

# OPINIONS

Technique • Friday, September 22, 2000

## OUR VIEWS Consensus Opinion

### Supporting the arts?

Tech's inability to grant Chorale the money and permission to move its rehearsals into the church on Tenth Street is yet another example of how Tech does not support the arts. The Institute has, in fact, left the music department to fend for itself.

While the Institute likes to present itself as a place where students can obtain a well-rounded educational experience by citing fine arts programs such as the chorale, it continually fails to support these opportunities financially. It is time for administrators to put their money where their mouths are and support the music program with more than just rhetoric.

The administration should make good on its promises to provide the much needed rehearsal space for the chorale. Music and the arts are more important to campus than using the church as a package receiving center.

Our music program is already a strong department—just think how much more incredible they could be with proper facilities in which to work.

### The Hill takes a stand

While other schools are almost unilaterally caving in to the request to limit student access to Napster made last week by Metallica and Dr. Dre's lawyers, Tech replied with a letter stating they will not take part in censorship. It is good to see that we will not be wasting resources on a responsibility that should not fall on the Institute to begin with.

However, as the student at University of Oklahoma has shown, individuals still need to be careful. Tech students may now be possible targets for a future lawsuit. As such, we certainly do not want any of us used as further examples to other MP3 listeners by being personally named in the next Napster lawsuit.

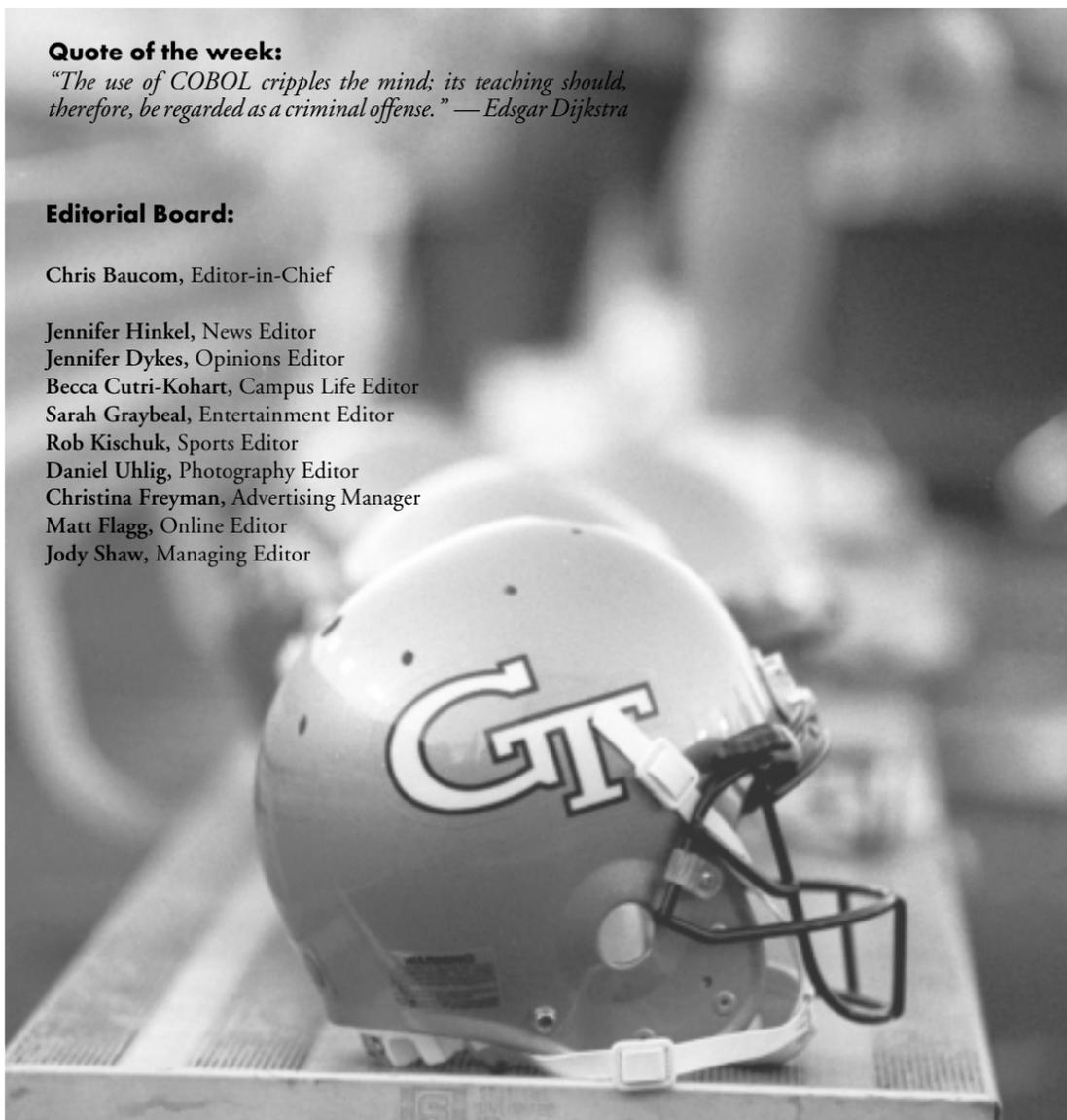
#### Quote of the week:

