One night or one love? Students unsure

Which is better—students examine the benefits and the detriments of random dating and longterm relationships.
Lux finds success in bringing poetry to unlikely place

By Jennifer Lee
Staff Writer

Strange for once, I'm not the one asking the questions. "So how do you like writing for the school paper?" Thomas Lux, Tech's Bourne Poetry Chair who I'm here to interview, asks me, before even get a chance to gather my thoughts.

I pause, not prepared to speak about myself, and then respond with a mixture of surprise and amusement: "I like it a lot."

The interview is unusual, indeed. But then, so is the idea of poetry at Georgia Tech. And perhaps that's the reason there's been so much buzz generated about the upcoming Bourne Poetry Reading that will take place this coming Monday, Oct. 28, in the Ferst T theater, featuring one of the nation's top poets—U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins, Steven Dobyns, Rita Dove and Lucille Clifton—as well as former Atlanta mayor Andrew Young, who will be hosting the event.

"One of the coolest things, said Lux, "is when people hear 'poetry at Tech' and they ask me, 'Why? And I always say, 'Why not?''"

"It's kind of oxymoronic," he continued, noting the flyers for the event that are posted around campus, "and we like that. That was part of our conscious plan in designing the posters. 'Poetry at Tech': simply because we heard it so many times—usually with a question mark."

Georgia Tech may be an unlikely host, but that only serves to make the event even more impressive. 'It's a phenomenal literary lineup,' said Lux. "All four poets are really good readers. It's just a great Literary event, certainly the biggest ever at Tech, and perhaps in the country.'"

How was such an amazing line-up assembled?

"Poetry is a relatively small world," said Lux. "I've been publishing for 30 years, so you meet other poets all the time. Billy is a friend of mine, and taught at Sarah Lawrence with me. Dobyns is one of my oldest poet friends. Rita Dove I've just met over the years, and Lucille Clifton is Lux's brainchild, his assistant. Ginger Murchison, also playing a role in the event. "She's the one that takes care of the business," said Lux. 'Wouldn't this would not have been possible.'"

Murchison's dedication to poetry at Tech in a general sense. "We're also in places as far away as Tennessee and some from even further, such as faculty and students from other colleges as far away as Tennessee and South Carolina."

"But behind all of this, Lux and Murchison's dedication to poetry at Tech in a general sense. 'We're going on the premise that there is nothing antithetical between making art and being an engineer,' said Lux. "Poems are made things: the poem is the kind of labor that is needed by an artist, the same kind of attention, the same enthusiasm and warmth. Having previously taught at Sarah Lawrence College, poetry was something that was taken for granted—that you could study with some of the best poets in the country whenever you felt like it because they were there.'"

Lux said, "Here, I'm sort of the only person doing something like this. And that's fun, to be fulfilling that kind of need."

This year is the culmination of 14 months intensive planning, contacting poets, deciding venues and advertising.

Their hard work paid off, though, as tickets for the event were completely sold out two weeks before the reading, and Murchison still has people calling her to ask if there is any way to get tickets. Originally, the two were hesitant about having the event in such a large venue as the Ferst Center. "We took a risk in deciding to have it in that space, but it's much bigger."

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Stingerette confessions: saving stranded students nightly

By Kimberly Rieck
Senior Staff Writer

“Good evening Stingerette. So you’re at IBB. O.kay, you’re at the library going to 1073 Atlantic. O.kay, well be there. You’re new come,” said LeRoi Lipscomb. Before pointing out that it is in the campus library and not the club with the same name, “I’m sure you are some students that we have this dialogue with. Stingerette, as par policy, does not go to any establishment that serves alcohol,” said Lipscomb.

It’s a typical night at the Stingerette office, which is located inside the Parking office. The Stingerette service is responsible for providing a safe alternative mode of transportation for students at night. The entire setup consists of a few computers, two phone lines and a radio communicator to drivers. The office has six full-time drivers on staff.

