you to plan my future? It's just that things are getting down to the wire and I need to start making some choices. I've got the GRE or the GMAT, degree petitions, applications for graduate school or business school. My parents want to know something about what I want to do.

I just want somebody to send me an email and let me know what the perfect plan for my life is.

"Hey Matt, it sounds like you should go to Thisandthat School of Business, they've got a perfect pro-

gram for you," or, "Matt, there are people starving in Africa and you have the perfect solution to their problem, go there," or even, "Mr. Bryan, I think that you have just the right skills for our company, and we're flexible enough to let you have a family."

It used to be so clear to me. I applied to two schools, Tech and Florida, just in case Tech let me down. I was going to be a helluvan Electrical Engineer, I would marry my high school sweetheart, and we would live happily ever after. Well, things aren't really the same anymore.

Ok, I'm gonna check my email and see if any of you have sent me a message yet...let's see...telnet acme, type in my username and password, start pine...well, what's this? It appears to be something from a Mr. Emerson, Ralph Emerson. This is what it says:

"To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal

of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded."

Well Mr. Emerson, that doesn't seem very enlightening, you didn't even mention one suggestion for a good graduate school. But I did like that part about laughing, that made sense. And the bit about appreciating beauty, I think I can do that. I'm not much of a gardener but a healthy child seems reasonable. Well, thanks for your comments.

Hold on a second Ralph, after all the ideas I wrote for my future and even opening it up for suggestions you're telling me that it really doesn't matter so long as I know one life has breathed easier because I have lived?

Perhaps that's what has caught the nation this week. The desire to make one life better by giving blood or donating money or volunteering. It seems like it didn't take an email from good old Ralph Emerson to wake up America. It's like there was something inside that America had all along, that Ralph understands, and that I need to find.

Like that success comes not from money or work in the classroom, but from relationships with my friends and my God and from the chances that I have to change the world.

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## Tech and City: Atlanta fosters growth of nerd-chic atmosphere

By Jen Hinkel  
Columnist

Living in Atlanta as a Tech student creates a puzzling paradox. Verified nerdiness, great football, and lasting tradition comprise Tech's peculiar character. Atlanta, regardless of football prowess, is a city of the chic, the cosmopolitan, and the commercial.

Balancing academic demands with an active urban lifestyle could drive anyone crazy, especially those seeking both to take classes and to pass them. As Techs in the city, is there such a thing as nerd chic? And if it exists, how do we find it?

Fall fashion advice aside, the ideal nerd chic wardrobe would let you go straight from a lab stool to a barstool. But the secret might not be to blend geekiness and coolness simultaneously. Instead, we can borrow from the best of both worlds.

Sometimes, I think that everyone at Tech is trying to get ahead, and everyone in Atlanta is trying to impress everyone else in Atlanta with their stuff. Few Tech students drive Lamborghini Diablos or live in Buckhead condos, but we can still learn from our fellow city dwellers. I, for one, own a fake Kate Spade bag and occasionally eat sushi. However, I also go to band practice and communicate via ICQ.

"As Techs in the city, is there such a thing as nerd chic? And if it exists, how do we find it?"

Jen Hinkel  
Columnist



The Tech-Atlanta nerd chic implies compartmentalization between a devoted pursuit of academia and everything else. Admittedly, the Physics lab is probably not the place to give a detailed account of your hot date last night. Likewise, we all try to avoid "geeking out" and talking about Diff EQ while at the new Virginia Highlands hotspot.

Sometimes the interplay is subtler, allowing for a chic society comment in INTA class and a brief engineering observation regarding Buckhead traffic. A well-timed nerd statement makes you look smart; a chic observation makes you appear cooler. Thirty-five minutes of engineering lecture at lunch makes you a boring conversationalist, and a fashion dissertation in biochem makes you a distraction.

The real challenge to nerd chic is the delicate balance of attitude. Some Thursday nights are meant for Buckhead; others are meant for studying. Some Tuesdays are

for Rocky Mountain Trivia, and others are for writing columns. These issues aren't easily resolved, and for that reason, we have the practice ground of freshman year GPA.

