

Dickson Recuperates at MGH After Recent Bypass Surgery

By Brett Altschul
NEWS EDITOR

Senior Vice President William R. Dickson '56 underwent successful heart bypass surgery Wednesday after suffering a heart attack on Saturday.

The surgery was performed at Massachusetts General Hospital where Dickson will be under close supervision for the next few days. "He will probably spend about six days in the hospital," said Kenneth D. Campbell, director of the News Office.

After that, it will be some time before Dickson returns to work at MIT, Campbell said. Dickson will spend four to six weeks convalescing at home after his discharge, he said.

President Charles M. Vest said that the prognosis for Dickson looked good. "His doctors have advised us that he is doing well," Vest said.

Offices cope without Dickson

Many areas of the Institute are ultimately under Dickson's purview, including the Medical Department, Information Systems, and Physical Plant.

These offices seem adequately prepared to function in Dickson's absence.

Vest said that the administration would not need to take major action in order to deal with Dickson's



TECH FILE PHOTO

William R. Dickson '56 underwent successful heart bypass surgery Wednesday.

absence. "We have no plans whatsoever to take special administrative measures during his absence," he said.

"He [Dickson] and I have every confidence that the departments reporting to him will function well without his immediate attention during his recovery," Vest said.

Susan E. Crowley, the administrative assistant in Dickson's office said that the office was functioning without Dickson's presence. The office had been in communication with him regularly between his hospitalization and the bypass surgery, she said.

Dickson, Page 16

Debate Persists over New Graduate Dorm

By Frank Dabek
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

A new graduate dormitory is scheduled to open in two years at the intersection of Sidney and Pacific streets in Central Square. As the planning process nears its close, disagreements between involved parties have surfaced.

The current proposal calls for a five-story building with parking as allowed by Cambridge zoning regulations, said Associate Planning Officer Jennifer L. Marshall. The new dormitory will house approximately 600 single graduate students, Marshall said.

A point of contention has arisen, however, over what style of housing the new dormitory will take on. "It would be a huge mistake to move towards dorm-style housing and it's clear that's what's happening," said Carsten D. Hohnke G, chairman of the Graduate Student Council housing and community affairs committee.

Hohnke said that the "GSC has a certain set of priorities" for the new dormitory based on data gained from surveys, and focus groups conducted by outside firms. This data reveals that graduate students are looking for "creative apartment-style living," he said.

"The building should be creative but the unit is an apartment," Hohnke said. According to the surveys, graduate students are interested in two-bedroom apartments with kitchens, Hohnke said. In addition, data reveals that graduate students do not place emphasis on having a dining hall or housemaster facilities, he said.

Client team criticized by graduate students

A client team has been organized to make decisions on the structure of the dormitory. "A group of graduate students, faculty and staff have met over the summer, and will continue to meet into the fall, to plan the spaces proposed for the building," Marshall said.

Hohnke, who serves on the client team, expressed his disappointment in the team. "The impression was given at the time [the team was formed] that we were doing this because we would make decisions," he said. Hohnke said that he later learned that the client team would not have the authority to make decisions but would only sub-

Housing, Page 15

Financial Aid Decision Postponed One Year

By Zareena Hussain
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

Originally scheduled for this September, the Congressional reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 has now been delayed until a year from now, said Dean of Students and Director of Student Financial Aid Stanley G. Hudson.

The Higher Education Act outlines and sets out money for federally funded financial aid programs, including provisions for such programs as the Stafford and Perkins loans and federal work-study.

The deadline was extended to September 1998 because of other, more pressing issues on the Congressional docket, including budget reconciliation needed as a result of the government shut-down two years ago, Hudson said.

Any change to legislation will not take place until fall of next year and therefore will not take any major effect until January 1999, Hudson said.

Reauthorization, like the passing of any legislation, takes place both in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate. At the House level, legislators can hold hearings in which lobbyists can outline their opinions and recommendations on the subject. From these hearings, legislators can act accordingly to effect change in the drawing up of the bill.

MIT participates in law process

The Institute participates in the process through membership in various organizations, which act as advocates for member institutions. These include the American Council on Education and the Consortium of Financing Higher Education, which includes such peer universities as the Ivy League Schools, Johns Hopkins, and Rice University, Hudson said.

Very little new money will be coming into the program as a result of reauthorization, Hudson said. The greater questions in the coming months' debate will focus on the reallocation of existing funds in a "tug between constituencies," he said.

One area of interest to Institute financial aid administrators is need analysis. Currently, the federal formula eliminates evaluation of assets, such as home equity, in determining financial aid eligibility, Hudson said. This aspect of the for-

First Dinner in da Vinci Series Focuses On Aircraft Automation and Accidents

By Douglas E. Helmburger
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

Professor of Aeronautics and Astronautics R. John Hansman Jr. PhD '82 spoke to and dined with a group of 17 students yesterday evening in Ashdown House's Hulsizer Room as part of Tau Beta Pi's Leonardo da Vinci dinner series.

Hansman spoke about difficulties with automation in aircraft systems.

The MIT chapter of TBP, a

national engineering honor society began this series celebrating the life and work of Leonardo da Vinci to "foster a spirit of liberal culture at MIT." The private dinner talks will bring together several faculty members and about 20 TBP members every Thursday evening for a dinner and lecture, said TBP President Panayiotis I. Kamvyselis G.

The dinners, which feature cuisine from a wide variety of cultures, are funded through the proceeds of the annual TBP career fair. Last

night's dinner was entitled "Traditions of Native American Cooking."

Human factors needed in design

During an introductory half-hour lecture, entitled "Problems with Automation Systems in Commercial Aircraft, or Why I Hate to Reboot in Midair," Hansman, a pilot and a specialist in human factors engineering in aircraft, spoke of the