Lipscomb alternates between his duties as driver and serving as the dispatcher for the night; Anthony Richards is the evening supervisor on duty. By 9 p.m., Lipscomb has already answered 100 calls. In between coordinating the actions of the drivers, Richards helps Lipscomb answer the phone and keep track of the calls.

After each call, Lipscomb inputs the information into an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet contains information on the amount of time it took for the driver to reach the caller, the origin of the call, final destination of the caller and the number of people picked up. The process is tedious and antiquated compared to the technology available today.

H owever, Lipscomb said a group of computer science graduate students are working on developing a new system for the office that would make the process more efficient. The current system is plagued with problems when it only had student drivers. The pickup schedule was inconsistent because of the students’ hectic class schedules, midterms, tests and finals. In addition, it was not fair to the students who had to attend class during the day and drive until the late hours of the night. Back when it was student-run, the shuttle service was not reliable. Students often had to wait for the shuttle to arrive or had to cancel their pickup. The current system is more efficient because students can schedule in advance their pickup.

On an average night during the fall and spring terms, the office receives between 220 and 240 calls. The most Lipscomb said he had encountered in his year on staff was 258. During the summer the number of calls significantly decreases; the office only receives between 50 and 60 calls a night. When the call traffic is slow, Richards said drivers go out around campus and campus perimeter to offer any people they see walking a ride home.

In many ways, the service is still fairly new due to the changes in its structure. When Richards came to Georgia Tech in 1992, students ran the Stingerette service. While many students enjoyed the camaraderie they cultivate with students, the service was responsible for providing a safe alternative mode of transportation for students.

On average the office stops taking calls at 2 a.m. and pickups at 3 a.m., because, according to Richards, there were not many calls between two and four a.m. In the past, the Stingerette service operated during the holiday seasons. The only days that the service does not operate are Christmas Day, New Year’s Day and Thanksgiving.

Unlike the Stinger service, the institute directly employs the Stingerette drivers. The current staff is all full-time with most working the hours of 6 p.m. to 2:30 a.m. The vehicle inventory consists of two handicapped-accessible vans and four regular vans. The service operates during the day for handicapped students. However, the daytime service is prearranged. Drivers have a copy of each student’s schedule and arrange to pick them up at designated areas and times.

While Lipscomb noted that most of the calls are coming from Atlantic Street and the destinations are the Marta station and West Campus dorms, there is one surprise for the night. A student calls to cancel his pickup. Andersen and Lipscomb are shocked because students hardly ever call to cancel a pickup. The courteous act saves the office valuable time. Each late arrival and no-show creates a ripple effect throughout the whole system. The driver stands up getting behind schedule on their pickups, which could be potentially dangerous late hours. No-shows can increase the average pick up time of eight to ten minutes, which could be potentially dangerous late hours. No-shows can increase the average pick up time of eight to ten minutes, which could be potentially dangerous late hours.

Despite the late hours, complaints from students and Atlanta’s drunk driving conditions, the drivers say they enjoy their jobs. “You see these folks every day, and you build a nice rapport with them. That personally is what I like about the job more than anything else—the camaraderie I have with students,” said Lipscomb.

Stingerette phone number: (404) 894-9649

LeRoi Lipscomb, Stingerette driver, radios his location to the Stingerette office, in the Parking office, and finds where his next destination for the night will be; Lipscomb enjoys the camaraderie he cultivates with students.
50 Years of Women at Tech

Jan Davis explored Tech, Atlanta, space during time here

By Joshua Cuneo
Staff Writer

By the 1970s, Georgia Tech had long established itself as one of the most prestigious engineering universities in the country, and its incorporation of women into its campus had started to improve considerably. But that wasn’t why Dr. Nancy Jan Davis enrolled in the fall of 1971.

