

# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, February 7, 2003

# TECHNIQUE

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**Quote of the week:**  
"In America, anybody can be president. That's one of the risks you take." — Adlai Stevenson

## OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

### Post office changes

The Georgia Tech post office, site of much waiting and standing in line, is soon to be renovated as part of the Bookstore space. Although over 5000 boxes will be eliminated, these changes will definitely make the post office more efficient and streamlined.

Despite the fact that off-campus students will now have to pay if they want to have box, the improved service and private boxes will more than compensate for the fee. The idea to add an additional window at which to pick up packages will also help to improve the flow of people in and out of the facility.

With this change, it will be more important than ever that students update their entries in OSCAR if they move off-campus. This means that students will have to be educated about how to change these entries and encouraged to do so in an expedient manner after they move off campus.

Additionally, some thought must also be given to what to do with campus mail. Many students may not use their boxes for anything but receiving mail from on-campus offices. This is one of the reasons it is vitally important that students update their addresses. If campus mail is sent to someone who no longer has a box, a system must be developed to deal with this problem.

Some student organizations have raised concerns about the loss of the ability to stuff mailboxes and thereby reach all—or most—students. The increasing dependence on email rather than real mail renders this a moot point. Student organizations would do much better to spend their funds on other things rather than on fliers that many students throw away before they read them.

### SGA Election Code

Some of the changes that the Student Government Association approved this week were ill-thought out and could lead to considerable harms for both student organizations and student leaders. The requirement that candidates for legislative office reveal their organizational affiliations will cause more harm than good. While the principles behind the proposal, likely that reps should reveal their other activities so that unbiasedness could be maintained, were good, the execution will force those students involved in personally-focused organizations, especially those based on religious beliefs or sexual orientation, to expose areas of their lives that should be protected from undue public scrutiny. SGA should reconsider this clause and change it from a requirement to a suggestion.

*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 Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

## Remember Columbia's passion

Space is the raw ether of human dreams. Throughout history it has acted as the stage for some of humanity's greatest acts and, sadly, recently has proven the background for a tragedy. The astronauts who perished on Saturday were exemplars for each of us and in the light of their actions we must not lose sight of the visions they carried and the passions which drove them.

Some may question the efforts that we have put forward in putting humans in space, the hardships that have been overcome and the resources that have been expended to ease what may seem like nothing more than an itch of human curiosity. The billions upon billions of dollars that placing people into orbit has cost may seem lavish, especially when juxtaposed with the troubles that society has encountered in parallel.

Now, with the latest loss of life, some may argue that the dividends aren't worth the sacrifice. It is to these people that I now plea. I ask that they sit back, and for one moment, let themselves feel the passion that drives those involved with the space program, to let the energy that nourishes their vehemence be seen as something other than blind zealotry.

To help in this, we must look at those few who have traveled there and what got them there. What is it about space that can cause a man to pay \$20 million for a ride on a 40-year old design of what amounts to a column of liquid dynamite?

If you read the biographies of the Columbia astronauts, and most any other astronaut, you'll notice a very consistent theme amongst them and that is they all had dreams of space beginning as children. For some of them it was watching the Apollo astronauts expand the human touch and find the beauty in what was otherwise a dry, dusty mass of rock. For others it may have simply been



"When we leave this Institute, many of us leave as engineers and with that title comes a great burden."

**Ian Clark**  
Assistant Photo Editor

a picture, perhaps one looking down at the Earth in its pure naturalness, or, perhaps it was a picture of the Earth rising over the horizon of the moon, with the background of space giving it a visage of dark tranquility.

Regardless, there was something in those images that, when combined with the innocence of a child, engendered an emotion that would never fade and that they would forever focus towards. These images have been carried on and have their modern day equivalence in Hubble images of radiant nebulae or quasars so unfathomably distant that their creation nearly predates time itself. A new generation of children now sees these images and in them an ardor is instilled that they will use to carry their generation forward.

In those who are now associated with the space program you will find that the passion of their youth has not been weathered away by the dryness of adulthood and they are the crop from which astronauts are chosen. They are a group who, despite having lost 14 of their comrades and seemingly facing a nearly 1 in 50 chance of also dying, would not even pause if offered an opportunity to follow in the path of the Columbia crew for a venture beyond Earth's atmosphere.

Even amongst those only loosely associated with the shuttle you would be hard pressed to find someone not willing to take that risk. The opportunity to go somewhere where even poetry fails to fully vocalize the

feelings that one has is not one that is easily passed up.