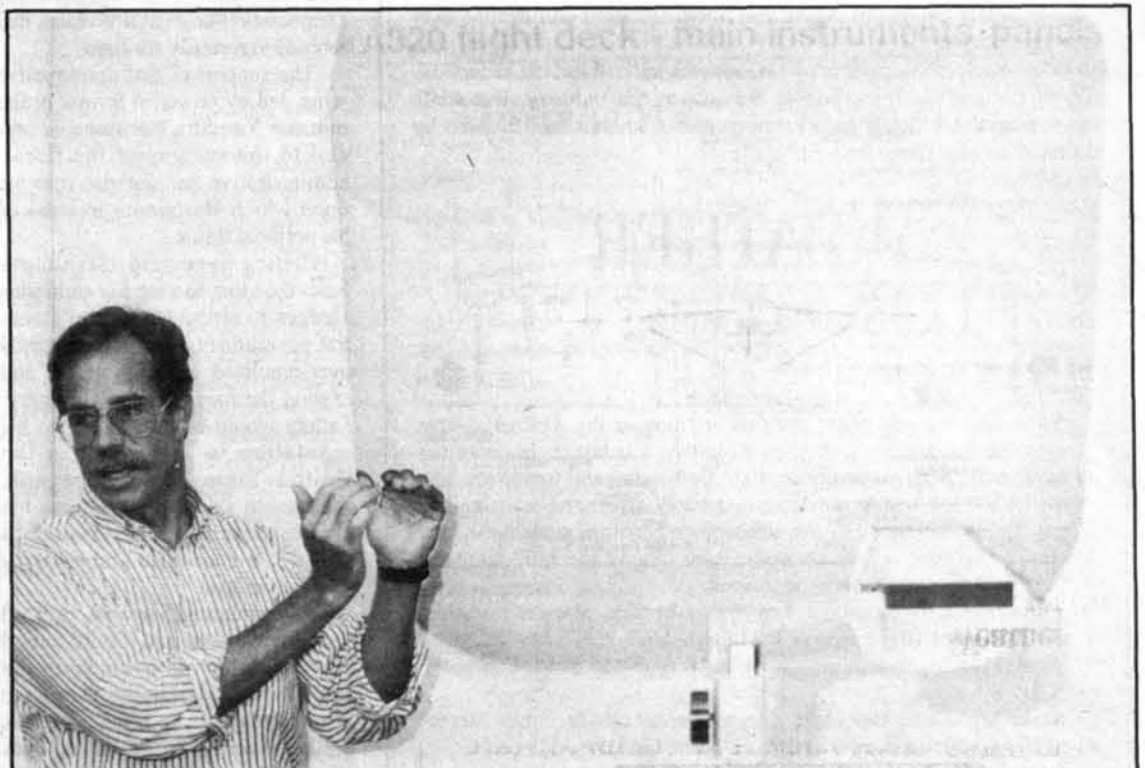
TBP, Page 9

INSIDE

■ *The Game* might seem worthwhile at first look, but disappoints later. [Page 6](#)

■ *In the Company of Men* leaves a bad taste in the viewer's mouth. [Page 6](#)

■ Comics [Page 10](#)



Professor R. John Hansman Jr. PhD '82 discusses problems with automation systems in aviation. His talk was part of Tau Beta Pi's dinner series dedicated to Leonardo da Vinci.

WORLD & NATION

Albright Urges Israeli 'Timeout' From Construction and Reprisals

THE WASHINGTON POST

JERUSALEM

Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright called Thursday night for a "timeout" in Israeli settlement construction and reprisals against Palestinians, saying they diminish prospects for implementation of the 1993 Oslo peace agreements because the Palestinians regard them as provocative.

She issued the appeal following a meeting with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in which he promised full cooperation in the fight against anti-Israeli terrorism. Albright has publicly pressured Arafat to crack down on radical Palestinian groups, and Arafat "made what she regarded as the right kind of commitment," a senior U.S. official said.

Albright did not retreat from her endorsement of Israel's demand that Arafat make a credible commitment to eradication of terrorism as the essential condition for resuming implementation of the Oslo agreements. "To be effective, the Palestinian Authority's fight (against terrorism) must be comprehensive, relentless and sustained," she said in Ramallah. "It cannot be pursued only when it is convenient to do so."

Albright told Arafat, a senior official said, that "she needed a commitment and action on the subject of security" before she could make a credible approach to the Israelis on the political and economic issues. The message, the official said, was: "President Clinton and I want to help, but if you don't, we can't."

Annan Urges Patience As Congo Holds Off Investigation

THE WASHINGTON POST

UNITED NATIONS

Congolese officials apparently continued Thursday to block U.N. investigators from visiting an area where refugees allegedly were massacred. But Secretary General Kofi Annan SM '72 said the world community should show patience in seeking President Laurent Kabila's cooperation with the inquiry.

U.N. officials have been frustrated for months in their attempts to investigate reports of mass killings of Rwandan refugees by forces loyal to Kabila during the civil war that ended in May when Kabila's insurgents wrested power from the late dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko.

Despite Kabila's promises of full cooperation, his government has foiled any movement throughout the summer by putting a succession of obstacles and objections in the path of the U.N. team. Last weekend, Kabila sent a letter to Annan promising yet again to grant access to the investigative team, which arrived in the country last month.

Annan also said the record of rights abuses in the region is "disturbing" and requires investigation both to learn precisely what happened and to punish perpetrators. He added that if Congolese officials continue to impede the investigation, "the Security Council and world opinion eventually will have to draw their own conclusions" about what is going on there.

Clinton to Be Briefed Today On Tobacco Deal Review

THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON

President Clinton is to receive a briefing Friday on the results of a three-month review of a proposed settlement with the tobacco industry, with his advisers still at odds on how much the deal should be toughened at the expense of cigarette makers.

There also is disagreement on how precise Clinton should be in spelling out where he believes the settlement falls short, according to administration officials familiar with the deliberations. He is tentatively planning to make his views on the tobacco settlement public next week.

Some advisers believe Clinton should specify, with dollar amounts, how the deal needs to be improved to win his approval, sources said. Others, including Vice President Al Gore, are urging Clinton to avoid specifics and issue a general statement making clear the settlement as drafted is too soft on tobacco companies and does not do nearly enough to ensure that youth smoking will decline over the next decade.

One option to be presented to Clinton is to limit the tax deductibility of the penalties, increasing the cost to the industry. But some administration officials believe the penalties should be increased by as much as four times their current level.

WEATHER

Slow Clearing

By Michael C. Morgan
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Slow clearing will begin late this morning as the weather system responsible for our rainy weather yesterday and last night continues to move east. With relatively cool air aloft today and tomorrow, any sunshine we get in the morning and early afternoon will lead to clouds by mid-afternoon as the atmosphere becomes unstable. A few locations might see a rain shower. Fewer clouds and mild temperatures are anticipated for early next week.

Today: Mostly cloudy, a few sunny breaks. Shower possible. Winds southwest 10-15 mph (16-24 kph). High 76°F (24°C).

Tonight: Clearing. Winds west at 10 mph (16 kph). Low 64°F (18°C).

Saturday: Some sun early, then afternoon clouds. Slight chance of an afternoon rain shower. High 75°F (24°C). Low 63°F (17°C).

Sunday: Pleasant. High around 74°F (23°C). Low 61°F (16°C).

Clinton Maintains Approval Ratings Despite Hearings

By Jonathan Peterson

LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

Despite a barrage of unseemly revelations about his party's political fund-raising, President Clinton has retained a lofty job-approval rating of 63 percent, while Vice President Gore's image has been tarnished by the negative publicity, according to the Los Angeles Times Poll.