"The use of COBOL cripples the mind; its teaching should, therefore, be regarded as a criminal offense." —Edsger Dijkstra

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### Talbot says 'no' to shaft

John Talbot, Director of the Robert Ferst Center for the Arts, announced his resignation earlier this week. We hope that he finds success in his new endeavours. Unfortunately, Talbot's skills were not taken advantage of to improve the Ferst center—instead, his expert advice was consistently ignored. Whomever we find to replace him will be of a much lower quality than Talbot because our reputation has been tarnished, despite Talbot's best efforts to protect the arts on campus. His ambition will be missed.

Got opinions?  
 We want to hear them.

[opinions@technique.gatech.edu](mailto:opinions@technique.gatech.edu)

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

## YOUR VIEWS Letters to the Editor

### Rush rules misrepresented

As the Vice President-Recruitment for Georgia Tech's Panhellenic Council, I read with great interest last week's article concerning the week of Recruitment ("Mystery Revealed: Secret life of a rushee").

As a new member, the author apparently was unaware of some salient facts and so misinterpreted and/or misrepresented certain aspects of the Panhellenic Council's obligations under the National Panhellenic Council's rules. I would therefore, appreciate the opportunity to correct any misrepresentations that may have resulted among the *Technique's* readership. In particular, the writer commented on:

1. Recruitment Week's formal structure: GT's Panhellenic Council follows the guidelines put out by NPC, the governing board for all national sororities. The guidelines NPC follows were originally developed and have been refined over many years to promote the broadest participation and fairest selection process possible.