What is important now though is that we not let tragedy deter our ambitions. We as a society must not let the Columbia accident weaken our resolve. In much the same way that the shuttle astronauts harbored their childhood passion for life, we must promise to ourselves to not let our dedication be lessened. It is in this that we honor their labor and allow for future spacefarers to understand what drove their ambition.

Beyond the personal ambitions of the astronauts, there are many well-documented benefits the space program has reaped for society that I will not go into here. The latent potential of the space program make it more than worth the money that we as a society spend on it. Without this funding, our further exploration of space and the unknown will cease, a situation that will damage humanity irreparably.

On an ending note, if there is something that we as Georgia Tech students must see in the shuttle accident, it is this. When we leave this Institute, many of us leave as engineers and with that title comes a great burden. As engineers it now becomes our responsibility, and our duty, to ensure that accidents such as this are dealt with and all action possible is taken to prevent their future occurrence. It is on our shoulders that we will bear those who will always carry hope.

# Music piracy not a problem for industry

The movie and music industries are in trouble. Irreparable damage has already been done to them in the last few years, and things are only going to get worse, drastically worse, as the entire business heads to its demise. And all the industry execs point to piracy as—

Woah. Let's put a hold on the doom-sayers, put away those "repent now; the end is nigh!" signs for a moment and look at things in perspective.

"Piracy," as the industry loves to label it, is like copying songs onto tape for friends, or recording them off the radio and keeping them. Or even copying a CD for a friend.

The only difference isn't even that it's necessarily more damaging to the music industry now; it's just more visible.

Not more damaging? But, you might say, global CD sales are expected to fall six percent in 2003, making for the figure's fourth consecutive annual decline.

From 2000 to 2001, CD sales were down a whole 10.4 percent; revenues dropped 4.1 percent.

Look at the rest of the economy. A loss of only 4.1 percent revenues from 2000 to 2001? That seems almost laudable. Another year of declining revenues coming up? Consider AOL Time Warner—something tells me that



"As soon as a well-priced, comparable alternative to file sharing exists, people will pay for that service."

**Stephen Baehl**  
Copy Editor

internet file sharing does not account for its \$99 billion loss this past year, and the not-so-great outlook for the media giant.

All things considered, it could be worse for the Recording Industry Association of America. As for the Motion Picture Association of America?

Box office records are broken at a ridiculous rate. Last year, fully 3.8 million DVD players left the shelves, according to [www.ananova.com](http://www.ananova.com). And sales of 80 billion DVD discs amounted to a 111 percent increase over 2001 sales.

And just why am I calling this piracy? Tim O'Reilly of the O'Reilly Network, in a Dec. 11, 2002 article appearing on [www.openp2p.com](http://www.openp2p.com), said, "Piracy is a loaded word, which we used to reserve for wholesale copying and resale of illegitimate product. The music and film industry usage, applying it to peer-to-peer file sharing, is a disservice to honest discussion."

While O'Reilly claimed that "The simplest way to get customers to stop trading illicit digital copies of music and movies is to give those customers a legitimate alternative, at a fair price," the RIAA and MPAA seem more interested in attacking their consumer base.

The famous fall of Napster was followed by numerous other court cases pressed upon P2P sharing networks, not the least of which currently include Kazaa and Morpheus.

Furthermore, Hillary Rosen, chairman and CEO of the RIAA, actually had the audacity on Jan. 18 to suggest that ISPs charge all their users a fee with which the music industry could recoup lost sales.

Oh, and as a side note, she also mentioned that major music labels like Sony Music should invest more in promoting subscription download services.

But what good is that little conciliatory step doing? While

urging record labels to take some steps in the right direction with one hand, the music industry uses the other to aim threats at the *very people to whom they want to sell their music.*

The point is this: if file sharing is such a detriment to the RIAA and MPAA, it would behoove them to find a plausible solution to the problem.

While the current legitimate programs offer a cheap music source, the choices are limited due to the nature of the providers and the obstacle course of licensing restrictions sites must navigate.

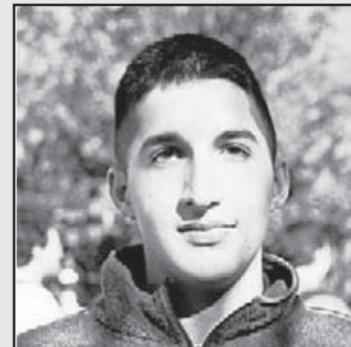
As soon as a well-priced, comparable alternative to mass file sharing exists, people will be willing to pay for that service. When DVD sales skyrocket even while movies are widely available for trade on file-sharing networks, there is obviously evidence that the people sharing files are willing to pay money for what they think is worth it.

