



Tech File Photo

Ann F. Friedlaender PhD '64, dean of the school of humanities and social sciences.

## HUM-D classes to be limited Two-year plan will cut number of offerings in half

By Katie Schwarz

Ann F. Friedlaender PhD '64, dean of the school of humanities and social sciences, plans to reduce the number of humanities distribution subjects by about half in the next two years.

The reduction is an interim reform measure while the faculty debates further changes in the distribution requirement, Friedlaender explained.

Many of the over 150 classes that now carry HUM-D credit will lose it, so that undergraduates will have fewer ways to satisfy the requirement. The faculty wants this change for two reasons, Friedlaender said:

- The present requirement does not guarantee "meaningful breadth" in students' programs, Friedlaender said, because it can be satisfied with classes in related areas. Allowing credit for only the most fundamental subjects would reduce overlaps between HUM-D classes, she continued.

- Since there are now thousands of different ways to satisfy

the requirement, Friedlaender said, students lack common experiences in the humanities. If fewer courses are offered for distribution, she said, students will share more of them.

### Bigger changes proposed

These same problems drew criticism from the Committee on the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. Earlier this year, the *ad hoc* faculty committee recommended a requirement for one subject in each of four categories: Contemporary Sociology and Cultures, Historical Studies, Literary Studies and The Arts. Its proposal has met with resistance from other faculty ["Faculty divided over HASS proposal," Nov. 25].

Friedlaender has directed the HSS School Council to revise the committee's design, but there are no plans yet to submit a new humanities requirement for the full faculty's approval.

Humanities professors want to do something about problems they see as serious, even though the reform effort has run into controversy, said Travis R. Merritt, director of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Office. Simply cutting the number of distribution subjects is "something to do right away," Merritt said.

### Confrontations not expected

The re-evaluation of HUM-D credit need not be "confrontational," Friedlaender said. She will first ask department and section heads to identify the classes they want to keep as HUM-D subjects, using these criteria:

- The subjects should be offered at least once a year.

- The subjects should be expected to have enrollments of at least 15 students.

- The departments should be willing to offer them as 12-unit classes.

The departments' lists are due by early January. Friedlaender expects these lists will contain too many HUM-D subjects. She and the HSS School Council will select the classes that qualify for HUM-D status.

"The horses have been out of the barn"

Faculty have been uneasy about the number of HUM-D subjects for some time, Merritt said. A 1985 faculty-administration conference found "general agreement that the existing menu of almost 200 HUM-D offerings was excessive and provided the students with too little structure and focus," according to Friedlaender's summary.

The number of HUM-Ds has roughly tripled since the distribution requirement went into effect in 1974. A committee chaired by Merritt investigated the requirement's history and found that it has become harder and harder to

(Please turn to page 2)

## UA publishes new course evaluation

By Irene C. Kuo

After a three-year absence, the Course Evaluation Guide has returned, published by its own Undergraduate Association committee.

The Student Committee on Educational Policy stopped publishing the guide in 1984 because of a lack of people interested in working on the guide, according to John F. Kuenzig '88, chairman of CEG.

"People missed it," said Dean Dellinger '88, departmental coordinator for CEG. "There was not a big outcry, but when we were recruiting in Lobby 10, people came up to ask for copies. There is a definite need for it."

"The guide serves students directly by evaluating instructors and courses at the Institute so

they can better choose courses that they want to take," Dellinger explained. "It serves students indirectly... by sending feedback to the departments."

"It gives departments an idea of how professors are doing and helps some departments with tenure decisions," Dellinger explained. Student evaluations are the only form of objective feedback about a professor's teaching, he continued.

This feedback improves the overall quality of teaching, according to Kuenzig. "Some professors will change the text, syllabus, or focus of a course because of the evaluations," he noted. He stressed that some departments value the guide's information more so than other departments.

Many departments had no

classes included in the guide. Only six departments are represented: chemistry, electrical engineering and computer science, biology, physics, mathematics, and humanities.

The new guide differs slightly from its predecessors. A professor (Please turn to page 2)

## Course I will offer new degree

By Kenyon D. Potter

MIT has begun offering a new undergraduate engineering degree to provide a background in general engineering, operations research, and computer science. The program may alleviate crowding in the department of electrical engineering and computer science, hoped Yosef Sheffi PhD '77, head of the program

and associate professor of civil engineering.

The department of civil engineering initiated its new option, Engineering Systems and Computation (ES&C), which will lead to the degree of "Bachelor of Science as recommended by the Department of Civil Engineering."

The program, which started this September, is a "new educational track... designed for students interested in applying systems-analytic and computational methods to a broad class of engineering programs," according to a departmental brochure.

Sheffi, who described himself as the "driving force" behind the program's adoption, said the program was established at MIT to utilize "non-traditional" expertise in the civil engineering faculty and to further emphasize studies

in computational analysis. A program similar to ES&C already existed at Princeton University.

The low enrollment of the civil engineering department — 68 declared undergraduates — also contributed to the decision to formalize the program at MIT, Sheffi said. He hoped that the program would attract more students interested in computational studies.

Students in the ES&C track will follow a course of study with an emphasis on computer models, presenting an alternative to the EECS degree. Traditionally, students in civil engineering would study one of three options: Transportation, Water Resources, or Constructed Facilities. The ES&C option differs from these in that students would typically

(Please turn to page 2)

## Bennett criticizes education costs

By Earl C. Yen

US Secretary of Education William J. Bennett said he is seeking to end the federal government's subsidy of interest payments on student loans, according to the Nov. 26 *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Interest payments on government-sponsored student loans are presently tax deductible.

The "fullest, most direct, and most tangible benefits," of a college education are enjoyed by the student, not society, Bennett said in a speech two weeks ago. College graduates can expect to earn \$640,000 more over their lifetimes than high-school graduates, Bennett claimed.

"It is only sensible — and only fair — that that beneficiary pay the cost rather than taxpayers, the majority of whom do not themselves enjoy the financial rewards of a college education," he said.

Director of MIT Student Financial Aid Leonard V. Gallagher '54 countered, "The government's subsidy of interest and the deferral of payments have been

key provisions of the loans."

Senator John Kerry (D-MA) responded to the proposal, "What Mr. Bennett has offered is neither constructive nor thoughtful. There is considerable debate over whether the program that Mr. Bennett talks about would result in any savings to the federal government."

"There have been estimates that a program like this might cost the treasury upwards of \$5 billion," Kerry asserted. "We should be studying the issue, not proposing programs based on unproven assumptions."

Bennett's proposal would require Congressional approval, and Congress would reject such a plan, Kerry predicted. "This is not the time to imperil our future by embracing risky, unlikely schemes," he said.

Gallagher added, "This proposal gets pulled almost every year, and it's never passed Congress." But the growing federal deficit may someday pressure Congress into cutting student aid, Gallagher feared.

Bennett said he is also considering a federal policy that would limit financial aid to students whose institutions increased their expenses much higher than the inflation rate.

Such a plan would exclude "any increase in tuition and costs greater than the inflation rate plus 1 percent" from the needs-

analysis system governing grants and loans, he explained.