Almost seven in 10 Americans hold Clinton responsible for fund-raising excesses that have been exposed by the media and in congressional hearings. Yet it is Gore, who has been embarrassed by disclosures about his telephone solicitations and participation in a Buddhist temple fund-raiser, who may be paying the larger price politically.

Just 34 percent of survey respondents reported a "favorable impression" of the vice president, compared to 59 percent for Clinton.

The national survey of 1,258 adults was conducted Sept. 6-9, a period when the news was filled with the stories about Gore's fund-raising woes and a Senate panel was gearing up for a new round of hearings. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus three percentage points.

"Even with all the allegations swirling around Clinton, people still like him," said Susan Pinkus, director of The Times Poll. By contrast, she added, fund-raising embarrassments "are chipping away at Gore's image."

More broadly, the Times findings underscored strong cross-currents within an American public that is increasingly upbeat about the country's general path, even as it

views the political finance system with distaste and harbors mixed feelings about the Clinton administration.

Those surveyed described crime, drugs, homelessness, education and a decline in morality as the worst problems facing the country.

But more than seven in 10 — 73 percent — said the United States economy was doing well; just 25 percent disagreed. In addition, 42 percent said the nation was moving along the "right track," while 47 percent took a more negative view.

While that finding may be less than euphoric, it is the most positive response to the right-track question in a Times Poll since 1991.

Such numbers may hold at least part of the key to understanding the president's high popularity ratings at a time when nearly half the public believes he personally knew of questionable political donations in the 1996 campaign — and 68 percent hold him responsible for fund-raising excesses. Among those who said the nation was on the right track, for example, 76 percent expressed approval of Clinton's performance in the White House.

Clinton's approval rating also may reflect views that he is "in touch with the public and how things are going in the country," said Stuart Rothenberg, a political analyst in Washington.

For Gore, who until recently enjoyed a nearly pristine image with the public, the poll results could be sobering. According to the survey, 42 percent of political independents and 24 percent of Democrats — two groups that are vital to Gore's future political success — view him less favorably in light of recent allegations. (Some 46 percent of

Republicans also view him less favorably.)

Only about half of Democrats — 48 percent — said they held a favorable impression of the vice president, numbers that could undermine the view that he is virtually assured of his party's nomination for president in 2000. Some 32 percent of independents and 25 percent of Republicans reported a favorable impression.

The Times' finding of a 34 percent favorable rating for Gore was markedly lower than some other surveys, such as a USA Today/CNN/Gallup Poll that was concluded two days earlier and reported a 55 percent favorable opinion for the vice president. But the newer poll possibly could reflect a very recent drop-off of support amid ongoing publicity from Senate hearings.

On Wednesday, for example, a survey for ABC News found that 49 percent questioned whether the vice president had the honesty and integrity to be president, a slip of 10 percentage points from March. The number saying he lacked such traits jumped to 40 percent from 32 percent.

The Times Poll suggests that such doubts resonate with many who had focused very little attention on Gore prior to his current episode in the public spotlight.

In the poll, the public expressed a decided range of opinion about various fund-raising disclosures.

Of those who would blame just one of the major parties for seeking foreign money, the Democratic Party that is most widely cited, with a fifth blaming Democrats alone and just two percent pointing to the GOP.

Hashimoto Elevates Convicted Felon in Ministerial Reshuffle

By Kevin Sullivan

THE WASHINGTON POST

TOKYO

In an unusual display of political brass, Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto brought back-room politics out into the open Thursday by naming a convicted felon to a key post in a cabinet reshuffle.

Analysts said Hashimoto's appointment of Koko Sato, who was convicted of taking bribes in the massive Lockheed scandal of 1976, was a political gift to the conservative Old Guard in his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which had lobbied vigorously for Sato.

The support of that conservative wing, led by powerful former prime minister Yasuhiro Nakasone, is crucial to the success of the fiscal, administrative and defense reforms upon which Hashimoto has staked his political future.

Critics have said Hashimoto lacks the clout to keep his ambitious pledges to streamline Japan's central government, open the country's over-regulated financial system and expand the role of Japan's military. Failure would be devastating to his reputation in Japan and in the United States, which regards Hashimoto as an ally and sees his proposed reforms as pivotal to America's economic and military interests in Asia.

By appointing Sato, 69, to head the Management and Coordination Agency, which is overseeing the streamlining, Hashimoto may have hired the muscle he needs to attack the bureaucracy from within. Sato represents an LDP establishment with massive influence over bureau-

crats who want to block the reforms. One analyst said Sato will be grateful to Hashimoto for a second political life and will "work like hell" to push his reforms.

Analysts Thursday said Hashimoto is gambling that his personal popularity and the strength of the LDP, which are both at a high point, will be enough to withstand the public criticism he will receive for the appointment of Sato.

"It's a sign of strength that Hashimoto can do this," said political analyst John Neuffer. "He's going to take some hits in the media about this, but he'll keep Nakasone and the Old Boys happy, which is more important to him."

Thursday's cabinet reshuffle came on the same day Hashimoto was elected to a second two-year term as LDP president. He has also overseen the resurrection of his party from its low point in 1993, when it lost the one-party lock it had held on power for almost 40 years. Last Friday, the LDP regained an outright majority in the 500-seat lower house of parliament when an opposition lawmaker defected.

Hashimoto further flexed his political muscles by retaining Finance Minister Hiroshi Mitsuzuka and Defense Agency chief Fumio Kyuma. Normally, premiers like to make a clean sweep in their midterm cabinet reshuffles, handing out the top jobs as political perks. By choosing to keep Mitsuzuka and Kyuma, who are key to his financial and defense proposals, Hashimoto was choosing policy over politics — a gamble that a weaker premier

might not have been able to make, analysts said.

Sato was convicted in 1982 of accepting about \$15,000 in bribes in a scandal in which the Lockheed Corp. was attempting to influence Japanese lawmakers to purchase aircraft for its civilian fleet. Sato, who accepted the bribes when he was vice minister of transportation, was given a three-year suspended jail sentence. He also paid about \$15,000 in fines.

Last year, Sato was reelected to parliament from his home district on the northern island of Hokkaido. Since then, he has been quietly helping Hashimoto with his government reforms.

"It's not like Sato is just some clown out of nowhere," Neuffer said. "He has been doing a lot of the heavy lifting to get Hashimoto's administrative reforms off the ground."

Hashimoto is also heading into choppy waters over new allegations of political graft that surfaced this week and affect key members of his team. On Monday, Osaka oil dealer Junichi Izui, who is on trial for tax evasion and fraud, alleged that he had given about \$2.3 million in illegal contributions to six LDP lawmakers, including Keizo Obuchi, who Hashimoto named as foreign minister Thursday.