However, simply attacking the "pirates" will only lead to more and more creative ways to circumvent closed avenues. New programming and new sharing networks will pop up.

Perhaps a return to treating its consumer base like consumers, and not enemies, will turn the RIAA and MPAA in the right direction to finding a solution to this dilemma.

# BUZZ

*Around the Campus*  
What do you think about Tech diversity?



**Stephen Medina**  
PHYS Freshman

*"For a public school, it's pretty good."*



**Mike Sprinkel**  
PUBP Senior

*"Tech is doing well, but it could do better."*



**Terrence Jernigan**  
MGT Senior

*"It's an integral part of Tech that helps it stand out."*



**Reena Taank**  
IE Freshman

*"It's important because it helps you learn about other cultures and other people."*

Photos by Andrew Saulters

## OUR VIEWS Hot or Not

# HOT-or-NOT



### Fixin' up Woody's

Most students at Tech don't even know what a T-square and a slide rule look like, but 20 foot replicas of these two instruments once comprised the decor in Woodruff Dining Hall. The renovations taking place are obviously long overdue. The addition of a moving tray disposal line is a great change, as students will no longer associate Woodruff with smelly trash cans and tray carts. Or will they?



### Road woes continue

The weather continues to be frigid when the Georgia Tech basketball team travels away from Atlanta. Coach Paul Hewitt's young squad dropped another road game this week, this time at Clemson. Littlejohn Coliseum? Not exactly the most hostile of environs. Without road wins, the Jackets can start banking on the NIT instead of the big dance. But hey, at least in the NIT there's a chance they could play at home.



### Solid Gold shines

These classyladies represent Tech well during the recruitment process. We're proud that our girls take their jobs seriously without resorting to sketchy methods of recruiting practices rumored to occur at other schools (such as that less venerable school in the back-country to the north of here).



### Deck Parking

This week has seen one of the greatest travesties that has ever happened at Georgia Tech—the Student Center parking deck didn't open at 5 p.m. this week. With such terrible things going on, it's hard to think of anything else. Seriously, open the deck; people need to park there, especially for evening meetings.

## YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

# Cherry St. really closed?

As you may have noticed over the last few months, Cherry Street is again open to vehicular traffic. The remaining barriers, raised planters and "Road Closed" signs slowly deteriorated and have almost disappeared. Traffic, a mix of the selfish and the lost, happily motors around construction fences, parked delivery vehicles, and mobs of pedestrians.

Cherry Street is supposed to be closed from Ferst Street to the library as part of a deliberative public process—the development of the Georgia Tech Campus Master Plan. I have watched Georgia Tech Police officers themselves pass through Cherry Street, giving not so much as a dirty look to those using the closed street for thoroughfare. GTPD can and does write traffic tickets; why do they turn a blind eye here?

I ask the Georgia Tech administration to take a moment to act assertively. Act, if not in

favor of the Master Plan, at least in favor of some coherent plan. Reasonable arguments are possible for Cherry Street to be either open or closed. It is an entirely different matter, however, to have the street officially closed and yet subject to through traffic of 60-90 vehicles per hour. We already have the chaos of (needed) construction all over campus to deal with—let's not add to it with a street in limbo.

Until some plan is implemented, I will continue walking squarely down the middle of Cherry Street, obstructing traffic as best I can on foot. So far, I have not made it between the Engineering, Science, and Mechanics Building to the library without blocking the progress of at least two cars. It's a simple act of public protest, and I invite you to join me in doing so.

Wes Younger  
[gte147t@prism.gatech.edu](mailto:gte147t@prism.gatech.edu)

### 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 Jody Shaw, 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 8 a.m. Wednesday 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 reserves the right to edit for style, content, and length. Only one submission per person will be printed each term.

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### Coverage Requests

Press releases and requests for coverage may be made to the editor-in-chief or to individual section editors. For more information, visit <http://nique.net/stuorgguide.pdf>.