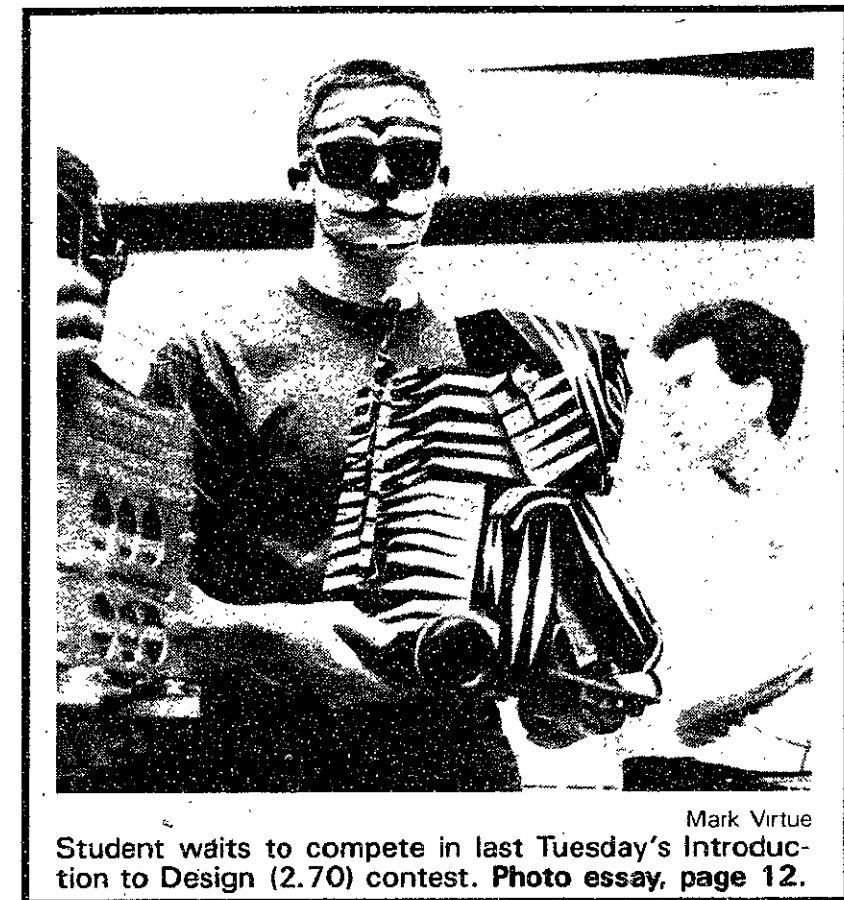
Federal aid has fueled the spiraling costs of college, Bennett claimed. "Colleges raise costs, there is pressure on the federal government to meet those costs, student aid increases to meet them, and costs go up all over again. This cannot go on."

"We believe that for colleges to increase costs beyond inflation, and for the government to subsidize those increases, contributes unnecessarily and irresponsibly to rising college costs," he said. "The federal government should not subsidize such increases. Refusing to do so may prove one way of reining costs in."

Gallagher explained that such a plan would adversely affect MIT by placing "an artificial cap on [student] need for federal funds."

If Congress approved such a change in student loan policy, MIT would be pressured to lobby private donors for increased funding or, failing that, would be forced "to pass the costs on to the student," Gallagher said.

Bennett said he is skeptical of the reasons that colleges typically give for raising costs — the need to catch up on faculty salaries and boost maintenance budgets that were held down during the high-inflation years of the 1970's. The proportion of university (Please turn to page 2)



Mark Virtue

Student waits to compete in last Tuesday's Introduction to Design (2.70) contest. Photo essay, page 12.

Registration packages may be picked up today in Lobby 10. Starting tomorrow, students will have to go to the Registrar's Office to get their materials.

## Bennett threatens aid subsidies

(Continued from page 1)

spending in these two categories has not increased and cannot account for the tuition increases, he claimed.

Universities have become pre-occupied with raising money through endowments and tuition, he said. "Some of our colleges and universities charge what the market will bear," he said. "And lately, they have found that it will bear quite a lot indeed."

Gallagher contended that MIT's rising student expenses

have been justified by "rising real expenses and the desire for expansion in programs. We need to attract faculty and to maintain MIT's excellence. A simple fiat by the [federal government] will not stop expenses from rising at selective schools such as MIT."

Bennett suggested his proposals will not only hold down costs but will lead to an improvement in the quality of higher education. If students paid the full costs of borrowing, they would become more demanding con-

sumers.

"Rather than spending someone else's money, students will find themselves making decisions about their own money," Bennett said. "This cannot help but make students more conscious of how much they pay their college, and of the quality of the education they receive in return."

Kerry said any reduced federal commitment to education is short-sighted, especially in light of recent assaults by foreign nations on American economic competitiveness, he noted.

"If the United States hopes to remain competitive in the world marketplace, we must make every effort to provide the educational excellence and opportunity needed to ensure that competitive edge," he said. "Mr. Bennett's proposal would erode our competitive position, not enhance it."

"I think it is important to speak out to reassure both students and parents that there is little possibility that Congress will act on any of the Secretary's proposals and that they should not fear his attempts to endanger their educational futures," Kerry said.

## Course Guide returns after 3-year absence

(Continued from page 1)

sional graphics company designed the new guide, Dellinger explained.

"I'm glad it's been revitalized," Christine A. Chu '88 said. "It died the semester before I came. I dug up old issues and used them to get a description deeper than that provided in the course

## Option could relieve Course VI crowding

(Continued from page 1)

take classes including: Optimal Design of Engineering Systems (1.02), Engineering Applications of Artificial Intelligence (1.07), and Computer Applications in Statistics (1.15).

The new program has received "good responses" from industry, according to Sheffi, indicating that graduates of the program will be in demand. Companies such as General Motors, International Business Machines, and Proctor & Gamble have indicated strong interest.

The department of civil engineering has not yet submitted the ES&C degree for accreditation. The department will let the program "stabilize before seeking accreditation," Sheffi said.

This point is "not an issue," he declared, adding that those students planning "to build bridges" should follow the "standard civil engineering track."

catalog. People's opinions of lecturers pretty much held true."

"It was pretty good," Glynis A. Walton '87 said. "You use it a lot during freshman year. It's not as good once you go into a certain department."

Those responsible for reviving the guide include Dean for Undergraduate Education Margaret L. A. MacVicar '65, Associate Dean for Curriculum Support Peggy Richardson, and UA President Bryan R. Moser '87, Kuenzig said. CEG "received an amazing amount of encouragement from the administration," he added.

CEG is currently staffed by ten students and is funded by the UA Finance Board, MacVicar's office, and by various schools at the Institute.

## Plan will remove HUM-D status from 150 classes

(Continued from page 1)

define a HUM-D subject, or distinguish one from any other humanities subject.

The committee's report attributed the expanding number of options to the professionalization and specialization of the humanities faculty, as well as the departments' desire to attract more students. "The horses have been out of the barn... it's hard to get them back in again," Merritt said.

## Student members of institute committees, 1986-87

Committee on Academic Performance: Robert V. Anglin '87, Laura A. Malley '87, Kevin T. Oliveira '88; Committee on Curricula: Derek T. Chiu '89; Committee on Discipline: Erik H. Bettez '87, Andrew S. Gerber '87, Jong-on Hahn G, Laura A. Malley '87, Richard I. Miller G, Faculty Policy Committee: Michael V.J. Colao '87, Andreas S. Bommarius G; Committee on Graduate School Policy: Kalyanaram Gurmurthy G, Committee on the Library System: Sarah Koskie G, James H. Knapp G, Committee on Student Affairs: Erik H. Bettez '87, Alison R. Burgess G, Brett V. Gaspers '87, Henry H. Houh '89, Kathleen M. Laffey G, Jing-Kai Syz '87; Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid: Michael D. Fox '88, Carol D. Morris '88, Christopher G. Sarto '88, Committee on the Undergraduate Program: Jonathan H. Gruber '87, Carey M. Rappaport G; Committee on the Writing Requirement: Salman Akhtar '89, Ted C. Johnson '87, Corporation Joint Advisory Committee on Institute-Wide Affairs: Norman M. Wereley G, Bryan R. Moser '87, Andreas S. Bommarius G, C. Kathryn Stockton G; two undergraduate students to be appointed; Committee on Assessment of Biohazards: Nancy J. Gorelick G, Athletic Board: Martha R. Beverage '87, Leo F. Casey G, Thomas R. Hoffman '87, Corley L. Kerstetter '87, Michael C. Murphy G, Michael H. Schoen '88, Megan J. Smith G, Caleb C. Wong '87, Commencement Committee: Grace W. Ueng '87, Norman M. Wereley G, Kevin G. Crowston G, Sherry K. Lee '87; Community Service Fund Board: Stephen H. Pasternak '87, Molly S. Shoichet '87, Matthew W. Turner '88, graduate student to be appointed; Equal Opportunity Committee: students to be appointed; Committee on Foreign Scholarships: Shaqiuq Islam G, Committee on the Hobby Shop: Anthony J. Colonna '87, Robert D. Newman '89, Andrew G. Zeigler G, IAP Policy Committee: Christina M. Alvord '89, Mark V. Andersen '89, Ziad R. Ayoub '87, Marya B. Lieberman '89; Committee on International Institutional Commitments: Brett V. Gaspers '87, Carey M. Rappaport G, Medical Consumer's Advisory Council: students to be appointed; Prelaw Advisory Council: James H. Koening '87, Frank E. Kulbaski '88; Committee on Privacy: Stephen B. Genn '87, Sanjoy Mazumdar G; Committee on Safety: Roger F. Horton '89; Committee on Toxic Chemicals: David G. Genereux G; Committee on the Use of Humans as Experimental Subjects: Ronald E. Becker '87; Committee on the Visual Arts: Uri Feldman G, Andrea M. Ghez '87, Wellesley-MIT Joint Committee: Michael T. Couris '88, Steven L. Geiger '88, Elliot S. Marx '89; Advisory Committee for Women Students' Interests: Tamara L. Abell '87, Janaki Abraham '88, K'Andrea C. Bickerstaff '89, Amy L. Bourassa '89, Katherine L. Boyd G, Denise D. Denton G, Theresa M. Flood '87, Lynne T. Haber '87, John M. Lucassen '87, Alison C. Lynch '89, Leslie G. Melcer '88, Janine M. Neil G, Nirmala J. Panicker '88, Patricia Pereira '87, Sarah R. Thomas '87, Eugenie V. Uhlmann '87, Elizabeth V. Waltenberg G, Robert E. Weinerman '87, Julia L. White '87; Ad Hoc Committee on Military Impact on Campus Research: Steven A. Farber G, Thomas C. Hsu G, Advisory Committee on Shareholder Responsibility: Molly S. Shoichet '87, graduate student to be appointed.