Izui also said he gave money to one of Hashimoto's closest allies, Taku Yamazaki, head of the LDP's Policy Research Council. Hashimoto told reporters he had decided to keep Yamazaki in his position, as long as he could refute Izui's allegations.

HHS Proposes New Standards; Will Protect Medical Privacy

By Amy Goldstein
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON

Federal health officials Thursday proposed the first comprehensive ground rules for protecting the confidentiality of medical records in an era of exploding computer information about people's medical histories.

The standards, released by Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala, would require that doctors, hospitals and insurance companies release individual patient records only when needed for medical treatment and payments. The rules would establish new federal criminal penalties for misusing such information, and would guarantee patients the right to see their records and find out who else has looked at them.

But in a provision that drew swift denunciations from privacy advocates, Shalala proposed a broad exception for law enforcement authorities, who would continue to enjoy relatively ready access to doc-

tor records — with the names of patients attached and without those individuals' knowledge. Those investigators would be allowed to keep the records indefinitely and use them as they saw fit, conceivably even to prosecute a patient.

In granting ready access to law enforcers, Shalala disregarded the work of an advisory group that three months ago urged her to adopt "the strongest substantive and procedural protections" against subsequent uses of medical records by investigators.

The Clinton administration's recommendations, required by Congress a year ago, represent the federal government's most significant attempt to control the flow of medical information at a time when new computer networks have allowed patients' most personal medical details to be glimpsed — and used — ways that would until recently have been inconceivable. Thursday, Shalala cited the case of a Boston health maintenance organization in which every clinical

employee could read notes from patients' psycho-therapy sessions. In another case, she said, a Colorado medical student copied patients' health records and sold them to medical malpractice attorneys.

The federal standards would augment a patchwork of privacy measures that most states have begun to enact in recent years. Although a few states have comprehensive laws, most provide protection on narrower matters of particular sensitivity, such as AIDS tests and mental health records. Slightly more than half the states ensure patients some kind of access to their own records.

Unlike most state laws, the standards put forth by the Clinton administration would apply to all settings in which medical records are kept, including doctors' offices, hospitals, insurance companies, claims administrators and pharmaceutical companies. It would extend protections that now apply only to government-funded research to all types of medical study.

Haitians Place Blame for Ferry Tragedy on Preval Government

By Serge F. Kovaleski
THE WASHINGTON POST

MONTROUIS, HAITI

Moments before the sea swallowed the *Pride of La Gonave*, Dadson Fontlis recalls, banter among friends and the sight of romping children were transformed into a cacophony of shrieks, pleas for divine intervention and frenzy as the ferry capsized.

"What I sadly remember is all these people being thrown on top of each other and begging God to save them, to give them some kind of miracle," Fontlis said today. "There were children near me who eventually drowned and were yelling, 'I don't want to die, I don't want to die.'"

The sinking of the ferry at dawn Monday — the sixth such disaster in five years in Haiti — claimed an estimated 245 lives. It is believed to have been caused by the passengers, who kept shuffling from one side of the boat to the other in an effort to stop it from listing as it approached the beach here on its regular commuter journey from the nearby island of Gonave. Finally, the human weight caused the 61-foot ferry — which survivors say carried no life jackets — to topple to the left and capsize.

Grieving families contended that if the government of President Rene Preval had moved sooner on plans to construct a dock at the beach, where several commuter ferries operate from each day, perhaps the catastrophe could have been avoided. According to survivors, the boat keeled over while turning around in rough waters about 100 yards from shore so passengers could disembark from the rear and be carried to land on the shoulders of workers who charge the equivalent of about 50 cents per person.

Tens of millions of dollars in vital international assistance to Haiti continues to be held up because of delays by the government in implementing key reforms, including privatization and modernization of such inefficient state-run enterprises as the phone company.

As for effectively regulating transportation — including the private ferry services, which for many Haitians are the only means of traveling to certain parts of this island nation because of inadequate or nonexistent roads — one Presidential Palace official said, "Yes, there are rules and regulations, but there is no money to enforce them."

During a visit here this week,

Preval issued a statement saying the ferry sinking again shows the weaknesses of the country's infrastructure and his administration will continue efforts to provide Haitians with "reliable and sure" maritime transportation.

Although a number of survivors have said that about 700 people were on the ferry — including many children, who routinely are not required to pay — the vessel's operator has insisted that no more than the legal limit of 265 tickets were sold for the trip. In February 1993, a ferry sank with about 1,000 people aboard, and as many as 700 are thought to have perished.

Over the past two days, Haitians have held demonstrations and accused the government and U.N. personnel assisting in the recovery operation of taking too long to retrieve the dead. A total of 58 corpses have been recovered by divers, according to U.N. officials.

"What we have of a government has no respect for the dead or those in mourning," said Jacques Senat, who lost eight relatives in the capsizing, including his sister, brother and uncle. "Let's go. Bring up our relatives so we can see them for the last time and bury them with dignity."

American Life Expectancy Rose, Infant Mortality Rate Fell in 1996

By Marlene Cimons
LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

The vital signs for U.S. health were stronger than ever last year, with life expectancy hitting an all-time high, infant mortality dropping to record low rates and AIDS-related deaths, homicides, suicides and births by teen-agers all declining, federal health officials reported Thursday.

In a remarkably upbeat assessment of the country's overall health, the government said that in 1996, Americans were living longer — an overall average of 76.1 years, up from 75.8 years in 1995.

Also, infant mortality reached a new low of 7.2 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Health officials said that a 15 percent drop in deaths from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome was the reason for much of the total decline.

Confirming the impact of the use of drug combinations in treating AIDS, the disease has shed its designation as the leading killer of

adults between the ages of 25-44. It now ranks second, after accidents, as the cause of death among this group.

Health and Human Services Secretary Donna E. Shalala described the annual report as "a wealth of good news," adding that she was especially encouraged by the progress in treating AIDS.

Dr. David Satcher, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who is to be nominated by President Clinton Friday

for surgeon general, attributed the gains on several health fronts to education and prevention programs. He said these efforts "are paying real dividends," and predicted that the health picture would continue to improve.

But the news was not all good.

Despite overall reductions in homicide and suicide rates, they still remained the second and third leading causes of death, respectively, among youths ages 15-24. There also was a slight increase in the number of low-birth-weight babies

born in 1996.

Also, although it has narrowed, a discouraging gap continues to exist between the races.

In life expectancy, for example, black males were living an average of only 66.1 years, compared to 73.8 years for white males. This disparity did narrow slightly between 1995 and 1996.

And while both racial groups recorded declines in infant mortality, whites experienced 6 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to more than twice that, 14.2, among blacks.

Some public health experts complained that the racial differential was still too wide, particularly when viewed in the context of the overall progress.