“My dad, not being a technical person but nevertheless emphasizing education, said, Well, you should go to school with the name ‘Tech’ in it,” she laughed during a recent interview, “and Georgia Tech seemed to be the closest.”

Davis’ parents were extremely encouraging toward her endeavor to major in a technical field, providing her with both moral and financial support. She received extraordinary encouragement in her youth from a female engineer in her hometown of Huntsville, Alabama who was working with the Marshall Space Center during the great space race of the 1960s. She had been inspired by the Apollo 11 moon landing and realized she could do that, she explained. She was also inspired by the Apollo 11 moon landing and realized she could do that. She had been inspired by the Apollo 11 moon landing and realized she could do that. She had been inspired by the Apollo 11 moon landing and realized she could do that.

Davis felt that nobody—save those affiliated with her sorority—looked out for her, including D ean of Students James Dull. She survived, she said, thanks to the sorority’s mentoring and nurturing and her own persistence.

Davis also had to face issues of personal safety. Tech still didn’t offer women’s athletics, so she was forced to run track and swim at off-campus facilities. “We didn’t really feel safe,” she said, since the facilities were seedy, especially at night. She felt even less secure when Atlanta began experiencing a proportionally high rate of muggings and the degradation of many of its downtown neighborhoods. She even refused to travel outdoors on campus at night, opting instead to take the newly-installed Stinger busses.

When Davis managed to find a job after college, she worked for Texaco for two years before applying to become an astronaut in 1987.

She flew three successful shuttle missions, performing a variety of scientific experiments and earning herself recognition as one of only nine Georgia Tech graduates to travel into space.

“Georgia Tech guys didn’t date Georgia Tech women... because they couldn’t impress us with how much they knew about calculus... that kind of stuff,” she laughed.

Davis found time to participate in the local Presbyterian church and attend the Tech football games.

“It really doesn’t matter (what you major in). You find something you really, really want to do, because when you find something you really want to do, you’ll be good at it.”

Davis even found time to participate in the local Presbyterian church and attend the Tech football games.

She found more time as an upperclassman when she realized that she was needlessly rushing the academic process and decided to slow down. Even with her college-level work from high school, it took her the normal four years to graduate.

Recently married, she then attended Auburn and earned a mechanical engineering degree to improve her chances of finding a job, since, she said, there wasn’t an open market for bioengineers at the time.

After college, Davis went to work for Texas Instruments for two years before applying for a position with NASA. She spent some time at the Marshall Space Center in her hometown of Huntsville before being accepted as an astronaut in 1987.

But she never shied away from a challenge. “I was never one to... let the fact that I was the only girl in my class (bother me),” she said. She recalled that she was often the only girl in the classroom.

Davis never had a dual major like that. All of my electives were hard. I mean, I had all engineering and science classes and very little else. But, I like learning and I like studying, so it was okay. And the other thing is, I tried to finish in three years, which was really dumb.”

Her situation was another example that was gradually helping to alleviate the fact that the presence of women would “dumb down” the institute. Women, it was turning out, had to face the same academic rigors as men.

Nevertheless, Davis was one of only two female ESM majors, a fact that still affected relations with her professors and her students. Her department, in an about-turn from Tech’s traditional treatment of women, took particular interest in her work, but, she said, “I was never one to... let the fact that I was the only girl in my class (bother me)”

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By Scarlett Williams
Independent Florida Alligator

(U-WIRE) Following a recent Sunday night episode of HBO’s “Sex and the City,” Michelle Benitez sits at her computer as if she were Gainesville, Fla.’s version of heroine Carrie Bradshaw, the show’s blond bombshell writer who continues to look for love in all the wrong places.

Although Benitez doesn’t have kinky blond hair like the show’s actress Sarah Jessica Parker, Benitez easily could pass for Penelope Cruz. She pulls up her long dark brown hair with a rubber band and begins typing in her journal about her previous few days’ events as a newly single woman.