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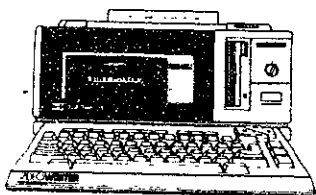
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# news roundup

from the associated press wire

## World

### Fascell criticizes administration policy

Several Congressional committees are investigating the sale of US weapons to Iran. The matter has "seriously jeopardized" US foreign policy, according to Foreign Affairs Panel Chairman Dante B. Fascell (D-FL). The panel is seeking a wide range of documents, including papers relating to a secret order signed by President Reagan last January. The order reportedly gives detail of the arms deal and orders Central Intelligence Agency Director William Casey not to tell Congress.

Sources in Iran said that up to 20 plane loads of American weapons were delivered to Tehran last May, a much larger shipload than previously reported. The Justice Department withheld comment on the allegations. (AP)

### Congressional leaders seek truth in arms profit manipulation

Lt. Col. Oliver North "did not act alone" in transferring Iranian funds to the Nicaraguan *contras*, according to Senate Intelligence Committee Vice Chairman Patrick J. Leahy (D-VT). North received his orders from a higher authority, Leahy accused on Saturday. Some administration officials would like to see North become the scapegoat for the whole Iran affair, Leahy asserted.

Some officials believe that former National Security Advisor Adm. John Poindexter may have destroyed sensitive documents about the arms deal as part of a regular procedure. Paper shredding is part of the NSC's daily routine, the officials said.

In an interview with ABC yesterday, Senate Republican leader Robert Dole (R-KS) called for a rare special session of Congress to resolve the intensifying furor. Only the President has the power to call such a session, which last convened 38 years ago. In an interview with *Time* magazine, Reagan promised to get to the bottom of the controversy over the manipulation of profits from the arms sale. (AP, *The New York Times*)

### Israel offers cooperation in arms investigation

Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir promised cooperation yesterday in US probes of the Iranian weapons deal. Israel admits shipping arms to Iran to help free American hostages in Lebanon. But Israeli officials said they did not know that profits from the sales were being diverted to Nicaraguan rebels. (AP)

## US officially breaks SALT II

The addition of a modified B-52 bomber to the US nuclear arsenal last Friday put the United States over the limit of the SALT II arms treaty. Some European allies expressed concern over the failure to comply with the limit. The treaty was never ratified by the US Congress. (AP)

## Efforts continue in drive to free hostages in Lebanon

Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite announced yesterday that he has renewed his efforts to free American hostages being held by Moslem extremists in Lebanon. Waite told the BBC that US dealings with Iran and Nicaragua have "frayed" some of his Shiite Moslem contacts, but that his work has not been undermined.

In Beirut, American Moslem envoy Mohammed Mehdi received a pledge yesterday from a key Shiite religious leader to help gain the hostages' release. Mehdi and another official of the National Council for Islamic Affairs met today with the wives of three hostages — Thomas Sutherland, Frank Reed, and Joseph Cicippio. (AP)

## North Korea accuses United States of spying

North Korea accused the United States yesterday of engaging in high-altitude spying. An SR-71 reconnaissance plane intruded into its airspace twice yesterday, according to the state-run news agency. There were nine such flights in November, the agency claimed. Such actions present "war provocation," the news agency asserted. (AP)

## Local

### Playboy names MIT a top party school

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology is among the top 40 party schools in the United States, according to a recent survey by *Playboy Magazine*. MIT was ranked 25th on the list. Boston University was ranked 15th. Harvard University did not appear on the list. (*Playboy*)

### False alarm in Paxton mailbox

Things got a little intense in the town of Paxton yesterday when beeping was heard in a mailbox. Postal inspectors and a member of the state police bomb squad rushed to the scene in front of Town Hall. The box was carefully opened, and authorities discovered a beeping portable paging device. (AP)

## Nation

### Supreme Court to decide extent of federal coercion

The Supreme Court question whether the Federal Government has the right to withhold highway funds from states that refuse to raise their minimum drinking age to 21. South Dakota authorities argue that such a practice unconstitutionally weakens state powers. (AP)

### Layton convicted of conspiracy to murder

Larry Layton, a former member of the People's Temple Cult, was convicted yesterday of conspiring to murder Congressman Leo Ryan (D-CA). Ryan was killed in Jonestown, Guyana eight years ago, on a Guyana airstrip. Layton faces a maximum sentence of life in prison. Hours after Ryan and four others were shot to death, more than 900 cult members died in a mass suicide. (AP)

## Weather

### Stormy again

The large area of high pressure that has brought us fair but cold weather over the past couple of days will move into the maritime provinces tonight. This will allow a sprawling area of low pressure in the Ohio Valley to move up the Appalachian ridge tonight and pass to our west tomorrow. Plenty of mild air will be drawn in here on southerly winds and we can expect mostly rain. There will be quite a bit of icing in central New England tomorrow night with snowfall confined to the northern maritime.

**Today:** Partly sunny, clouds increasing in the afternoon. Highs near 40° (4 °C). Light northerly winds early, becoming southeasterly by late afternoon.

**Tonight:** Snow and sleet developing before midnight, changing to rain with little or no accumulation. Temperatures rising into the low 40s (4-7 °C) by morning. Winds from the southeast at 15-25 mph (25-40 km/h).

**Wednesday:** Rain, heavy at times, windy with some coastal fog. Highs in the upper 40s (7-10 °C). Winds southerly 20-30 mph (30-50 km/h).

**Wednesday night:** Partial clearing, windy, lows in the mid 30s (0-3 °C).

**Thursday:** Partly sunny, windy, highs in the low 40s, but cooling off the the 30s in the afternoon.

Forecast by Chris Davis



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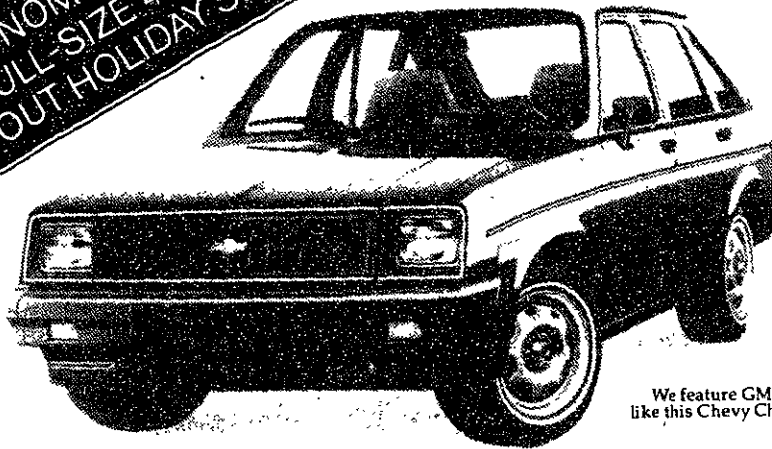
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# opinion

Column/Thomas T. Huang

## Dear mr. prezdunt,

Dear mr prezdunt,  
My name is Lisa. I go to third grade. I am sevn and a half year old. how are you? I am fine. how is Nancy? Mrs. parker says for us to rite you.

