

OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, April 6, 2001

OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

GT SMART lacks smarts

GT SMART seems to be spending too much of its grant on full page colored ads and personnel instead of directly addressing the problem of binge drinking. The leadership of the group needs to focus on taking action, not simply preparing maps of drinking hot spots and new ads. Right now, students perceive the GT SMART campaign as wasteful and ineffective. Why? Is it because they do not recognize a drinking problem on campus, or because they do not believe GT SMART is taking the right steps to address it? That is the question GT SMART must first answer before it can be truly effective.

They have a tough task in front of them; they need to set realistic goals and take steps to achieve them. In some way, binge drinking affects everyone and so the actions, or inactions, of GT SMART should be a concern to all members of the Tech community.

Housing makes good move

The small change housing has made concerning postponing move outs and room changing to overlap on the Sunday after finals will really help students. The new clarification better reflects what students did all along; it's good to see housing respond to what students want.

SGA advice and lessons

Congratulations to incoming SGA officers and representatives. The recent election and experiences over the past year serve as a reminder of a few key points:

- Trey, as GSS president, do not veto things by flipping a coin.
- Go to all the meetings you are supposed to.
- Find out what your constituents want and work towards those goals.
- Potential candidates for next year's election, take note: a well-run campaign can and will win you an office. Of course, the cow helped too.

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

Atlanta: an American city with true sense of charm

I'd like to address Jennifer Hinkel's article about Atlanta not being up to par with London as a "world class metropolis." First, the comparison of Atlanta to London is not only unfair and absolutely ridiculous, but also shows that she obviously hasn't been to any other major city outside these two, nor has she weighed the cons of living in a crowded, expensive city like London for more than one weekend. I mean, does she even know what a concrete jungle is?

Had she visited a city called New York, which is clearly a more comparable city to London in the so-called "cultural sense," she would maybe have the sense to know a) that Atlanta is clearly not a "concrete jungle" and b) one should not expect to find the same variety of European tourist attractions and eateries in the U.S. Of course you will find plays like *The Complete*

Works of Shakespeare, Abridged in London, but many Broadway plays like *Phantom*, and *Les Miserables* can be found playing right here in Atlanta. There are theaters like the Alliance Theater and Symphony Hall to name a few.

As for dining, you can find many fine restaurants staffed with European trained chefs in Atlanta and I've found all kinds of restaurants offering authentic foods from New York style pizza at Ray's to fine French cuisine at 103 West. Farmer's Market in DeKalb has a wide assortment of foods from ALL cultures.

As for music, Atlanta is the home of LaFace and SoSo Def Records, as well as many well-known entertainers like Elton John or Outkast.

There are other concert venues besides the Fox like the Tabernacle, the Cotton Club, the Roxy, Chastain

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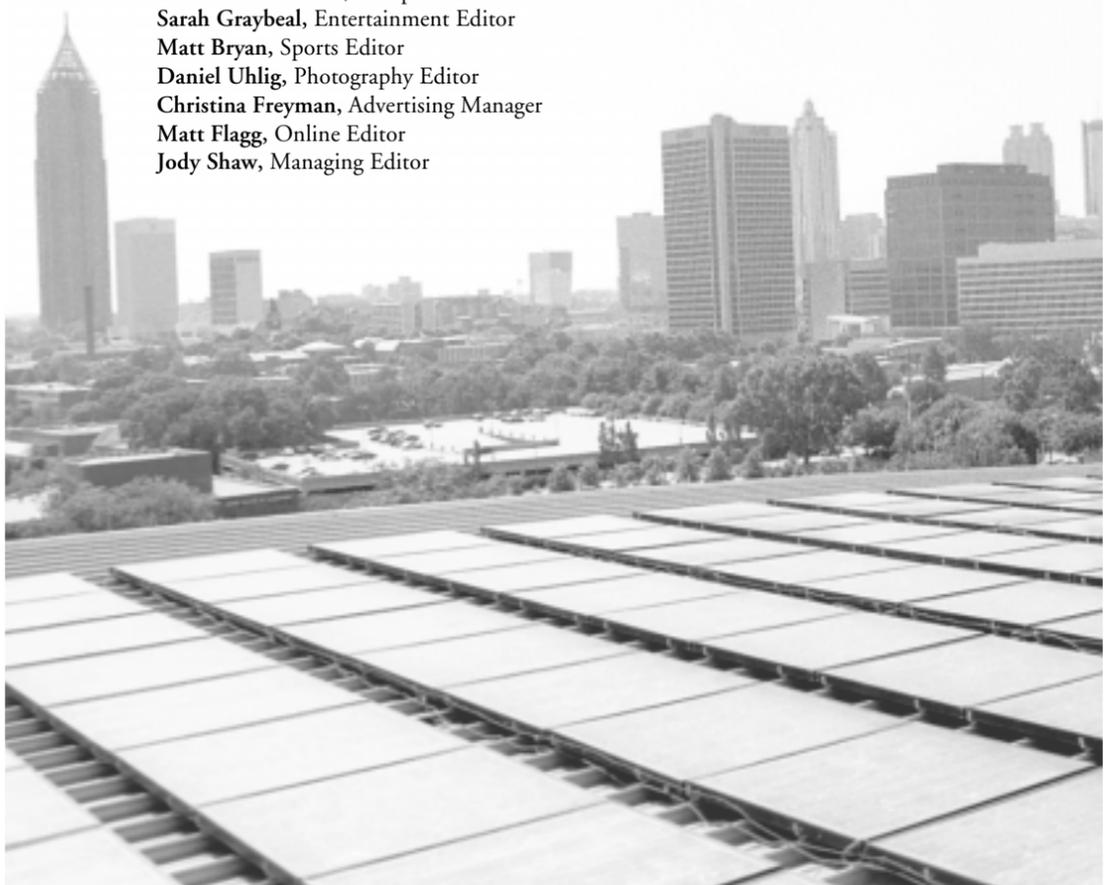
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Quote of the week:

"In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."
— Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)



YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

GSS shows lack of respect for undergrads

I would have to agree with the Graduate Executive's response to Melissa Matassa's charge that the Graduate Student Government is inefficient. They are very efficient. They are so efficient that they rarely extend their one-hour meeting time to consider bills of importance.

They are not to be faulted for their efficiency, but they should be faulted for their tradition, as a legislative body, for being divisive, inconsiderate and out of touch with the needs of the campus.

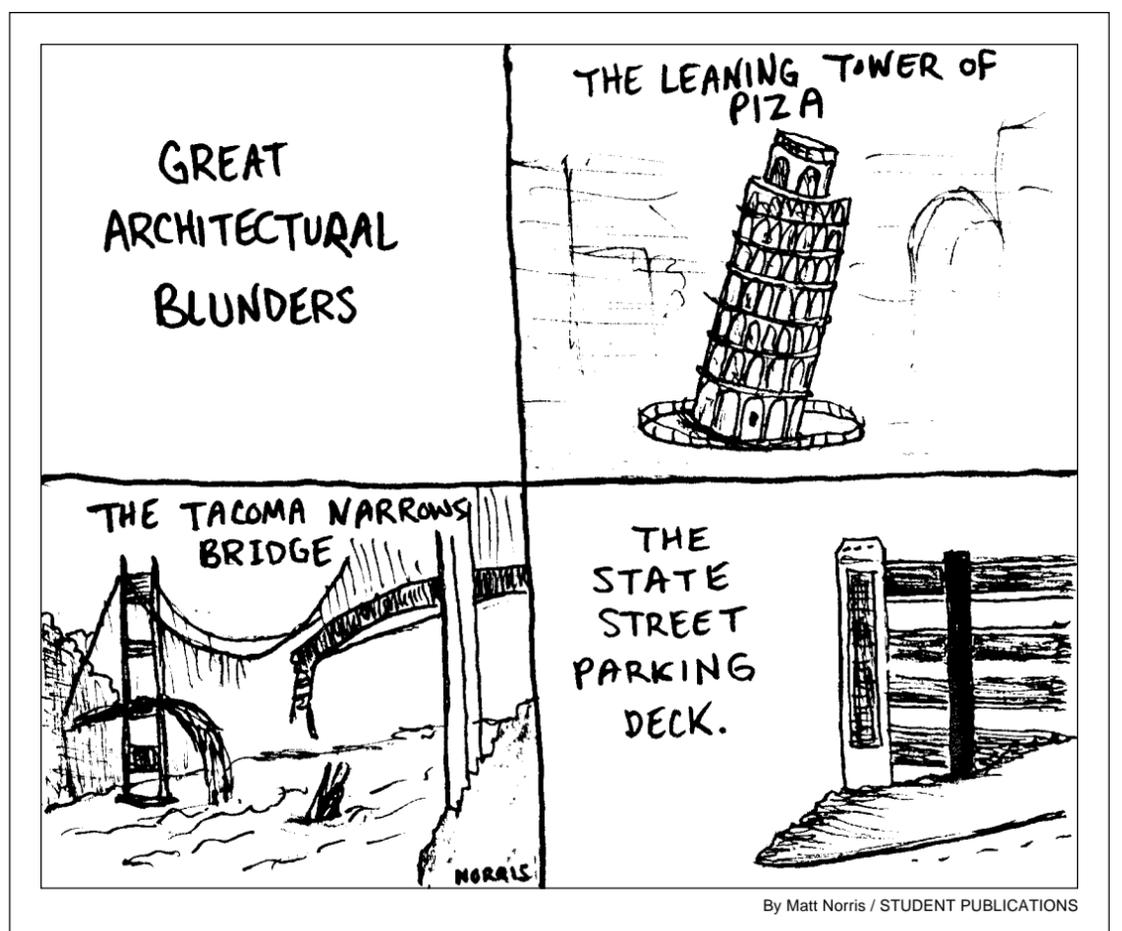
Graduate President Grant Jenman's own divisiveness was evidenced