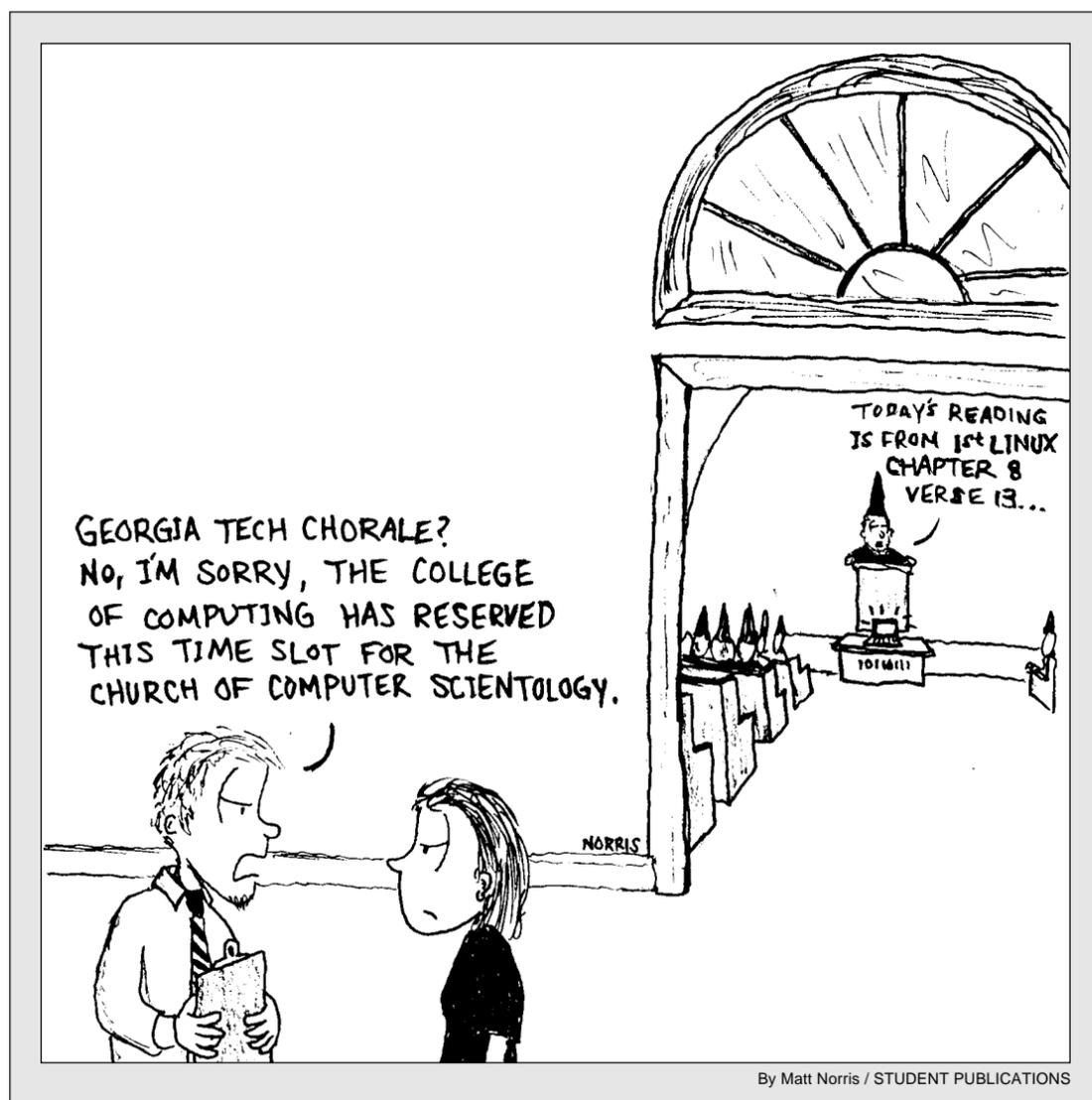
2. Recruitment Week timing: Of our three choices, having recruitment before school opens, just after the school opens, or after classes start, Option 1 would be our choice. However, the dorms do not open

early enough and a large percentage of our sisters study abroad or co-op during the summer and cannot return in time to participate. Option 3 also has attractions; however, as were found when we tried it last year, once classes begin academic obligations conflict with recruitment and we ran into even more problems. We must therefore be content with Option 2.

3. Nighttime activities: Our decision to include these events was dictated by 3 concerns: 1) our intent to limit unfair influences; 2) our past experience and feedback from participants and problems they had run into; and 3) the unfortunate and unavoidable tendency of unsupervised last-night social situations that could promote violations of the NPC "Silent Period" rules.

I welcome comments and suggestions on how to improve the process, and I strongly encourage our new members to participate in the governance of their own houses and of the GT Panhellenic Council to promote their ideas.

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 Panhellenic Council Vice President-Recruitment  
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By Matt Norris / STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

# Strive towards community, not apathetic behavior

The transition from high school to college, especially from high school to Georgia Tech, can be an overwhelming experience for many people. While I have yet to feel consumed by classes, tests, or homework through my first month of college, I must admit that the experience is not what I imagined. Tech is different. Never before have I been around so many intelligent, diverse, and creative people who seem to be simultaneously apathetic to the community and world around them.

Don't get me wrong—there are some amazing things going on here. Those people who are active are *very* active. Many student leaders strive on a daily basis to build Tech into the community that she can be. They share goals, successes, failures, and a common vision. Unfortunately, a select few dominate the campus leadership; not that those in such positions are power mongers, but rather that most of the students have not found their passions. They are focused on "getting out" of school as quickly and as painlessly as possible, without stopping first to think about the difference they could make at Tech and beyond if they pool their talents and utilize their resources. While I have not yet carved out my niche, at least I am searching.

What is it about Tech that causes such apathy? One problem is that Tech doesn't challenge people. When I say "challenge," I refer not to the difficulty of the classes, but rather to the intellectual diversification and emotional challenge that college should provide. One can breeze

"Students need to move out of their comfort zones [and] away from their computer screens."