I saw you on the news last nite. befor I went a sleep. were is iran? My daddy says you messed up, but I dont think so. yor pritty smart, cuz you foold evrybuddy. like hide and go seek only no-buddy was looking. You can get are men back home and iran can get guns and evrybuddy is happy. Once they get guns they wont bother us no more.

Today i gave this boy Billy my candy sos he wont hit me no more. He has stopped!!! It works!

wut is nsc mean? Are they superheros like superman or james bond or like he-man? They saved the hostijs. they are grate! they can do anything. They arnt like congris. Congris is reel brats, cuz

they cry just like my frend jenny when you dont tell her a secret. And there grownups!!!

Daddy cuissd and says you broke the law. But you make the law. you can lie so nobuddy gets hurted. Just like my daddy says he luv's my mommy but he lets his secretary sit on his lap. Hes smart. do you let secretary Schultz (mrs. parker helped me with his spelling) sit on yor lap?

Oh well, the bell is ringing. I hope you are making lots of friends in the middeleast. yor older then my grampa but i like you better. You smile mor. he has gross smelly teeth. i tried them on once.

Luv, Lisa

P.S. my brother hates yor guts, but he also hates "Knight Rider" so hes just mental.

P.P.S. I wanna grow-up to be just like you.



feedback

## Thanksgiving is a time for mourning

To the Editor:

Every Thanksgiving most Americans go home to celebrate with their families; this is the most traveled day of the year. Thanksgiving often brings to mind thoughts of Pilgrims and Indians. The Pawkunnawakutt (Wampanoag) Indians helped the Pilgrims survive their first year in the New World and then shared a harvest with them. Most people think of this as the first Thanksgiving; rarely do people consider the actual origin of Thanksgiving.

Years later, after Massachusetts Bay Colony had been established, over 800 Pequot Indians were celebrating their annual harvest ceremony when delegates from the Colony ordered them to submit to the authority of the King. The Pequot refused, so the colonists set fire to the Longhouse in which the ceremony was being held.

More than 800 Indians were massacred; to celebrate this "victory," the Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony declared

the day a holiday. Thus Thanksgiving has been celebrated ever since. Every year when most Americans are enjoying their Thanksgiving, the Indians hold a national day of mourning in Plymouth, the land of the Pawkunnawakutt.

Indians have been taken from their families, forbidden to speak their own languages or to practice their religions. Even as late as the 1970s, they were arrested for playing a traditional drum in public. It was only in 1978 that American Indians were granted freedom of religion. Presently, these people are still being arrested for traditional hunting and fishing and are fighting for their land, its rights, and the rights of their animal and plant relatives.

Jacqueline Onassis owns land on Gay Head Bay — Indian land. Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA) helped push through legislation denying the Indians much of their land. Now Onassis has nothing to fear, because the Pawkunnawakutt are no longer a tribe and therefore no longer

have a claim to the land. The US government refuses to recognize as a tribe the Indians who saved the Pilgrims.

In the Declaration of Independence, American Indians are defined as "merciless Indian savages." Besides being a disgrace to all Americans, this definition also has allowed our government's attorneys to deny tribal status to the Pawkunnawakutt. Since these Native Americans can drive cars and live in houses, they are not savages and therefore not Indians.

This is only one example of the continuing mistreatment of native people by our government, and it is by no means the worst incident. Of the 371 treaties made by these people with our government, every one has been broken.

This Thanksgiving I did not go home. Instead I went down to Plymouth to mourn with the Indians and to spit upon the rock.

Stephen Fernandez '86

# The Tech

Volume 106, Number 55 Tuesday, December 2, 1986

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## IAP is a waste of valuable time

To the Editor:

Time at MIT is valuable. One could measure its value in several ways: the cost of tuition, the income that the graduate expects to earn over a lifetime, or the more subjective value one could assign to the skills and techniques one learns in classes and by doing research.

For this reason, administrators at MIT should re-examine the policy that determines how the MIT community spends the period of time between the end of fall term and the beginning of spring term. Commonly known as the Independent Activities Period, that time is currently being absurdly wasted. There is a wide variety of courses available, but very few offer any credit toward degrees. Instead, it is safe to say most students, especially undergraduates, involve themselves in inconsequential activities.

While "classes" in preparing tax returns, in picking up a new computer language, or even in learning "defensive driving" are not the best and most efficient ways for an MIT student to spend time, these activities are at least useful in some general way. These are not the activities that should be eliminated.

What is objectionable is the host of extremely trivial pursuits that undergraduates seem particularly susceptible to; examples in recent years include oenophilia, transcendental meditation, historical tours of obsolete radio observatories, glass blowing, and

childish treasure hunts.

To illustrate what is meant, consider the last of these, the so-called "Great IAP Mystery Hunt," the most foolish offender. Participants spend up to a week looking all over the campus for a coin that the organizer has hidden somewhere. This so-called Independent Activity is a total and unmitigated waste of time. In Japan, there is a saying, roughly translated as follows: "There is a time for Zen, and there is a time for no-Zen."

MIT administrators be warned: if the United States is to catch up to Japan technologically, such kindergarten activities that Japanese children outgrow at the age of four should not be allowed. Furthermore, even if there are

those who will indulge in such idiocy, the MIT administration still has a responsibility towards foreign students at the Institute, many of whom are here with limited time and resources, and who are very eager to learn useful material.

For example, the proposal to offer Structure and Interpretation of Computer Programs (6.001) for credit during IAP was an extremely intelligent and pragmatic one, and should have had more hearing. Perhaps, on further reflection, the decision not to hold those classes will be reversed, and even followed by the introduction of classes for other popular subjects.

Meico Yazuka G

*Editorials*, marked as such and printed in a distinctive format, are the official opinion of The Tech. They are written by the editorial board, which consists of the chairman, editor in chief, managing editor, executive editor, news editors and opinion editors.

*Dissents*, marked as such and printed in a distinctive format, are the opinions of the undersigned members of the editorial board choosing to publish their disagreement with the editorial.

*Columns* and *editorial cartoons* are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper.

*Letters to the Editor* are welcome. They must be typed and addressed to The Tech, PO Box 29, MIT Branch, Cambridge MA 02139, or by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483.

Letters and cartoons must bear the authors' signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. No letter or cartoon will be printed anonymously without express prior approval of The Tech. The Tech reserves the right to edit or condense letters. We regret we cannot publish all of the letters we receive.

# opinion

Column/Simson L. Garfinkel

## What does ARA stand for?

Local 26 of Hotel, Restaurant, Institutional Employees, and Bartenders Union is now at war with the evil corporation of ARA, that huge amorphous thing that MIT has hired to manage the Institute's cafeterias. I would like to step back for a moment and call upon every MIT student to join in the battle. Our cause is obvious: ARA lies to students.

My argument will confine itself to the Lobdell dining hall, which remains the worst place on campus to eat. It is true that symptoms of ARA's treachery can be seen at a moment's glance at every Institute dining facility, with the exception of the faculty club. But faculty members who frequent Lobdell and Walker Memorial will surely be sympathetic to my call.

ARA spent the summer "renovating" Lobdell. What did they actually do to it? ARA installed fancy glass display cabinets. ARA placed mason jars containing macaroni and other dried goods on the counter tops. ARA hung huge signs with inviting photographs to advertise the selection of food (which hasn't changed). Each one of these actions represents another lie to students.

We've all seen the glass cabinets: they are beautiful. They are filled with all the yuppie foods we love to consume, like basted breast of turkey, a wheel of cheddar cheese and "garnish," (whatever that is). The only catch is that nothing in glass cabinets is for sale; it's all for show.