when he threatened to "veto" the Women's Awareness Month bill and railroading his fellow graduate students into almost unanimously failing it. If Mr. Jenman was so concerned with obeying Robert's Rules of Order, he would have raised his hand and waited to be recognized before spouting his disdain for the WAM bill during the March 13th Graduate Student Senate meeting.

Additionally, Ms. Matassa's bill was "in order," and not special consideration, as Grant's letter to the editor last week suggests. No motion was taken in that meeting to

waive the bylaws. No group was inconvenienced, as a result of GSS's consideration of the WAM bill, with the possible exception of the representatives from Women's Awareness Month. WAM sent representatives to every meeting for weeks on end, as they patiently waited for their bill's consideration. Melissa Matassa's letter a couple weeks ago was not "sour grapes," as the Graduate Exec intimates, but instead a protest of the lack of respect shown to undergraduate students

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By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

EDITOR'S VIEWS Staff Opinions

Follow MIT example and put all course material online

MIT OpenCourseWare could be an expensive, easy to use, up-to-date textbook that makes accurate information available for anyone who wishes to use it regardless of student status

MIT recently announced plans to put all course materials for their entire curriculum online, complete with lecture notes, course outlines, reading lists, and assignments. The project, called MIT OpenCourseWare, would allow anyone with a net connection to learn the same material as MIT students for free without course credit. Should Georgia Tech follow their example and launch a similar project? It's a great idea and that we should definitely consider doing something like this. However, some people would be bothered by the de-privatization of our precious education here at Tech. Launching this type of project has quite a few implications.

You're probably thinking: "So what? Practically all of my classes have a Web site with course notes and assignments already! This is nothing new." Having a standard format for every class Web site and enforcing the creation and maintenance of class sites for those courses that currently do not offer materials online would surely be a giant step forward. Students would quickly benefit from having the ability to see current and future course activity. Currently, a class that has a great Web site appears to simply have an added value that most other courses do not offer. Students should expect to have this type and amount of information available online, not just hope for it.

Of course, offering this amount of course material online would affect far more people than the paying students who are actually

"Students should expect to have this type and amount of information available online, not just hope for it."

Matt Flagg
Online Editor



enrolled. Suddenly those that can't afford to go to Tech, couldn't get accepted, or simply only care for a very specific topic can learn course material in a format that is extremely similar to actually attending. Think about it. The class syllabus is there, so the topics at hand are available. The assignments are there, so an equal challenge is placed on the 'Net student, and the lecture notes are up for grabs, so the class structure and style is also out in the open. Having the entire curriculum for Tech packaged up in a standard kit available for free is quite a sweet deal for the wanna-be Tech student. Georgia Tech would be highly commended for providing such a civil service and improving the state of higher education.

Could providing a resource of this scope and value be perceived in a negative light? But, of course. People could consider this project to be a detriment to the value of their education. Those that consider access to Georgia Tech course material to be a privilege could find this project to be a blow to all the hard work they put in to get accepted at Georgia Tech. This point of view is

ridiculous. Most, if not all, Georgia Tech course material is widely available in textbooks. Sure, textbooks cost money, but libraries do exist. The only angle of this view that I could see people legitimately complaining about is the idea that course material is put together selectively to reflect the ambitions and style of the professor and that this is the added value that Georgia Tech students get beyond reading the textbook. But, anyone who is willing to put forth the effort to learn a topic in depth is most likely willing enough to go the distance and read the textbook.

