Stingers Renewed

Despite having the opportunity to remedy the unreliability of the on-campus transportation services, Auxiliary Services chose to continue contracting with Tech’s current vendor, First Vector. The numerous student complaints and problems with unreliability were well documented in a study by Lanier Parking Systems. Auxiliary Service administrators should have taken the results of the study and looked more seriously at hiring another company. Even if another company would have been more expensive, the $10 increase in student transportation fees should be put to good use by providing a better service.

If Tech was willing to spend the money on the assessment in the first place, why aren’t the administrators taking the results more seriously?

The concerns over choosing to continue with First Vector stem from many of the problems with the company’s performance thus far, including customer service, bus maintenance and unreliability. If there were only a few minor problems, renewing a contract with the company would have been acceptable. But with so many problems to remedy, it will be hard for the company to improve them all.

Parked and Transportation has placed blame on the old age of the buses, claiming new buses will help to solve many of the problems. The many incidents and complaints made by students over the past few years should be evidence that some of the problems lie with the service of the company and its employees, not with the buses.

Another concern is the timing of the contract negotiations. The decision to continue with First Vector was made before the new parking director arrived, when he should have had a say in the decision. Granted, the timing may have been unavoidable due to the expiration of the current contract, but in this case a contract for a shorter time period, a year perhaps, should have been negotiated. This year would have served as a test period to make sure that First Vector followed through with their contract, and if they did not, a new company could be selected.

Since they have decided to continue with First Vector, Auxiliary Services should make sure they apply the results of the study into ensuring that improvements are made in their service. This duty particularly lies at the feet of the new employees, not with the buses.

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I have a confession to make. Stashed away in a hidden folder on my hard drive are several hundred megabytes of graphic MPEGs that I downloaded from a file-sharing program. They’re all Gummi Bears cartoons.

Or, if you’re a fan, I have Duck Tales or Garfield, and I think there’s a Rainbow Brite lying around somewhere.

I’ve been an avid user of file-sharing technology for years, but it’s only recently that I’ve started downloading those old shows from the 80s and 90s, back when I was an avid viewer of cartoons.

I’m sure everybody remembers the heyday of their youth when Saturday mornings were filled with reruns of Alvin and the Chipmunks, Ghostbusters, and Mighty Mouse. There are a few in particular—the ones I mentioned above—that I’m especially fond of, and I started revisiting those couple of months ago on a whim.

I’m not ashamed to admit it. Television was an integral part of my childhood, so revisiting these cartoons deepens an important bond with era of my life and reminds me how I viewed myself and the world at that time. My childhood was not a picture of perfect innocence, and I never led a carefree lifestyle, but at the risk of sounding preachy, it’s easy to lose sight of that amid the rush of adult responsibilities that accompanies adulthood.

Watching Gummi Bears again helps me remember the foibles of those first fifteen years, what I did or didn’t do, or failed to understand, the regrets, the frustrating limitations. I can also recall the postmodern curiosities and imaginative ideas from that era and realize that I still deal with them, but it’s in such a different context now that it’s difficult to recognize them as the same. I remember that childhood was as difficult to cope with at the time as adulthood is now.

Childhood was a very difficult, trying, educational experience for me. I suffered from weak social skills and had a phobia for embarrassment, and so often used television as an escape.

Furthermore, I found parental restrictions very frustrating, and, naturally, many of them concerned television privileges. When I absolutely banned them from saying the words about the TV being turned off, I remember how much television was a focal point of my life, and then, through it, I can connect to other facets of my childhood. Consequently, the entire concept of film and television is still very dear to me (possibly why I’m pursuing a certificate in the subject). I can’t think of a better way to connect with my own past than through television.

That said, I’d like to encourage my fellow classmates at Tech to revisit their formative years.

Josh Cuneo
Online Editor

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Life and the Importance of Gummi Bears

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What happens when ignorance stops being the issue?

By Gin Bacon
Staff Columnist

"Every once and awhile I get totally smoked in the face by how naive I can be. Somehow I always manage to fall back into it."

Last week my editorial focused on ignorance. This week let me ponder on what happens when people have all the necessary information yet still make illogical choices.

First example: President Bush's sex education policy. Study after study has shown that abstinence-only sex ed does nothing to lower teen pregnancy or prevent STD's. Conversely, study after study have shown that comprehensive sex education does not increase teen sexual activity. I would hope Bush is aware of these studies, yet if he is, he continues to increase funding to program that only promotes abstinence.

When asked why gays might be discriminated against, one of my classmates said that many people felt that gays were responsible for the HIV/AIDS crisis. Hopefully, the class listened to my professor as he discussed how this view, along with other points, were in reality myths.

I have focused much of my academic career on women's issues so I know there can be discrepancies in the way men and women are treated. I assume far too often that these are derived from cultural norms and ignorance is the root of the problem. I forget sometimes that people often act negatively towards women, or other minority groups, with complete knowledge and intention. They still believe that these groups are inferior or have certain roles to fill. What happens when ignorance stops being the issue? When people are given the facts and still make choices that seem illogical? This happens not only with blatant discrimination but is evident in the way Bush's sex education policy is handled.

I suggest we obtain a more suitable education policy. For instance, Sex Trek, in any incarnation, is still one of the best shows ever aired, but that's a discussion I'll save for another time.

Hallmark chokes on Father's Day cards

By Wesley Jackson
Sidelines

"I have focused much of my academic career on women's issues so I know there can be discrepancies in the way men and women are treated."

(U-WIRE) Middle Tennessee State University - Without a doubt Father's Day ranks high in the lists of the well-known but poorly understood holidays. Even if you're not religious, you still know the reason for Christmas and Easter. Mother's Day is a no-brainer. If you don't treat your mom like a saint on that second Sunday in May, you can just add another couple hundred years to your time in purgatory.

All the card companies have marketing strategies mastered for other holidays. Even if you don't treat your mom like a saint on that second Sunday in May, you can just add another couple hundred years to your time in purgatory.

The Real Adventures of Johnny Quest, Invader Zim, Dexter's Laboratory, Cartoon Network's new series - all of these shows have been created for children. But why is there not a show specifically for dads? Parents have their own shows: Family Guy, The America's Most Wanted?"

I've also come to understand that ideas and references that I never would have recognized even five years ago. I've also come to understand that the shows that I enjoyed the most were those that subscribed to the tradition that we can't bring our thoughts and produce it with the children in mind, but weave in an underlying layer of intelligence and quality that older audiences will appreciate. I still watch cartoons from time to time, and the new shows that I enjoy the most—Invader Zim, Dexter's Laboratory, The Real Adventures of Johnny Quest—follow the same pattern.

That has led me to discover, with some amount of interest now, that there is something about the way men and women are treated. I assume far too often that these are derived from cultural norms and ignorance is the root of the problem. I forget sometimes that people often act negatively towards women, or other minority groups, with complete knowledge and intention. They still believe that these groups are inferior or have certain roles to fill. What happens when ignorance stops being the issue? When people are given the facts and still make choices that seem illogical? This happens not only with blatant discrimination but is evident in the way Bush's sex education policy is handled.