Last weekend, I went to Lobdell to get a sandwich for lunch. There were two highly trained sandwich makers constructing sandwiches to order behind the fancy counters. After 25 minutes of patiently waiting, I got to place my order:

"I'd like a tunafish sandwich with cheddar cheese, please."

"We don't have cheddar cheese. We only have American, swiss and muenster. Which would you like?"

Even after I pointed out to the sandwich expert that there was cheddar cheese in the glass cabinet, she refused to give me any.

She wasn't supposed to go into the glass cabinet.

I asked to speak with the manager, but he wasn't around. Before ARA arrived, a manager was always around.

Indeed, the only way to tell the difference between Lobdell's tunafish sandwiches and the egg salad sandwiches is by texture: both fillings are equally tasteless. They are the same fillings that were served before ARA came. ARA hasn't improved the food, just the atmosphere. I guess people buy more food if it is purchased in a pleasant place.

There are other lies. Like the macaroni in the mason jars on the counter tops. Why are they there? Why are there baskets of fruit hanging when the fruit isn't for sale?

Of course, ARA's "Big Lie" is the signs they've hung over every counter. These are the same signs, with the same photographs, that ARA hangs in many major airports. The only difference is that in airports the pictures look something like the food which they advertise. Not so in Lobdell. So you have to ask yourself, again: Why are these signs here? I don't see how it could possibly improve sales.

ARA has spent a lot of money. Where does the money come from? It comes from MIT. Where does the money go to? Part of it goes to the companies that sell the signs and the glass counters, which appear to be the same ones that ARA uses in countless airports across the United States.

ARA gets paid a fixed fee for providing managerial oversight of the MIT dining facilities. This means that if ARA makes too much money it goes back to MIT, and if ARA loses money it gets subsidized.

MIT brought in ARA with the hopes that ARA could manage the cafeterias more economically than MIT could manage them itself. It now seems clear that one way ARA saves money is by not paying for its employees' pension plans.

To be fair, ARA has made a few minor improvements to Lobdell: Lobdell now sells thick

french fries cut from real potatoes. Students can purchase fruit cups. Fruit juices are available in convenient glass bottles. ARA posts comment boards to which they seem to be paying attention.

Have these minor improvements been worth the cost, a cost which includes the loss of a pension plan to the workers' and ARA's continued insults to the intelligence of MIT students? I don't think so.

Before we run ARA out of town, I just have one question for them:

What does ARA stand for?

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## The Mission shows off stunning locations and fine character acting

### THE MISSION

Directed by Roland Joffé.  
Starring Jeremy Irons.  
and Robert De Niro.  
At the Cheri.

By JULIAN WEST

**E**IGHTEENTH CENTURY Latin America provides the setting for the winner of the Cannes *Palme d'Or* and one of the better films of the year. It is a study of two powerful personalities, one a priest and a pacifist, the other a former slave-trader and mercenary, and their involvement in the historic events of the year 1750.

In that year, a treaty adjusted the boundary line between the American possessions of Spain and Portugal, handing seven Jesuit missions to Portugal, which allowed slavery. The Jesuits refused to abandon the Guarani people who had found sanctuary and the best facets of European civilization at the missions. But the power behind the Portuguese throne threatened to expel the Jesuit order from the Portuguese empire in retaliation. The papal envoy gave in, but the Jesuits held out, leading to the 1756 massacre of 1500 Indians by European artillery.

Don't worry. A detailed knowledge of



Father Gabriel (Jeremy Irons) calms the savages with his flute.

American history is not a prerequisite for enjoyment of the film. An appreciation of fine character acting is. Otherwise, you can sit back and enjoy the stunning footage of lush South American rain forests.

The Don Diego River and the 200-foot high Iguazú Falls in Argentina provide the locations. The equally spectacular acting is provided by Jeremy Irons, as the Jesuit priest Father Gabriel, and by Robert De

Niro, as his acolyte.

As Gabriel, Irons is transcendent in a corrupt world. He is a man of God who understands, but is little involved with, the affairs of humanity. He seems more at home among the Americans than with his fellow Europeans, and indeed Irons did find his jungle experiences "enlightening."

Jesuit Father Daniel Berrigan, who played Sebastian in the film and acted as technical advisor, said Irons captured the spirit of the Jesuit order. If this is so, then it is a spirit of profound peace and strength. Disturbed by the events of the film, Father Gabriel is unperturbed. "God is love," he declares, "If might is right, then love has no place in the world."

De Niro was allowed more range with his character, who starts out as a ruthless mercenary, but undergoes a painful spiritual conversion. Ultimately, he must decide how best to resist the European political and military interests. He chooses to invent an effective form of early jungle warfare: the Portuguese soldiers are still tamping down their guns when they start to take arrows in their chests.

After killing his brother in a feud over a woman, Mendoza withdraws from the  
(Please turn to page 9)

The Tech proudly presents...

### The Tech Performing Arts Series

a service for the entire MIT community from *The Tech*, in conjunction with the Technology Community Association, MIT's student community service organization.

Special reduced-price tickets now available for the following events:

#### Jose Feghali

Jose Feghali, gold medal winner of the Seventh Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, will give a recital at Jordan Hall on Sunday, Dec. 7 at 3 pm. The program features works by Mozart, Chopin, Debussy and Prokofiev. MIT price: \$3.50.

#### The Boston Premiere Ensemble and The Spectrum Singers

The Boston Premiere Ensemble, under Music Director F. John Adams, and The Spectrum Singers will present J. S. Bach's "Weihnachts Oratorium" in its original German at Jordan Hall on Friday, Dec. 5 at 7 pm. MIT price: \$5.00.

Tickets will be sold by the Technology Community Association, W20-450 in the Student Center. If nobody is in, please leave your order and your phone number on the TCA answering machine at x3-4885. You will be called back as soon as possible.

## Undergraduate Association News



### Attention Freshmen!

Here's your chance to get to know your instructors on a more friendly (less 'tutish) level.

Come to the **Class of 1990/Faculty Social** on December 4, 4 to 6 pm in the Sala de Puerto Rico in the Student Center and enjoy free refreshments with all your core course professors and TA's.

sponsored by the Freshman Class Council

### ☆☆☆☆ The Course Evaluation Guide ☆☆☆☆

The Spring '86 Course Guide is here! Pick up your copy with the registration material in Lobby 10, or in the UA office W20-401.

Sit down and be counted! Attend your classes this week and evaluate your courses. We want to know what you think of them.

Do you like the Spring 1986 Guide? Help us prepare the Fall 1986 Guide over IAP. Pay is available, and it's a great time! Look for more information in the next issue of *The Tech*.

### ATTENTION CLASS OF 1989

There will be a class council meeting held on Thursday, December 4th at 5PM in the UA Office.

Agenda topics include a study break on Wednesday, December 10 in the Mezzanine Lounge and selling of Candy Grams.

All class members are welcome to attend.

Pizza will be served!!!

**The Undergraduate Association**  
student government for students at MIT

the 4th floor of the Student Center  
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## ARTS

**"Trek IV": light entertainment in the 20th century****STAR TREK IV:  
THE VOYAGE HOME**

Directed by Leonard Nimoy.  
Starring William Shatner, Leonard Nimoy,  
DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, George  
Takei, Walter Koenig, Nichelle Nichols,  
and Catherine Hicks.  
At Cinema 57 and Assembly Square.

By PETER DUNN

**I**GNORE WHAT ALL THE MAJOR newspaper reviews say. Their film critics are trying to lead you astray. *The Tech* is going to give you the real scoop on "Star Trek IV."

"Trek IV" does not reprise the award winning episode "The City on the Edge of Forever" — film critics depend on their press kits too much — if anything, it resembles "Tomorrow is Yesterday," where the Enterprise crew slingshotted around the sun to return from the 20th century. Even here there are dissimilarities since in "Trek IV" our heroes travel back in time on purpose instead of by accident.

Another misconception you are likely to gather from reading other reviews is that "Trek IV" is unlike any of the television episodes or previous films by virtue of the fact that its tone is less serious. True, this new film does take a humorous approach to its storyline, but no less humorous than "I, Mudd" or "The Trouble with Tribbles." It seems there are few film reviewers who have seen any great number of Star Trek television episodes.