Often, course material is so new that a textbook covering the material isn't available during the time of the course. In this case, similar courses at different schools could thrive off the availability of this new content. This would be a key benefit to those who don't have the time or desire to read the academic journals that contain exciting new research results. If a piece of knowledge is important enough to include in a college course, but is only available in the journals, students and retired students could use this situation as

an excellent opportunity to stay up to date in the subject matter of a particular course. They wouldn't have to wait for new versions of textbooks to be released.

Offering something like MIT's OpenCourseWare for Georgia Tech students would certainly put a strain on Georgia Tech staff. According to the New York Times, the project would cost MIT \$100 million. The construction of this project involves developing the software and services needed to produce a standard course Web site. Hopefully, Georgia Tech could ride on the coattails of MIT and simply purchase the OpenCourseWare package from MIT after it has been developed, tested, and optimized. But even after Georgia Tech has deployed this service, an extra burden would surely be placed on the professors. The maintenance of such a site could be quite a time-consuming task. Plus, it would require professors to structure the entire course before the beginning of its term. This could be a tremendous advantage to students! I've been disappointed too many times from the lack of structure and outlook that some professors have. Planning out a course should already be a strong expectation of every professor.

MIT has a great idea in the works. If it turns out to be a wild success and Georgia Tech still hasn't considered launching a similar program after the next 5 years, then Georgia Tech could really fall behind in being a true leader in technology education.

Don't read this; no one will remember it in a year anyway

On Home

I stepped on to campus riding the high that we call "senior year in high school." I was still basking in the glow of the summer Olympics. Georgia Tech was never to be "home" for me. I had a home. The people there were to be my eternal friends, and I was to return back in four years with a valuable degree from this old trade school. Boy, do things change.

On Winning

If you are like me, you came to Georgia Tech a winner. Honestly, anyone enrolled has probably been pretty lucky, and pretty good to back that up. I fully intended to win here, as if a diploma was not a degree, but rather God patting me on the back to say (in the parlance of the South) "You done good, boy." Georgia Tech has not been the game I expected. There is not one path to success, but many. Along the way, I expected to be challenged, but to rise to the top. I would win power, prestige, admiration of my peers, reluctant acceptance by the faculty, and above all, I would make a difference. If you have made a difference, then you have won.

Strangely, no landmark along the way told me that I had made a difference. Five years here, and there is no building named after me, no green space cleverly called "the Carter Green," no leadership seminar entitled "Carter Green: the road to success." Surely, I have failed. Per-

"Though we see different names on the diplomas, the same body of students marches through Tech's doors year after year."

Carter Green
Assistant Photography Editor



haps the attitude I came in with was destined for failure.

On Friendship

Yes, as the parents predicted, the friends here are probably the best of our lives. What they do not say is that the reason they will be your best friends is because they have seen you make mistakes. They have shared your teen angst (which I petition should now be called "twenties" angst). These friends have seen the tortured, very worst side of you, and have gazed into your eyes on some occasions with affection, and on other occasions with disgust. Nonetheless, they stick by. And a thousand years from now all those things will still be true for this time in my life.

On Faith

I grew up a minister's son. It's something most people don't know about me. I've seen all the extremes of faith since I've been at Tech. My friends range from never having believed in anything, to having believed as a child but no longer, to

holding onto their faith but not attending a church, to the few that are able to sustain regular church attendance during college. It's funny, college is probably a time when church attendance would really help with stress and perspective, and at the same time it's a time when we tend to lose track of our roots. If there is anything I regret at Georgia Tech, it's losing track of who I was when I came here. Sometimes church is a good place to find that again.

On Making a Difference

I once heard Georgia Tech described as an ocean. The waves beat down the students. The bold venture out into the deep often swamped or overwhelmed by the strength of the water. The slackers lay behind on the beach, basking in the rays. And our student leaders are often ordered to make a difference to this ocean. Can you fathom that? The whole philosophy is flawed. Don't change Georgia Tech, friends. Spend time on your relationships. Serve Georgia Tech's proud traditions. If you see something that you can do

that might make life here more fun, give it a shot. It is definitely worth a shot. But changing Tech implies there is something inherently wrong here. There isn't. It's a fine school. So don't think like an engineer. Don't try to fix everything. Just soak it all in.