**Jody Shaw**  
Managing Editor



through this Institute in few short years without being forced out of his intellectual or emotional comfort zone even once. Without such challenges, it is easy to think only about one's personal condition, rather than needs of the community as a whole.

Tech is and always will be, first and foremost, an engineering school, but does that mean that the Institute shouldn't attempt to nurture the "whole" student? No one should be able to graduate from college without having been challenged in a variety of disciplines. Here, however, it is entirely possible to "get out" without having thoroughly explored the humanities, social sciences, and fine arts.

Value exists in taking nontechnical electives. Such classes provide students with a better understanding themselves, and their world, and their role in the community. They encourage the development of communications skills and allow students to explore topics into which they do not normally delve. With such stimulation, the college's intellectual diversity increases.

Students can also graduate with minimal interpersonal interaction.

Without the emotional challenge of developing true relationships with peers, faculty, and administrators, the soul starves. Tech is one of the most wired campuses in the world—through e-mail anyone can contact anyone within seconds. However, instead of bringing us closer together as a community, we are arguably more disconnected than ever before. People would rather give you an e-mail address than stop for a conversation. New innovations, such as classes taught completely on the web, make it possible to avoid interaction with real people entirely, and exist as only a name on the computer screen.

By using technology in this manner, students are not better prepared for the "real world." In fact, they are probably less prepared. I am not advocating the elimination of technology, but I am advocating a re-evaluation of our use of technology. Let's use it to build community rather than walls of self-isolation. Students need to move out of their comfort zones, away from their computer screens, and into meaningful interpersonal relationships.

A network of support coupled with academic exploration can help

an individual explore his or her purpose in the community and the world. Many Tech students, particularly my fellow freshmen, haven't stopped to contemplate their purpose and plan for their lives—beyond obtaining an engineering degree and making large sums of money upon graduation. Apathy will continue to plague this campus until every person finds that inner passion that motivates him or her. Everyone has a different vision and perspective to share.

Each individual must commit him or herself to the greater good—a cause higher than himself or herself. Eliminating apathy is a grassroots movement that starts in the hearts and minds of individuals who develop a vision and in turn share that vision with those around them. These visionaries then encourage the blind, and help them to discover their potential, their purpose, and their vision.

While it cannot solve student apathy, the Tech administration and faculty can do more to foster community on campus. Those people must create an environment in which students feel comfortable exploring themselves and their passions. Curricula can be revised to allow more electives to be taken, particularly in the beginning of the college experience. The arts can be given more visible role on campus, and they should be supported not only rhetorically, but also financially. These changes would require some effort, but would allow students to peruse

See *Community*, page 10

# US needs stronger math, science high school programs

I hate biology. Not for any complicated reason except that my high school teacher in tenth grade did a really bad job of teaching it. I hated his class and therefore transferred that hate, like a good 15 year old, to a hatred of biology.

My high school college prep physics teacher had never taken a college physics class. He was certified to teach chemistry, but not physics. I thankfully did not come out of it with a hatred of physics, but some of my classmates did.

There is a big debate in congress to increase the number of high tech worker visas (H1B) because the country doesn't have enough highly skilled, trained workers to fill our technology industry needs.

According to the Third International Math and Science Study, between the fourth and twelfth grades students do relativity well in both math and science compared to other countries but then fall among the worst in the world.

Why do student's math and science capability drop so significantly? It isn't because they aren't able. Is it because their teachers are bad? Is it because our country as a whole has no standards for secondary education? Our teachers are not trained to teach the higher math and science subjects.

The lack of our school focus on math and science as people progress through the grades has something to do the drop in our science and math skills from 4<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Think back to your high school education, do you feel like it prepared you for what you encountered here? Some of us can say, yes, my high school prepared me very

"[A lot of us] had the desire to learn and the parents that encouraged us. We are definitely not in the norm."

**Christina Freyman**  
Advertising Manager



well. Some of us say no, my high school did not prepare me for what I encountered here. For those it did, you are very lucky; you are a minority. For those that it didn't, you are among the majority of people.

A lot of us came from fairly sizeable school in affluent school districts that had the money to spend on good science equipment and teachers. We had the desire to learn and parents who encouraged us. We are definitely not in the norm. A lot of school districts out there, especially in the south, are small and don't have the money for a well trained science teacher. The school district is either in a poor county or they choose to use their money and focus elsewhere, like their football program.