For those of you who have not seen "Star Trek III," we left our heroes on Vulcan with a Klingon "Bird of Prey" ship, having merged Mr. Spock's soul with his body. The Enterprise crew was faced with charges of disobeying Star Fleet orders.

So how do our heroes finagle themselves out of this dilemma? Why, by saving the entire known universe (again!) of course. I exaggerate mildly: they only really save the planet Earth from total annihilation.

Whence does this mode of salvation

come? A probe from a distant, unheard of civilization travels to Earth searching for whales which, by the 23rd century, are extinct. Whatever civilization this probe comes from must have a strange sense of the dramatic: their interplanetary messenger not only booms its message at ear numbing volume but also manages to turn off all the light switches in its path, heralding the end of life as we know it on Earth. Seems like a pretty drastic way to send a greeting card.

Fortunately Admiral Kirk (William Shatner) and his cohorts (Leonard Nimoy as Mr. Spock, DeForest Kelley as Dr. Leonard "Bones" McCoy, James Doohan as Mr. Scott, George Takei as Mr. Sulu, Walter Koenig as Mr. Chekov, and Nichelle Nichols as Commander Uhura) are unaffected by the energy sucking probe until they begin to approach Earth on the "Bird of Prey." Hearing the distress signals from Earth and recognizing the probe's message as being the same sound as whale song, the crew slingshots back to the 20th century to retrieve two cetacean specimens to answer the probe.

Nobody can fault "Trek IV" for not being enjoyable, light entertainment: unlike

the previous three "Star Trek" films, the Enterprise crew takes a much less serious attitude towards completing their Earth saving task than usual. And unlike the two aforementioned television episodes which also involved time travel, the Enterprise crew seems a little lackadaisical about disguising who they are and what technology they possess.

But aside from some inconsistencies of this nature, "Trek IV" is immensely entertaining. The majority of the film is spent chronicling the humorous confrontation of 23rd century people with 20th century culture. Just how do people from the future deal with public transportation, punk rockers, computers which are not voice activated, and the use of profane language? One of the funniest scenes has Chekov, with his Russian accent, asking directions to the nearest nuclear powered vessel.

For all the fun that "Trek IV" manages to produce, it still lacks suspense: it is fairly easy to predict what is going to happen in the film 20 minutes before it actually occurs (would it surprise you that our heroes save their two whales from imminent death by intervening just seconds before they are about to be harpooned by a whal-

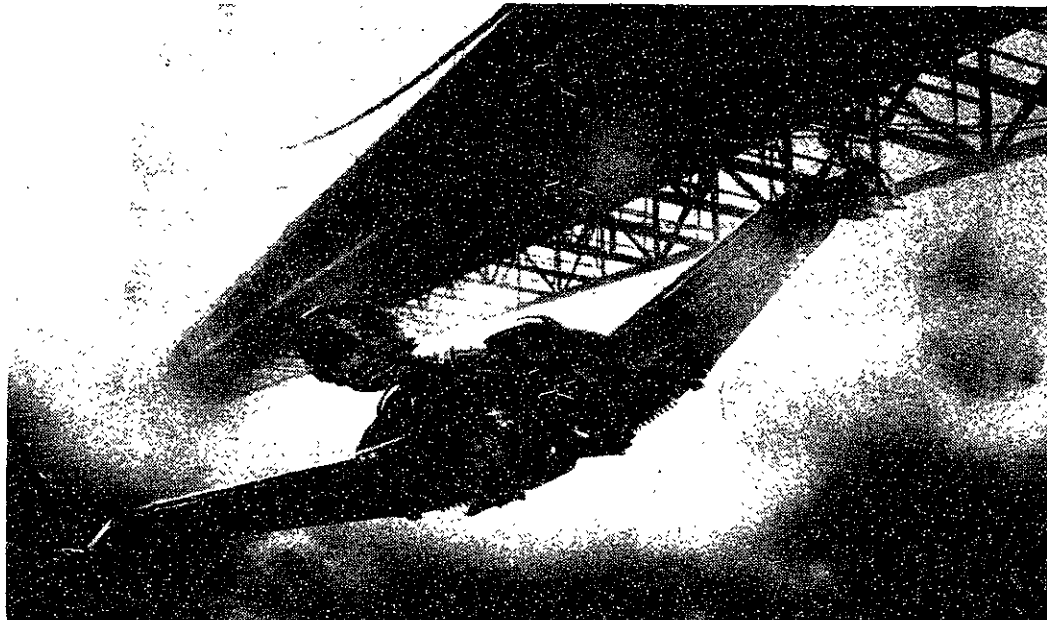


Leonard Nimoy as Mr. Spock.

ing ship?). This predictability is hardly noticeable while we are swept up by the fun, but it removes from the possible excitement of the climactic finale. In other words, once we stop giggling and expect to be sitting on the edge of our seats, biting our nails, the film lets us down with a cornball ending.

The original "Star Trek" television episodes were mostly thinly disguised morality plays and "Trek IV" follows in this path, wearing its "Save the Whales" theme on its sleeve. But despite the similarities, "Trek IV" won't live up to the expectations of anybody brought up exclusively on the television episodes.

The youthful energy, that snap, crackle, pop of seeking out "new life and new civilization," just isn't reproduced in any of the films. It is hard to imagine the crew of the Enterprise, now with graying hair, quite a few pounds heavier, and many years the wiser, gallivanting around the universe with the same amount of youthful gusto. I find it difficult to visualize Admiral Kirk in a good barroom brawl, swiftly dispatching some villain with a deft karate chop to the neck. But "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home," with its playful humor, will please Trekkies and the unconverted alike by revealing a bit of the warmth and vitality that made the original episodes so satisfying.



The "Bird of Prey" comes in for a landing in San Francisco Bay.

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## Optical devices and apocalyptic beasts

**VISIONARY APPARATUS:  
MICHAEL SNOW & JUAN GEUER**  
At the Hayden Gallery,  
through December 21.

**THINGS ARE SELDOM WHAT  
THEY SEEM: LOCAL SCULPTORS/  
FOUND MATERIALS**

At the Reference Gallery,  
through December 28.  
Both galleries are located in the  
Wiesner Building (E15), MIT.

By MICHEL BOS

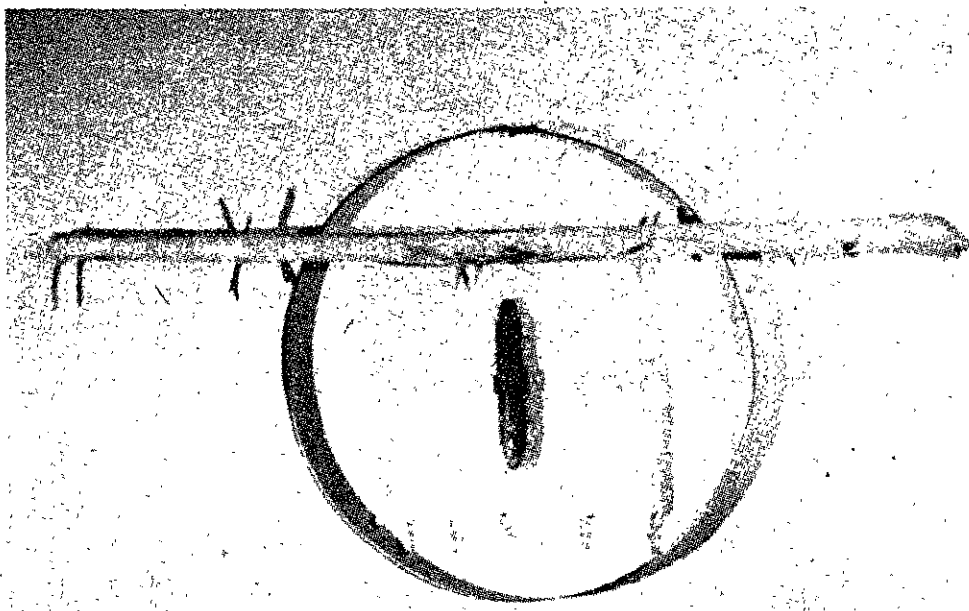
**T**WO DISTINCTIONS come to mind in connection with "Visionary Apparatus," the current two-artist show at the Hayden Gallery. The first is that between perception and vision. The second is that between technology and art.