Achieving cosmopolitan nerdiness isn't impossible, but it might require stepping out of a Quake comfort zone and going out for coffee. For those who have never been socially challenged, it might mean giving up a Friday to study, or actually going to class on Monday morning.

The blend between study and social life can challenge even the professional time manager. If I could have a quarter for the umpteenth times I've recently called myself overextended, I might be able to buy an entire coffee at the Cyber Café. Refreshingly, study and socializing are not mutually exclusive, in part thanks to the city.

In seriousness, we collectively need to get out more. Tech students need to find more life beyond the rectangle of campus and

discover what great things exist in Atlanta. On its own, Tech has few capabilities for fulfilling both ends of the nerd chic spectrum, whereas Atlanta is chock full of hidden jewels to complete the collegiate experience.

I can be a nerd at my off-campus tutoring job and later go shopping for trendy make-up at Sephora. Whether you find a job in the city or join an off-campus organization, you'll be a step closer to finding the equilibrium between school and the real world.

Tech's best quality is its location. We hold the keys to a playground of cool, and we don't have to abandon our identity to enjoy it. Regardless of where we invest our time, we can always return to this academic haven. Planting one foot firmly on campus and one foot in the wider world will integrate campus and city life, learning and teaching, taking and giving.

We shouldn't see the nerd chic paradox as a problem. Conversely, it will fund our success. In a way, the sophisticated geek is the nouveau superhero, solving Earth's problems while still enjoying beach weekends and fine dining. Our campus might be akin to an island in the middle of the urban ocean, but it's the ocean, not the shore, that will provide the most unique opportunities for an enriched collegiate experience.

## Service should have included prayer

As an alumnus and long-term campus minister at Tech, I am writing to express disappointment in there being no focus on prayer at last week's remembrance gathering. President Bush had declared a "National Day of Prayer and Remembrance." It was great to hear remarks from members of the Tech community, but the best use of some of the time would have been to ask God for help!

Perhaps some words spoken by Abraham Lincoln would help us at this difficult time: "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity...But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace, and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us! It behooves us, then to humble ourselves before God, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

Bart Jones  
ffchrist@bellsouth.net

# Buzz Around the Campus



## Question of the week

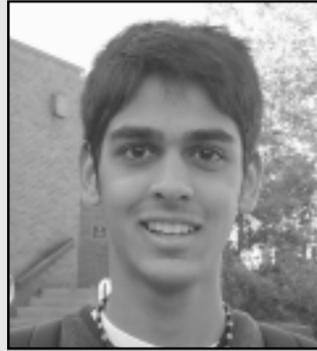
“When’s the last time you went to the theatre to see a play?”

Feature and Photos by  
Alisa Hawkins



**Shola Odumade**  
Chem Freshman

*“Back in May to see Alvin Ailey American Dance Company.”*



**Sumir Patel**  
IE Freshman

*“In the 12th grade, The Odd Couple.”*



**Valerie Gaimon**  
MSE Freshman

*“I went a month ago to see an Agatha Christie play.”*



**E. Tamar Neumann**  
Physics Freshman

*“About 3 weeks ago to see Phantom at the Opera.”*



**Jack Vasko**  
UEC Freshman

*“I haven’t seen a play since high school.”*



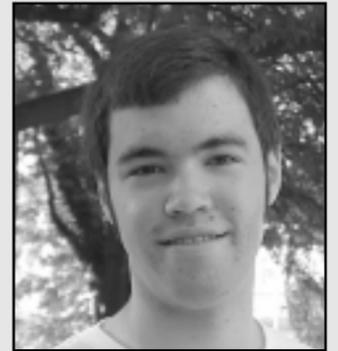
**Josh Lannu**  
CompE Sophomore

*“A long time ago.”*



**Brett Gilbert**  
ME Junior

*“What’s a play?”*



**Luke Moughon**  
ME Freshman

*“I’ve never been at all.”*

## Technique



Changing names to protect the innocent.