So the people who attend the first school get a well-rounded education complete in a strong science and math instruction. They feel because they have been exposed to high math and science, that they can successfully pursue a science and/or technology degree.

The person that went to the second school district has never been exposed to high science and math. Their math went through trigonometry and was taught by a teacher that majored in English and just

took college algebra. Their science teacher majored in P.E. and taught science because he had to teach a class besides just coaching. So the students' science education consisted of reading broad textbooks and regurgitation the information on exams.

Students' interest is not captured by subjects that they are just reading about instead of experiencing. I can remember clearly how my love of chemistry started when I did my first chemistry lab in high school where we had to figure out what the mystery material was by what the products of reactions were.

Experiencing science is how people get interested in science. This is not happening in a lot of our school districts and we are wondering why we are not graduating enough skilled high tech workers to fulfill our technology industry needs.

This country needs national standards for education, especially in math and science. It has been left to the local school districts. Our society has dropped the ball by not insisting on a quality education for our children.

We need national standards so we can hold our school districts responsible. We need standards that give students the opportunity to

decide for themselves if they like math and science and not just blow the subjects off because they are scary since they have not be exposed to it. We need standards to hold our teachers responsible to. Teachers need to be trained in the subject that they are teaching. They should not be made to teach subjects that they have no training in and just end up reading the book to the class without even understanding it themselves.

We need to look at how we view teachers and the teaching profession in general. We are a student body full of people that know a lot of math and science. Some of us might love to go into teaching. Some of us might be great teachers. The problem is a lot of us are discouraged by the mere economics of it all. How can one say no to a starting salary in engineering more than one would ever make as a teacher? School districts need to pay teachers what they are worth.

As our society becomes more and more dependent on technology, we will need more and more highly skilled and educated workers. Filling this demand domestically would, of course, be the desired solution. To fulfill this demand, more people must graduate in these fields and for that to happen, more people need to enter college in these majors. And for that to happen, our high schools need to be graduating more students that are prepared enough to go into science and technology fields. And for this preparedness to happen, our education system needs to be held to a national standard in addition to supporting the teachers.

## TECHNIQUE

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## MORE VIEWS Letters to the Editor

**Make flash cards readable**

As an Alumni I have always thought that our student body was one of the best I have ever seen. Not always the largest but vocal and unique. But why in the world can't we have a good show out of the flash card section. I have always believed that if you can't do something right do not do it. It has been years since I have been able to read anything from this drunken stupor. This used to be a fine tradition that was very well done. We were also one of a few schools who had a flash card and the only one in the south. And please do not pass this off as a vent without merit. I not only was in the flash card section but I have pictures of the tricks. They were sharp and done to precision. It used to be an honor to sit in this section, if for no other reason that they were the best seats students could have, which at that time were near the 50 yard line. But this is still a time-honored tradition and it is highly visible by all the west side alumni and the media. I know this is hard to believe but the students who sat in this section would sit there all season long

and even practiced. I know, if you have read this far, you must be thinking well why is this guy writing to me?

To be honest, I do not know who else to write. I sent a letter to Dave Braine and copies of the pictures from '77 and '97 and got no response and judging from the first two games no one has done something about this. The improvements to our football program have been outstanding. The band compared to the 70's, well there is no comparison, Bucky Johnson has done an amazing job with almost no help. We have grass back on the field and we renovated the stadium and are about to completely redo the rest of it.

Encourage the students to be rowdy and be different from other student bodies, after all Tech is different. Fix the Flashcard Section, save a few traditions that have made Tech unique and come up with some new stuff to make the opponents wonder what is going to happen next.

*Mitchell Hardigree*  
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**Community**

their options and find their passion.

Most people who come to Tech are still going to be engineering majors. And that's a good thing, because there are a lot of people out there, including myself, whose talents are suited to other endeavors. I just hope that when they graduate, they will use their skills to better the world, not just balance their checkbooks.

While Tech suffers from severe student apathy, perhaps it is just a microcosm of modern society. In general America is an apathetic country where decisions are made by the few, often because others "don't care." This year's presidential election is a prime example. Because the econo-

my is healthy, fewer than half of the population is expected to turn out to the polls. External motivations—money, possessions, and power—hold dominion over our lives. Until we return our lives to the internal passions—vision, love, and faith—that are more meaningful, we will continue to walk willingly through life with blinders on.