"Other gaps could have some biological basis, but this one shouldn't," said Dr. Richard Riegelman, dean of the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services.

"Yes, there is good news for the population as a whole, but why are some groups left behind?" he said.

Senate Approves Compromise Bill Regarding Standardized Tests

LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

By an 87-13 vote, the Senate Thursday agreed to a last-minute compromise with the White House that allows the federal government to pay for an ambitious Clinton administration plan to develop national standardized reading and math tests.

But an odd alliance of conservative Republicans and liberal Democrats in the House is expected to join forces next week to reject the proposal, setting the stage for a possible veto showdown with President Clinton.

Because in both houses the testing issue is attached to the \$80 billion appropriations bill for the departments of Education, Labor, and Health and Human Services, the dispute could disrupt their funding for the new fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1. The Senate approved the massive spending bill 92-8.

Thursday's Senate vote would allow taxpayer dollars to be spent on development and implementation of an annual reading test for fourth-graders and a math test for eighth-graders.

Officials at the Education Department estimate it would cost about \$32 million to design the tests and up to \$100 million to fully implement them. The testing is proposed to begin by spring 1999.

El Nino Summit Announced Following Subcommittee Hearing

LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

Federal, state and local officials plan to gather next month in Los Angeles for a summit on El Nino, the weather condition some predict will cause the wettest California winter at least since 1982-83 and perhaps in a half-century, U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer, D-Calif., announced Thursday.

News of the summit — which came hours after a lengthy congressional subcommittee hearing on the odd oceanographic forces that cause storms and droughts worldwide — pleased California leaders who had been prodding the Clinton administration to take a more aggressive approach in readying for the expected weather problems.

A cadre of six weather experts who briefed the House's Energy and Environment subcommittee Thursday morning refused to speculate on exactly how much rain El Nino would dump on the Pacific Coast, but said Southern California could easily see as much as three times its normal precipitation.

The experts urged passage next week of an appropriations bill that includes \$18 million for two El Nino-related research projects, arguing that investment in understanding the phenomenon would ultimately save the government millions in disaster relief.

Unlike a detailed discussion of the science of El Nino at the Scripps Institute in San Diego in June, the Los Angeles summit will focus on more practical concerns.

Key Clinton Aide Traces Donor Access to Sloppy Procedures

LOS ANGELES TIMES

WASHINGTON

National Security Adviser Samuel R. "Sandy" Berger testified Thursday that sloppy White House procedures allowed some Democratic donors with questionable reputations — and their foreign guests — to meet with President Clinton and his top aides.

But Berger, the highest-ranking White House aide to appear before the Senate fund-raising hearings to date, insisted that the visits did not influence U.S. foreign policy and said that a new policy instituted earlier this year subjects all foreigners seeking White House access to a National Security Council review.

Although Berger said that NSC officials never believed that the agency should "police" White House visitors, they did occasionally issue warnings, which went unheeded, about invitees such as controversial oilman Roger Tamraz and Democratic donor Johnny Chien Chuen Chung. Other visitors — a Chinese arms dealer and a Russian businessman with alleged mob ties, slipped into the White House without the NSC's knowledge, Berger acknowledged.

The Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, which is investigating campaign finance improprieties, called Berger for questioning to highlight how the Democrats' fund raising veered dangerously close to foreign policy during the 1996 presidential campaign as a variety of donors with overseas interests used contributions to gain access to top U.S. government officials.

Owner, Partners Announce Plans To Take BET Holdings Private

THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON

Robert L. Johnson, owner and founder of BET Holdings Inc., and his corporate partners want to take the Washington-based company private, officials said Thursday.

Johnson and Liberty Media Corp., a subsidiary of cable giant TCI Inc., are offering to buy the six million shares of BET that they don't already own for \$48 each, a 17 percent premium over Wednesday's closing price.

If the offer is approved, Johnson and Liberty would be the sole owners of Black Entertainment Network, an African American-oriented cable operation that reaches 50 million households, and a growing entertainment empire that includes restaurants, a pay-per-view network, a jazz channel and *Emerge* magazine.

"Analysts could imagine plenty of sound reasons for Johnson and Liberty to buy out the remaining public shares of BET, a company that in 1991 became the first African American-controlled company traded on the New York Stock Exchange and which has made Johnson one of the country's most prominent black entrepreneurs.

"My theory is that they perceived that BET shares were undervalued relative to its cable competitors and that the market wasn't going to give them a fair valuation," said E. Breck Wheeler, a J.C. Bradford analyst in Nashville. "BET is the largest publicly traded independent cable network and the value of its subscriber base alone is huge."

OPINION

Teaching by the Rules



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The Tech (ISSN 0148-9607) is published on Tuesdays and Fridays during the academic year (except during MIT vacations), Wednesdays during September and monthly during the summer for \$35.00 per year. Third Class by *The Tech*, Room W20-483, 84 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029. Third Class postage paid at Boston, Mass. Non-profit Organization Permit No. 59720. **POSTMASTER:** Please send all address changes to our mailing address: *The Tech*, P.O. Box 397029, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029. Telephone: (617) 253-1541, editorial: (617) 258-8324, business: (617) 258-8226, facsimile. Advertising, subscription, and typesetting rates available. Entire contents © 1997 *The Tech*. Printed on recycled paper by MassWeb Printing Co.

The MIT faculty has a practice each semester of violating its own rules governing schedules for classes, exams, and end-of-term assignments. The tremendous workload that students face has become part of the MIT mystique, but this is no excuse for ignoring scheduling rules that the faculty itself voted into existence. Because the faculty refuse to combat the problem, students have been thrust into the difficult role of policy enforcers. This is unacceptable, and the new chair of the faculty, Lotte S. Bailyn, must take the lead on solving this problem now.

The faculty established the rules on schedules for a good reason: to prevent students from being overburdened by the work in any one class. But every semester, as previous chairs of the faculty such as Professor of Urban Studies and Planning Lawrence S. Bacow '72 can attest to, professors commit dozens upon dozens of violations of the rules: 12-unit classes whose workloads go well beyond 12 hours a week; classes that meet during the 5 to 7 p.m. block that is off-limits for undergraduate subjects; professors who schedule night exams during the term and who refuse to cancel a problem set or a class session; classes that require a presentation, final paper, and exam during the last week of classes; recitations and end-of-term problem sets that are "optional" but students have to do if they want to learn the material; blanket extensions on assignments far into finals week.

Some professors commit some of these violations under the guise of doing students a favor by giving them extra time on assignments or extra class time to learn material. Others give more work in their classes as a matter of competition — to force students view their course as seriously as they view their other classes. Still other professors, as Bacow noted in a *Faculty Newsletter* piece last semester about this issue, let students vote to break the rules, apparently under the notion that students can override faculty rules when it suits class scheduling needs.