## GUEST EDITORIAL Sorority Expansion

**XΩT national vote disappointing for members**

When Chi Omega Tau was started in the Fall of 2000 it was a combination of dreams and persistence. Georgia Tech is a great place to create strong friendships, but with a small female population, it was difficult for our founders to form a circle of close female friends. Some of us had tried formal recruitment but did not find a sorority that fit us. Within the Greek system, we did not see problems, just opportunities for growth. With this in mind, four friends started the process to offer females another alternative. Over two years later, on Jan. 21, 2003, Panhellenic Council put a hold on our hopes to bring another national sorority to campus by voting to not begin extension at this time.

The results of the vote were disappointing, but we knew that this would be a difficult decision for all groups to make. For most, a concern was the number of girls participating in Panhellenic formal recruitment. Over the past several years, the number of women participating in the first round of formal recruitment was right around 260, with 175 accepting bids. While recruitment numbers have not significantly increased, only eight percent of female undergraduates have participated in formal recruitment.

We believe that an additional sorority will encourage more women to participate. A seventh national sorority gives rushees another choice and decreases the number of wom-

**"With a national affiliation, we have more opportunities to contribute to the Greek system at Tech."**

**Colleen Baum**  
President, Chi Omega Tau



en that are dropped during the process. We understand that bringing a new national sorority to campus presents some risks for the existing national sororities, but we hoped that they would focus on the benefits of another national group.

Chi Omega Tau has been part of Panhellenic since we petitioned for charter in April 2001. On April 24 of that year, we were accepted into Panhellenic as an associate member with the understanding that we intended to become a national sorority. Over the past year and half, we grew our sisterhood to 56 members and actively participated in the Greek community. We also fulfill all requirements for membership within Panhellenic, including completion of philanthropy and attendance at Panhellenic speakers and meetings. We pay dues as associate members and are required to obey certain rules pertaining to formal recruitment.

This fall, we discussed the future of our organization, and we decided to petition Panhellenic to pursue extension on our behalf. Our deci-

sion was based on a number of reasons but primarily on things that we are unable to do as a local sorority.

Currently, we pay dues to Panhellenic and fulfill minimum standards, but we are not allowed to vote in Panhellenic decisions. Charges can be brought against us by Panhellenic Judicial Board, but we are not allowed representation on that board. With a national affiliation, we have more opportunities to contribute to the Greek system at Tech. We gain a vote in Panhellenic decisions and could have officers on Panhellenic Executive and Judicial Boards. We could participate in formal recruitment and gain equal publicity during the process.

Additionally, we could gain support from alumni in the area and from chapters at other universities. Pursuing a national affiliation will ensure longevity of our organization and give us more opportunities to impact the Greek Community.

We believe very strongly that our campus is ready for another national sorority. All six current nationals

were within 95 percent of chapter total (total allowable membership) by two weeks after formal recruitment. When all chapters are so close to chapter total, there are two options: to raise chapter total or to add another national group.

With a group of 56 women interested in bringing another national group to campus, it makes sense to pursue extension. Unfortunately, Panhellenic decided against bringing another group to campus and has considered raising chapter total instead. Having only six sororities on campus does not allow all women interested in Greek life to join sororities. Chi Omega Tau is made up of women who could not find a place within the current sororities, and we believe that there are more women on campus like us.

Following the vote, Chi Omega Tau is anything but discouraged. We still intend to pursue a national affiliation. In the meantime, we will grow as a group and strengthen our sisterhood. We will continue to work with Panhellenic to improve our status as an associate member. It takes hard work and persistence to accomplish great things, and Chi Omega Tau will keep putting forth that effort. We have come a long way since our founding, and this group is meant for great things.

*The Panhellenic Council was also invited to submit an opinion piece about the XΩT vote but chose not to do so.*

**Transcript not needed**

In Jen Hinkle's column from last week, good ole' Jennifer rants and complains for several paragraphs about the need for an extracurricular transcript. Apparently one of her graduate school applications did not ask how many clubs she was in or how many kids she rescued from burning buildings. This grad school was more interested in her academic record and analytical abilities that determine if she has the merit to be in their graduate program. So they didn't ask you about your extracurricular activities... stop crying about it! Why do you really get involved in clubs, run for offices, and help people? Do you sincerely want to help people, make a difference, get involved with something that really interests you? Or are you doing these things to get into grad school? The inner city children that you tutor are not there to provide you with something to put on your resume.

An extracurricular transcript is a stupid idea. Getting involved in the community, however admirable, should not be a requirement and should not be put on a transcript. If grad schools, future employers, and *Technique* readers do not know about your extracurricular activities, so what? Be happy about what you do without having everyone know what you are involved in.

Andrew Scott  
gte324u@prism.gatech.edu