On Student Amnesia

My hypothesis is that though we see different names on the diplomas, the same body of students marches through Tech's doors year after year, regurgitating and recycling the same old same old. It runs in cycles: "Parking is heinous. There is no enforcement!" Pomp and Circumstance plays in the background. "Parking is terrible! They enforce all the time!" Yes, the old fogies may object, complaining of *déjà vu*, but soon they are rushed out the door, and the young bright frosh are here to storm the same old hill, and battle the same old battles. Know your history before you strike up a battle cry. In 29 days, pomp and circumstance will play, and this battle cry itself will be ushered across the stage.

On Getting the Most

The most lasting advice I can muster: Care about Tech. Have a plan. Change the plan. Eschew secrecy. Lose sometimes. Empower yourself. Get work experience. Study abroad. No matter what you face, take a deep breath and look on the bright side. Finally, have fun, because it is over before you know it.

TECHNIQUE

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editor@technique.gatech.edu

MORE VIEWS Letters to the Editor

Tech chorus sounds excellent despite hardships encountered

I would like to publicly commend the Georgia Tech chorus members who sang Carmina Burana with the Atlanta Ballet and Symphony during the month of March for their outstanding precision, sound, and overall performance.

Having seen Carmina Burana performed by the ballet and other choruses in previous performances, I was dubious about how a chorus from a University without a music department would be able to carry off such a complex piece in a theater without great acoustics. I was very, very pleased to be proven wrong!

I understand from talking to a student in the audience that most of the singers join the Tech chorus as volunteers, earn little

to no college credit for their work, and that Tech does not have a proper music facility for choral groups to practice. Under the circumstances, their work is not only to be commended but is phenomenal.

Kudos to every student who is willing to stretch Tech's community "engineering image" and who is rounding out his/her college experience with a blend of the arts mixed in. You will carry those musical memories with you forever. I hope that all of you realize that you brought a number of your fellow students out to see their first ballet, as well as your fine choral performance. Keep on singing!

Christiane O'Hara Brennan

GSS

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who come before the Graduate Senate.

Furthermore, Institutions of Higher Learning such as Georgia Tech should be places where students are exposed to unique ideas and encouraged to engage in debate. WAM's keynote speaker, Judy Chicago, is in line with the mission of such institutions. While she is considered to be controversial, her ideas are titillating and demand discussion.

If we at Georgia Tech are ever to compete with the likes of such institutions as Stanford and MIT, we must embrace the kind of speakers that Women's Awareness Month promotes.

Becky Glatzer

Former Undergraduate Student Government Member-At-Large, Public Policy Representative and Committee Chair
gte385e@prism.gatech.edu

Great April Fools' issue

I wanted to thank all of the writers who contributed to the April Fools' edition of the *Technique*.

I thought it was the best written and funniest issue of the year, and used a lot of current events from which to take witty opinions on. Even the minor details were satirized accurately, and most articles showed a deeper understanding of the world around us than can be found in the *Journal-Constitution*.

Keep up the good work, staff, if they let you stay on campus that long.

John Rafferty

gte287e@prism.gatech.edu

Write letters!

Make yourself heard! Let people know what's on your mind! Impress your friends and neighbors! Influence others! Fast cars and glamorous vacations! You may not get these, but you will get your name in the paper! Send your letter (400 words or less, please) to editor@technique or opinions@technique.

Atlanta

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Park, Lakewood, Variety Playhouse etc.

Atlanta's museums include Fernbank, Atlanta History Center, the Carlos museum at Emory. For a cultural fix, try sweet Auburn, the MLK site, not to mention the At-

lanta Symphony Orchestra and Atlanta Opera, as well as improv at the Whole World Theater. Also, there are many cosmopolitan scenes like Sambuca Cafe, the Martini Club, Cafe 290, etc. We all know that Buckhead and the surrounding metro area offers a very wide assortment of nightlife and clubs. We've got the Braves, Ted Turner with CNN,

Coke, and most important nice weather and an affordable cost of living.

Atlanta is known as the "queen city" of the Southern U.S. with its own set of unique cultural experiences. True, Atlanta could improve as a world class city, but lets not forget that Atlanta is a new and growing city, not to mention how

boring it would be if every "cosmopolitan" city were the same.

Meanwhile, Ms. Hinkel may need some time off to experience other cities besides "benchmark" London to broaden her definition of the cultural and artistic "greats."

Melvin Bullock

gte499e@prism.gatech.edu

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