Other Standards For Women, Minorities

In his column "Gender Affirmation" [Sept. 9], Anders Hove G says MIT does not use different standards in its affirmative action policy. Here is a statement from the horse's mouth, former Director of Admissions Michael C. Behnke, courtesy of the Nov. 9, 1996, issue of *Counterpoint*:

"We have a different set of rules due to our affirmative action policy."

Behnke also says, "MIT tries to admit people who have the ability to succeed socially."

Need I be the one to point out that the Office of Information does not have access to reliable information on this aspect of any applicant?

If Hove wants to defend the affirmative action policy, he should first represent it for what it is.

Omri Schwarz G

No Need to Insult Believers in Religion

In his recent column, "Taking on God in Course VI" [Sept. 9], J. Ryan Bender '00 seems to use a disagreement over a class offering as a personal launching pad for a vindictive attack on religion. Calling the Course VI class entitled "God and Computers" (6.915) an example of "Christianity's declaration of war on science," he satirizes the instructor and mocks anyone who would profess faith in a Christian God. Whether or not Bender is correct in arguing that the class should not be offered is one thing; writing that "Christianity has no solution to human beings' daily problems and sufferings" is a very different matter.

Bender makes the same mistake that many

who deem themselves defenders of pure science, unpolluted by religion, have the habit of making. He forgets history. Many of the greatest scientists in history have also been Christians, some of them theologians and apologists in their own right. The towers of Buildings 1, 2, 3, and 4 bear the names of prominent scientists. Many of these men studied science not because of an abstract notion of "productive thought and effort to overcome" but because they saw in the universe an orderliness and a beauty which could only have come from a god.

Bender faults the instructor for going beyond the scope of a class in artificial intelligence because she attempts to connect it with "Christian myths." But at the same time, he goes beyond the scope of his argument by categorically denouncing Christianity and confusing the real question of appropriateness. Bender should remember the framework in which he argues and limit himself to statements he can support without resorting to name-calling and irrational accusations.

Believing in Jesus Christ does not require suspension of rational thought; it requires acknowledging the fact that science, or anything else for that matter, is unable to meet human beings' need for a savior. I pray that one day Bender's eyes may be opened to see the perfect solution that Christianity indeed has for human beings' daily problems and sufferings.

Robby L. Stephenson G

A Human Response To A Divine Calling

In recent weeks, several columnists have offered some interesting opinions on God, Christians, and Christian organizations on campus.

Instead of equating "religion" and "belief," I submit this to the columnists:

Stamping out this behavior is a question of faculty discipline. Students should not be put in the awkward position of choosing between telling professors what to do, filing complaints behind their backs, or just remaining silent. Ideally, students could protest *en masse* by complaining openly or by simply not doing the work, but in practice, the fear of bad grades keeps students divided. The bottom line is that the faculty set out the rules that prohibit the violations. It's the faculty's job to stick to the rules and enforce them.

The larger issue here is the way professors structure their classes in the first place. Many faculty pay lip service to the cliché that MIT students are overburdened with work, but few are actually willing to change the amount of work they require in their classes. Courses like Circuits and Electronics (6.002), Introduction to Experimental Biology (7.02), Integrated Chemical Engineering I and II (10.490 and 10.491), and Unified Engineering I to IV (16.10, 16.20, 16.30, and 16.40) are notorious for massive workloads that go far beyond the units assigned to them.

Professors often take for granted the fact that they have a certain amount of material to teach in a term and that they can require any number of classes, assignments, and exams to cover that material. Although course content may change from year to year, professors don't necessarily alter the volume of work in their classes. Many assignments require mindless grunge that takes hours to work through and teaches students little. Professors should be making a serious effort to evaluate how classes can be taught more effectively. Making workloads more manageable while teaching students the same or more should be a primary goal.

The faculty should deal with these problems now. Bailyn in particular should take the lead on solving the rules violation problems. She is, after all, the one who will have to write the endless number of e-mails to professors breaking the rules once students start complaining. Either way, she certainly has her work cut out for her during her tenure as chair of the faculty.

Letters To The Editor

Religion is the outward manifestation of belief. Religion is a human response to a divine calling. Christianity is a religion, composed of human beings who err like anyone else. To say something like, "Christians are divisive" is obvious and holds no more meaning than "world leaders are divisive."

Just because Christians in the past didn't like Copernicus' heliocentric model and excommunicated him doesn't mean that Christians today would do the same. To assert that Christianity has no solutions to the problems of today is not really true.

One could argue that Mother Teresa did more to solve the problems of the world than all the scientists at MIT combined. But the question is really irrelevant. The real question is whether God has solutions to the problems of the world today, and the answer to that question is left as an exercise for the reader.

Timothy P. Shiau '98

Errata

In a table accompanying the story "Rush Results on Par with Predictions, Previous Year" in the Sept. 9 issue of *The Tech*, Pi Lambda Phi was listed as having seven accepted bids in '96. The fraternity actually had 17 that year.

A caption accompanying a series of photos covering the Princess Diana memorial service in Boston, also in the Sept. 9 issue of *The Tech*, incorrectly claimed the service was given by Rev. J. P. E. Streit. The service was in fact given by Samuel Lloyd III, and the corresponding photograph depicted Lloyd, not Streit.

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Corridor of the Infinite 1970s

Ditching the Dreary Paint And Stale Displays Could Work Wonders

Douglas E. Heimburger

A lot has changed in the past year along the Infinite Corridor. The Fishbowl has departed, taking with it the sight of sleep-deprived students, and the new Student Services Center has opened, with its bright alcoves and color-coordinated furniture.

Yet even with these changes — which could be considered monumental by MIT standards — the Infinite Corridor still looks like it hasn't really been updated since the 1970s.

Anyone who walks down the corridor can see that many of the displays are very dated. Except for the bulletin boards for general use, which are so heavily used they are cleaned off twice a week, many poster areas seem like they haven't changed since the days when hippies were the rage and when tear gas was used to deter war protesters on west campus.

Most of the posters in the corridor that are more permanent fixtures haven't been updated even stylistically since the 1970s. Indeed, there aren't any posters signifying MIT's contribution to the humanities, political science, and economics, three fields that have strengthened considerably in stature since that time.

Even if the content were relevant, these displays make still the entire corridor look dated. With their 1970s fonts and brownish colors to the hair styles portrayed in the pictures, the displays make the Institute look like it hasn't really advanced since that time.

Student groups that have a permanent space in the corridor help to make the corridor look dated. Until recently, WMBR's poster space had a sign-up for its Fall 1996 open house, replete with LED lights powered by batteries that had lost their juice several months ago. Several theater groups displays were also out of date, displaying information about their spring or even Independent Activities Period performances.