The works on display are devices meant to extend sight or to make us aware of its limitations. The underlying assumptions are that extended perception becomes visionary, and that visionary technology qualifies as art. One could argue abstractly about either, but it is wiser to let the show make its own case.

The central item of the exhibition (and, I understand, its curatorial starting point) is Michael Snow's "De La," a video installation with an ingenious construction of rotating cameras coupled to four monitors. As the apparatus twists and turns, its electronic eyes sweep out complicated trajectories, which we watch on the screens. With its rotating views and superimposed movements it is a kind of high-tech carousel. This installation is complemented by Juan Geuer's "Geta," a glass construction crossing the window, intended to stretch the view outward.

Snow's other works in this show address various issues of perception. "Monocular Abyss" and "Zone" play with limitations of sight, though neither does so in particularly profound ways. "Trinities-Triads-Trios (Waltz)" is a set of three holograms, novelty in the representation of perceptual data.

As for Geuer's other works, they reflect his professional activity as an instrument designer and draughtsman at a geological institute. In the installation "Al Asnaam," set in an eerily lit room, a laser projects a



*The Buildup* by Pia Massie, 1986 (Wood, Fabric, and Metal)

thin line on a wall, the position of which is influenced by long-wavelength fluctuations in the floor, such as those produced by the entrance of a spectator. "Earthquakes" is a display of the seismic history of North America.

In varying degrees all these objects are interesting, amusing, or instructive, and it thus seems somewhat petty to argue their placement here. But it is hard to escape the thought that the labs of MIT are replete with apparatus like these, apparatus continuously making similar points in similar ways. While it is nice to see such devices singled out for their visionary value, it ultimately goes to say that what is art and what is not is a matter of vision as well.

**T**HE TITLE of the current exhibition at the Reference Gallery, with its mention of found materials, suggests that issues of context might be prominent here, too. Ever since Marcel Duchamp exhibited urinals and other unpretentious items as art in their own right, the found object has figured in abstract discussions on the meaning of art and the nature of interpretation. Not so here, it turns out. For the three artists represented — all young and from the Boston area — discarded materials from everyday life make a powerful vocabulary

for use in thoroughly creative pursuits. But the resemblance among the three ends with a similarity of means, as their languages are rather diverse.

Brewster Luttrell is the most explicitly figurative. But his is a strange kind of figuration: a kind of organic recycling, in which discarded fragments of household and industrial objects are re-assembled as composite beasts, often with more than a hint of tribal art. It is as if a major catastrophe would have forced evolution to resume with mutants merging nature and civilization.

The work of Pia Massie is more elusive, more introverted also. Her pieces are moody compositions with barely tangible figurative connotations — highly associative poems in which widely disparate textures, shapes and colors produce subtle emotional effects.

Abram Ross Faber is the wildest of the bunch, the one true to that most amusing trend among found-materialists: the Surrealist practice to confront apparently unrelated objects in puzzling but suggestive ways. There is a refrigerator-cum-moving-tree-trunk here, a small interior with a chair converted into a fountain, and a boat with a fan in its bottom. To add to the effect things move or shake every now and then — it is a strange universe, confusing and entertaining.

## Jeremy Irons as a Jesuit priest

(Continued from page 6)

world. De Niro is abject, hopeless, and sullen, declaring "there is not penance hard enough for me." But Father Gabriel accepts him, allowing him to select his own penance before donning Jesuit robes. His conversion is masterfully handled, and even under the tranquil robes of a Jesuit his fire continues to smolder.

Many supporting roles were filled by 350 Wuanana from four communities in Colombia. Although the two principal natives, a Guarani who became a Jesuit and the village chief, were played by ringers, the Wuanana filled the rest of the parts. They are natural performers, and lend a good degree of authenticity to the film. Thirteen-year-old Bercelio Moya, whose character befriends Mendoza in the film, deserves special mention.

Towering symbolically above the action are the Iguazú Falls, which protect the Guarani from the ravishes of European influence. The Falls serve as a potent image of life and death. They acquire their mystic value in the first scene, a meticulous sequence in which a priest is strapped to a crucifix and tossed over the edge, to be found by the Europeans below.

It is a message from the beyond. Once Father Gabriel breaches the Falls, he enters an antediluvian world, populated by the Guarani, by sloths, and by other remarkable creatures. The cameras make the most of the Edenic imagery of an emerald green land. It is a garden which does not need to be cultivated, a world which scarcely needs to be redeemed. Nevertheless, the Guarani are charmed by music, and build a mission which produces violins the envy of all Europe.

But the political powers of the old continent are not moved by violins. Those who care for the Guarani take their stands, each in their own way. In the end, Mendoza's military posturing is probably as futile as Father Gabriel's nonviolent resistance. But their points are made, and we are left wondering whether a moral victory may not, after all, be achieved.

Father Gabriel and his followers would think so.

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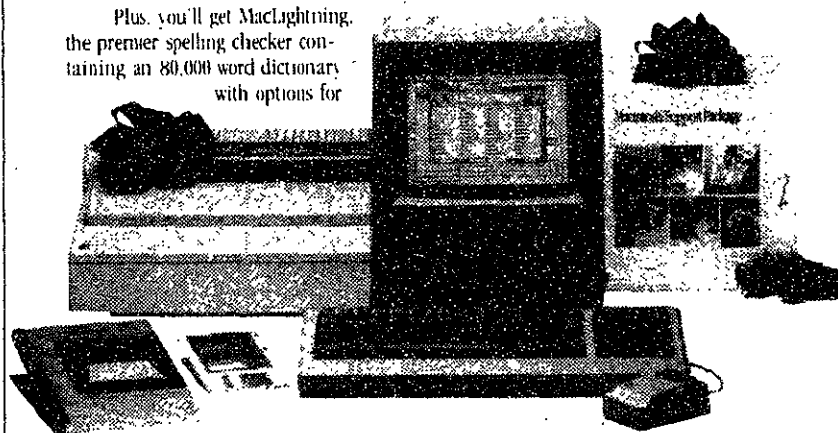
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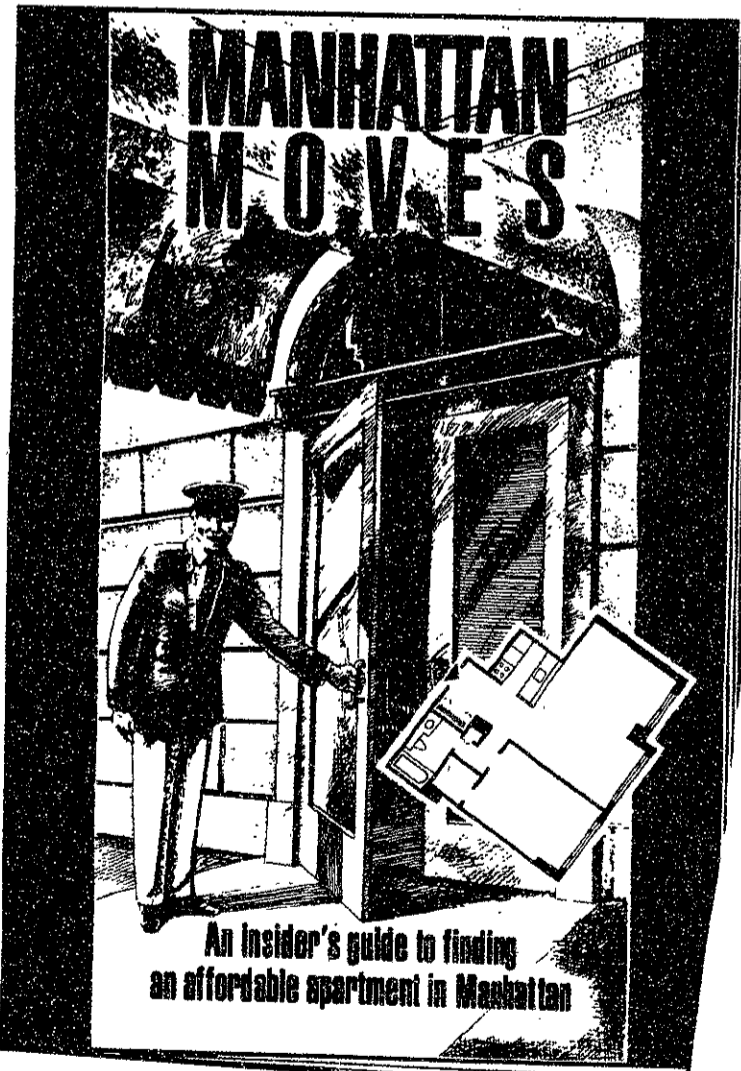
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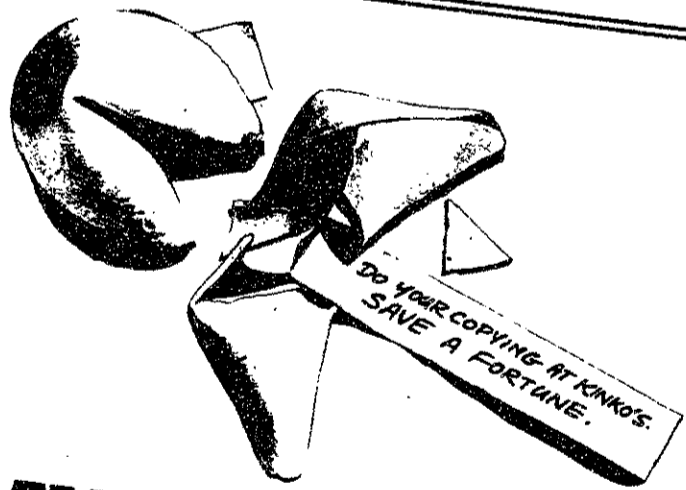
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# opinion