“I’m proving that women can be single and happy,” writes Benitez, 23, whose University of Florida boyfriend suddenly broke up with her to be single.

Though initially devastated by the breakup, Benitez has since picked up the pieces and embraced the independent lifestyle of her favorite New York City sex goddess, Bradshaw. Benitez is one of many college women ditching the pursuit of a M.R.S. degree for the M.E. degree. The number of never-been-married women ages 20-24 has doubled from 36 percent in the 1970s to 73 percent in 2000, according to the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau.

Benitez and other “Sex and the City” fans still take notes from Bradshaw in encore presentations played throughout each week on HBO, even though the series is over.

“Tonight, Carrie was completely consumed with her boyfriend,” Benitez types in her journal. “Watching (Bradshaw), I realized that I couldn’t think of a single reason why I need [a boyfriend] right now.”

Michelle Benitez
UF Student

After a treadmill run to relieve breakup anxiety, Benitez knocked on the door of her neighbor, UF freshman Mary Hall.

“Let’s go meet some boys!” Benitez persuaded.

“That would be fun, I need to meet new people,” said Hall, who had just moved from Palmetto. Hall looked forward to a fun night of girl bonding, but before getting dressed, she first checked in with her long-distance boyfriend to let him know she wouldn’t be home for their nightly phone call.

While Hall used up her cell phone’s free evening minutes, Benitez raced back to her apartment to blow-dry her hair.

A few minutes later, Benitez, Hall and UF freshman Zandy Parrimon strutted into 8 Seconds, a downtown nightspot.

Inside, the lights flashed to the beat of twangin’ guitars and fiddles as Benitez flashed her wristband to the bartender and grabbed her cranberry and vodka. Hall and Zandy, both 18, proudly grabbed their two waters.


Benitez knew just where to find them. She parked herself and her girlfriends at the men’s bathroom and roped in a few.

“One cowboy asked in true old-fashioned manner, ‘Would you like to dance?’” Benitez continued typing. “I agreed leading him onto the dance floor for a fun night full of line dancing.

“The next day at the pool,” Benitez continued typing, “my girlfriends and I met up to recover from the night before.”

Wearing her favorite pink bikini, Benitez walked onto the deck with her brand new portable stereo system in hand. She couldn’t help braging to her girlfriends about the great deal she got.

“I got this stereo at a pawn shop for the little—” and she stressed little “— diamond ring my ex gave me on an anniversary.”

Benitez popped in the CD of Student takes dating cues from TV show, enjoys being single

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Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, HIV, Syphilis, Hepatitis B and (if symptoms are present) Herpes and HPV. Students can also “Ask Dr. Buzzy” anonymous questions about sex, ST Is, or anything health related at http://www.wellness.gatech.edu.

Aside from the aforementioned health risks, hookups can have negative psychological effects as well. Bowers said that “if sex is introduced before an emotional connection, it can be very detrimental.” According to Bowers, by hooking up, people are doing one of two things: they are either prematurely advancing their relationship with each other to an extremely high level of intimacy, in which case their relationship may become “based on sex,” where the participants don’t even necessarily like each other; or, they are committing to “non-intimate sex,” which often brings feelings of guilt and dirtiness to it.

In fact, Rennak said that among students in the Tech community, the event of a girl walking home in the clothes she wore the night before after hooking up carries with it such strong feelings of guilt that it has become known as the “walk of shame.”

Bowers suggested loneliness as one of the reasons people hook up, saying that many hook-uppers are “wanting companionship right away” without going through the typical long process of building a serious relationship.

Another reason people hook up is because they find something “intriguing” about people they don’t know, making an instant intimacy with them an “adventure.” He also noted that, for others, it simply a “way to meet people.”

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email: focus@technique.gatech.edu

Winner of the Tech Up Close contest receives a Technique T-shirt and a coupon for a free student combo at Li’l Dino’s.

Last week’s Tech Up Close: Side of Bunger-Henry