Maybe I am just a young wide-eyed optimist who hasn't been around Tech long enough. Maybe I don't belong here. The question I get most is, "Jody, why are you at Tech?" I know why I am at Tech; I am here to find my purpose and dedicate myself wholeheartedly to it. Someone has to be a catalyst for change. Will you join me?

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## MORE VIEWS Letters to the Editor

**Peace Corps not as helpful as it sounds**

The recent Peace Corps (PC) report would have made Nazi propagandists envious. Truth is that PC is one of the most cunning and cost-effective scams ever perpetrated against America's young by "their" government and transnational corporations.

The principal causes of poverty are not lack of skills, "underdevelopment", as PC claims or implies, but political. Proof: after 40 years of PC and other "aid" to the Third World [including military intervention, terrorism ("School of the Americas"), torture, genocide], the gap between "us" and them is bigger than ever and growing; plus, America becomes Thirdworldized!

The dominant characteristic of US foreign policy is malignant and destructive expansionism (imperialism), with the long term goal to turn the Third World into "invest-

ment opportunities" for transnationals like Coca-Cola, Nike, McDonald's; and the essential PC role is to aid and abet that expansionism. PC is a form of tokenism designed to pacify the Third World, not change the conditions causing its misery [like England's colonial (-ist) outfit in India]. It's a Pacification/Propaganda Corps masking "Pax Americana" 's iron fist. "The PC helps create a world where the poor are taught to raise chicken so that the rich can eat fresh eggs," said a former volunteer. Or, America causes the Third World cancer, then sends her naive servants, the PC, to give them an aspirin!

To help the Third World, write off its crushing debts to Western banks/Int'l Monetary Fund, bring some villagers here, train and equip them properly, then send them back to fix their villages. But PC volun-

teers are conditioned to make do with what is available, not to make demands for supplies and equipment - justice is expensive and dangerous, while the PC is cheap feel-good entertainment for US audiences.

Young people of conscience, don't sacrifice more than 27 of your best months as lowly and underpaid lackeys of a corrupt and violent empire, serving transnational crooks and criminals. Even communists treated their young better. The PC is irrelevant to Third World's fate; its means are authoritarian and exploitative, its ends are fraudulent and immoral.

For info on non-governmental organizations, working for peace with justice, contact me.

*John G. Papastavridis, Ph. D.*  
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**Say no to Metallica, do not ban Napster**

The article that appeared in the Technique this Friday on the letter that was sent to Tech's administration was a good one and pointed out what we all pretty much believe. The Napster program and servers only facilitate communication between parties trying to chat and share (in this case music) data. Napster is not a pay-to-use service, nor does it obviously condone the illegal copying of music to parties who have not rightfully paid for an artist's album.

The lawsuit by Metallica and Dr Dre is one that is being pushed forward by money hungry record executives and artists (<cough> Lars Ulrich </cough>). I heard an interview of Lars earlier this year where he was telling the people out there why he was fighting so hard against Napster. He said a few things that

did not make sense to me and were not accurate at all. First off, he kept saying that although he and his band had promoted the sharing of cassettes in the 80s and early 90s to spread their music that somehow Napster was different. He kept referring to his desire to "have the choice if his music is distributed over a platform like Napster." Could he control cassette distribution?

Lars seems to not understand how Napster works and how it is fundamentally the exact same as copying an album to tape and sharing it with friends. The analogy in the Technique about renting a movie and letting others watch it was wonderful and was a perfect example of how Napster works in theory.

The use of Napster may in fact decrease record sales for a particular demographic, however it can also

be used as a valuable resource for decreasing the cost of sales to a consumer if implemented in a pay-to-download fashion. All this would require a similar system to Napster but it would have to be modified to fit an economic model.

I'm definitely on the side of everyone else on campus. Napster is most definitely not the group that should get sued by the RIAA/Metallica/Dr Dre, they are merely a convenient scapegoat. The consequences for the use of a system like Napster should fall on the shoulders of those who use it, and Internet Service Providers (OIT in this case for on campus users) would be advised to only provide bandwidth and not regulatory measures.

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