## feedback

### Hostility not in nation's best interest

To the Editor:

The press conference is a charade. Once an opportunity for US citizens to gain an insight into the President's policies, it has become such an intense competition between embittered rivals that one suspects that, were the television cameras suddenly turned off, it would rapidly degenerate into a fistfight.

On one side we have a crowd of reporters literally tripping over each other in their eagerness to catch every embarrassing slip-up; every evidence of hesitation or indecision on the part of the Chief Executive. Facing them is the President, reading woodenly from a teleprompter and defiantly refusing to answer questions with anything but the vaguest generalities or, in some cases, outright deceptions.

The relationship between press and President, in Franklin D. Roosevelt's day a friendly competition between competing but mutually respectful rivals, has soured to become little less than mutual disdain. Said Jack Nelson of *The New York Times*, "I think there's real contempt for the press within the Reagan Administration." And to judge from the tone of voice someone like Sam Donaldson or Dan Rather uses when referring to the "Reagan Administration's allegations," one could characterize the press' attitude as equally contemptuous.

The endless bickering between the Executive Branch and the Forth Estate would be merely laughable, were it not for the fact that most Americans are just shrugging their shoulders and leaving politics to the absurd actors of the nightly news. Is it possible that record lows in voter turnout are due to a perception that both sides are right?

Journalists have, since the Vietnam era, operated under the assumption that the government

is always out to deceive and to break the law. Reporters "will not let any potential scandal go unexamined," James Fallows pointed out in his essay, "The Presidency and the Press." The knowledge that such a scam will cause headlines is enough to motivate fantastic amounts of research into officials' backgrounds.

The glee with which journalists reports gaffes such as Gerald Ford's denial of Soviet influence over Eastern Europe and nebulous issues such as the supposed theft of Jimmy Carter's debate briefing book attests to the press's obsession with governmental error.

On the other side of the fence, we've witnessed recent Presidents sinking to new lows of deception and obfuscation in the name of national defense. The battle in Grenada was apparently such a close contest that the appearance of the American news media would have tipped the scales in favor of the Grenadians. The evidence of massive Nicaraguan arms shipments to Salvadoran rebels was indisputable, but also undemonstrable. In a similar manner did Richard Nixon claim executive privilege to conceal the truth based upon the precedent of FDR's actions during World War II, as if the Viet Cong were as much a threat to American security as the Third Reich.

The danger in having two such powerful forces at each other's throats is clear. "Stories about gaffes and scandals, campaigns and internal dissent, do no harm in themselves," Fallows wrote, but "the damage comes from the neglect of the stories these reports displace, the ones that would help the reader understand

the public business that remains to be done."

The coverage of the politics of an issue, rather than the issue itself, cheapens the debate and makes arguing policy seem silly and superfluous. The coverage that Reagan's many gaffes receive has been so heavy and so constant that the public has tired of it and come to tolerate the so-called "reign of error." To criticize him seems useless, even ridiculous. The result? A "Teflon President" who, while never being accurate, is never really wrong.

On the flip side of the coin, Presidential contempt for the press is enormously destructive. Consider Nixon, who, convinced that the press was out to get him, resorted to subterfuges such as investigating Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatric record in order to screw his political enemies. Sure that the "nattering nabobs of negativism" of the news media were in league with the campus radicals and the North Vietnamese, Nixon used the CIA and FBI to conduct his own secret war at home against journalists. And in 1986, when the White House feels justified in deliberately deceiving the American public about Libyan terrorism, everyone should be concerned.

The press and the President must realize that they together are essential components of our democracy. Perhaps Dan Rather should run for President, or Reagan should take up journalism as a second career. By being so intent upon criticizing each other, both sides are damaging the interests of the American people, whom they both profess to serve.

Dhanesh K. Samarasan G

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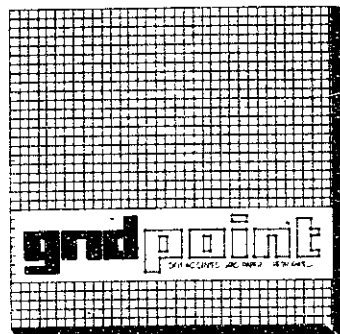
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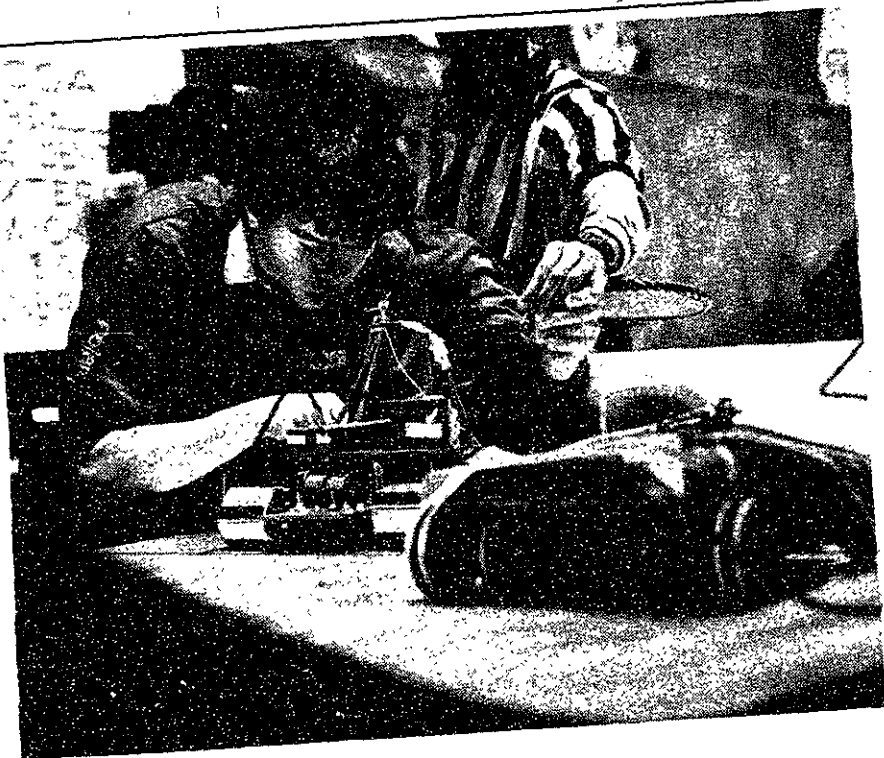
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