The Undergraduate Association, indeed, is particularly notorious — and it has one of the most visible bulletin boards, located in Lobby 7. Until recently, the UA's boards displayed information about the Airport Shuttle, which took students from their dormitories to Logan Airport at the end of last term.

Even the colors of the Infinite Corridor are

decidedly 1970s-ish. After all, when was the last time that anyone (not using Institute-provided paint) painted a dorm room in any one of the colors like bright green, red, and purple that cover the walls between the buildings that make up the corridor. Of course, the rest of the walls in the corridor aren't much brighter, having been painted in the almost-brown Institute white that's all over campus.

Fortunately, there have been improvements made to the corridor recently, namely the brightening of the area around the Student Services Center with an alcove for meeting people and new windows looking in on an Athena Quickstation cluster. But much remains to be done to make the corridor more modern and more reflective of the Institute of today.

In MIT's vast bureaucracy, of course, a committee must exist for this purpose, and one does. The Building Committee is composed of many people including the president, the chairman of the MIT Corporation, the director of Physical Plant, and the director of the Planning Office. According to Director of Special Projects Stephen D. Immerman, the committee

corridor to brighten and modernize the space.

In places where they really aren't needed, the bulletin boards could be removed entirely. The boards in Lobby 7, for example, were installed within the last 25 years. If they were removed, the entire lobby would seem a lot less cluttered and more in tune with the image that the space should project. The drop posters still have a place, though; they at least provide timely information that really personalizes MIT to visitors and shows what's happening right now.

That's more than can be said for the reams of stale posters that advertise events from two weeks ago. The UA bulletin boards, like the "Official Notices" board on the other side of the Lobby, are of little interest to students and reflect poorly on the Institute as a whole.

Other ideas for the corridor would require significantly more work. Creating more alcoves like the Student Services Center entryway could provide new places for students to congregate and would make the entire main campus space more personable. Better, brighter lighting would also improve the experience, especially at night, when the Institute's "energy-saving" bulbs cast



has review and approval authority for redesigns of areas like the Infinite Corridor and Lobby 7.

Hopefully, the committee has taken note of the recent state of the Infinite Corridor. If they were to consider an upgrade, they don't have to walk far to find a decent model. After all, there are numerous examples of better design on campus that could very easily be emulated in the corridor. The new displays in Building 56, for example, display historical things in a much more effective way than the Infinite Corridor displays do. While the topic of the display — hacks — is more humorous than those in the corridor, the display style alone could be copied into the

only a dim glow over the long hallway.

The Infinite Corridor and Lobby 7 are two of the most visible places for visitors on campus. Revising and modernizing the displays — and removing those that don't serve a purpose — would take steps toward making it a more welcome place for visitors and MIT students alike. Permanent renovations to expand the space for informal meetings would be even better.

Any change, however, would go a long way toward removing the dark, decrepit look of the corridor and would perhaps make life just a little less depressing for the thousands of people who pass through the space every day.

Pilots of the Indiglo Twilight

Guest Column
Wesley Chan

There's an invasion of Pilots on this campus. No, I don't mean the kind that fly airplanes. I mean those gray message-pad-like electronic organizers made by modem manufacturer U.S. Robotics that are smaller than the palm of your hand.

Depending on which flavor you get, Pilots sell for between \$300 and \$400. They allow you to schedule appointments, keep an address list, and search for any string of text — all at the touch of a button. The snazzier, more expensive version even lets you read and send e-mail when you connect it to your personal computer.

With all these flashy features, it's no wonder why almost everyone on campus seems to have a Pilot. I recently witnessed a bizarre situation in which, after one student pulled out his Pilot, four others followed suit, as though it were a natural reflex. After discovering that they were part of the ever-growing Pilot user community, they proceeded to discuss all the different programs that they've downloaded off the Web and "hot-synced" — as the initiated say — into their Pilots.

I've seen this sort of discussion happen several times, but with a number of different topics of discussion, from how much memory each person has in his respective Pilot to the latest accessories on the market to chic leather cases to spiffy screen protectors.

If all this weren't bad enough, most of my

friends have Pilots, and even my adviser has a one. With all the Pilots I've seen so far, it may well be that there are more of these nifty gray gadgets at MIT than there are Athena workstations. In fact, even the MIT Coop is even selling Pilots in their new fall lineup of products, prominently displayed in a glass case right next to the HP48GX and TI-85 graphing calculators, which used to be the really cool items to have around MIT until the Pilot came along.

Is the Pilot really that much better than the traditional pen and paper organizers, and does it justify that extra \$400 expense? Pilot users will always answer with a resounding "Yes!" But when you ask them why, you'll get a different answer from every user.

One Pilot user told me that his Pilot eliminated his need to carry — and lose — little scraps of paper that he would use to write down phone numbers. That was a problem he constantly faced when he carried his Dayrunner organizer. Another user professed that the Pilot "Indiglo" feature, which backlights the Pilot's screen, allowed him to schedule appointments in the dark — something, of course, he couldn't do with his old paper organizer. A third user even claimed that he could write and evaluate Scheme programs on his Pilot. He dared me to try doing that on a Dayrunner.

I admit that I, too, have fallen prey to the Pilot craze that seems to be taking over MIT. I purchased one last spring, and since I've had it, my paper organizer has been sitting in my drawer collecting dust. However, I will perhaps be the first Pilot owner to admit that my

Pilot is no more than a fun and overpriced toy.

My dusty Dayrunner would probably suffice, and it would keep me as equally, if not better, organized than my Pilot. Most people who have Pilots would probably secretly agree with me about this. After all, it takes significantly more time to enter an appointment on a Pilot using pen-based handwriting recognition interface than just simply writing it down in a Dayrunner. (Why anyone would want — or need — to schedule appointments in the dark or interpret Scheme on the go is beyond me.)

It is, however, those same reasons that explain the long lines that zigged around corners outside computer stores when Microsoft Windows 95 came out over two years ago. U.S. Robotics is finding that it can't stock stores fast enough to keep up with the demand for Pilots. And I found myself visiting several stores before I forked over \$418.50 to buy a Pilot.

Whenever casual observers ask me why I bought one, I'll always pull mine out and show them the nifty e-mail feature and the cool image of the MIT campus map I have stored electronically. I conveniently forget to mention that it really doesn't increase my productivity or make me any more efficient.

After all, I think everyone should have this overpriced toy. That way, I'll have plenty of people who will agree with me when I tell them that my Pilot was worth every penny of my \$418.50 simply because it can defeat me in a game of chess. Betcha your Dayrunner can't do that.

Wesley Chan is a member of the Class of 2000.

In The Limelight

Guest Column
Mitali Dhar

As classes begin, a wave of feelings seems to overcome each of us — joy to see all of our friends again, grief at missing all our friends from summer, fear at thinking of all those new classes and professors, and indifference, since what could possibly be worse than having no life and failing two classes like last term?

Whatever the feelings, we are here to face MIT again — the place we come back to every term, sometimes, it seems, just because they say that an education here will take you places. And who are "they"? Your parents, your professors, your neighbors, your friends who didn't get in here, strangers you meet outside the confines of the Institute?

Have you ever wondered what all those people out there — the ones who don't have the so-called privilege of belonging to this school — ever think about us, the supposedly privileged ones who study here? Contact with an MIT student seems to bring about different reactions in different people. Every summer, we all meet various people who look at us and talk to us differently just because we are from MIT. They come in a number of varieties.

Mr. I-Kiss-The-Ground-You-Walk-On. This person thinks that you are the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars to the educated population of the world. You are the local genius who managed to get into this great school, which must mean that you have an IQ of at least 200. You supposedly know everything and, therefore, every word that comes out of your mouth is taken as the truth and the law. If this person comes in the form of a parent, he runs to you for advice on how to get his child into MIT. Every kid looks at you in wonder and talks in hushed tones about you.

Mr. You-Had-Better-Know-Everything. This person assumes that you know all there is to know about technology in the world, and God forbid that you display the slightest bit of ignorance. Since you're an MIT student, you had better show him that you can do calculus in your head, can program in your sleep, and derive any physics equation in a flash — irrespective of your major, of course. He expects you to prove your MIT caliber with answers to problems that even your worst professor never dreamt of asking you.

Mr. Where-Did-You-Say-You-Went-To-School? This is the person who brings our soaring egos crashing to the ground. This person has absolutely no clue about anything in the world — or at least that's what snotty little I would assume if he hadn't heard of MIT. He doesn't care if you go to MIT or are still in junior high school. MIT could stand for Men in Trenches or Martian Intelligence Training for all he cares.

Mr. I-Am-Better-Than-You-Can-Ever-Hope-To-Be. Yeah, I'm talking about that person who most probably goes to that school up the river or some similar place. This person is paranoid about the possibility of you outshining him, so to him, anything you've learned at MIT is looked down upon as the total rubbish you'd expect from a technological school. In this person's opinion, you must be able to talk about Socrates and Emerson and Milton and Rembrandt all in the same breath for him to even consider having a conversation with you. Should you even dare to bring up the names of Einstein or Newton or Pythagoras, he will, with a condescending sneer, turn his back on you, and that will be the end of your acquaintance.

Mr. Glad-To-See-You-Again-Hope-You-Haven't-Changed. Your high school buddies are in this category. They don't care where or what you study, just as long as you act normal with them. You could be the perfect straight-A student at MIT, the person who messes up the curve for everyone else in the class, or you could be the kid who wonders every day how he ever got in to MIT. But as long as you are cool with your friends, they accept you as you are. These are the people you look forward to hanging out with in the summer. They don't try to test your mental abilities, and they don't try to outshine you or even expect you shine.

The next time you feel like an exhibit shining under the MIT spotlight, just think of the people who treat you like a normal person, and realize that there will always be someone out there who won't give two hoots about what college you attend. And remember that the day you decided to come to MIT, you gave a small part of yourself up to public scrutiny and criticism at the MIT exhibition. The latter is, unfortunately, just something you have to deal with.

Mitali Dhar is a member of the Class of 1999.

THE ARTS

FILM REVIEW

A gift for the brother who already has it all — *A Game*

THE GAME

Directed by David Fincher.
Written by John Brancato and Michael Ferris.
Starring Michael Douglas, Sean Penn, James Rebhorn, Deborah Kara Unger, Peter Donat, Carrol Baker, and Armin Mueller-Stahl.

By Vladimir Zelevinsky

Imagine if each and every Agatha Christie novel ended with the revelation that the butler did it. Each novel might be different from the other novels, more or less suspenseful, more or less interesting, but the ending would be the same. Sounds highly unlikely, doesn't it?

Well, yes, it does, but maybe not if you're a writer of Hollywood thrillers. They all end with the main character (also known as "good guy") trouncing the villains (also known as "bad guys"), and getting the attractive female (also known as "the girl"). *The Game* is a Hollywood thriller. There, now you know everything you need to know.

The bright, optimistic, so-cheerful-it-hurts conclusion is a particular disappointment in this case, especially because for a while it looks like *The Game* might be a winner, so it's sad that it gets so lost in the end.

The plot concerns an uptight investment banker, Nicholas Van Orton (Douglas), who gets from his brother a gift certificate to a company called "Consumer Recreation Services". This company, for a sizeable fee, puts its clients into a custom-made adventure — weird things start happening, strangers drop cryptic clues, and the plot thickens. After a long (and frequently tedious) set-up, *The Game* hits a high note and manages to sustain it for quite a while. It's fun to watch the protagonist drawn deeper and deeper into a twisting plot, where it's not even clear anymore what is the game and what is reality. This ambiguity makes the movie seem like it might actually be about something interesting and important. Then the ambiguity is resolved (after pretending several times that we finally know what's going on), and the movie crashes and burns, becoming as generic as its title.

Maybe the customary Hollywood desire to wrap things up neatly is to blame. The intriguing

notion that Nicolas might just be paranoid and losing his mind is not developed in any way. The fact that he starts as a businessman, ruthless up to the point of being inhuman, is lost as well.

Director David Fincher (*Seven*) obviously went a long way from his first movie, the Filmed In Confus-o-Vision *Alien 3*, but still mistakes insufficient lighting for atmosphere. Douglas does a good but uninspired job; set design is gothic and impressive; and the score is tingling with suspense. But all in all, this works only to prod the viewers into reacting the way they're supposed to.

If this sounds like a good way to kill a couple of hours, go for it. If not, you can check out the collection of short stories, *The Club of Queer Trades*, by G.K. Chesterton, and read "The Adventure of Major Brown". It has the plot identical to *The Game*, but has more fun doing it.

With its stylish visuals and general creepiness, *The Game* might trick you, for a while, into thinking that you're watching something worthwhile, but the illusion won't last long. It might look like fromage, and it might smell like fromage, but if it tastes like Cheez Wiz, you know what it is.



Nicholas Van Orton (Michael Douglas) receives a birthday gift he can't return in *The Game*.

FILM REVIEW

Quiet, unassuming, lonely, handicapped — she's perfect

IN THE COMPANY OF MEN

Written and directed by Neil LaBute.
Starring Aaron Eckhart, Matt Malloy, and Stacy Edwards.

By Vladimir Zelevinsky

Hold onto your seats, ladies and gentlemen, for the bulk of *In The Company of Men* involves two young healthy white-collar workers torturing a handicapped woman.

You might look for relief in the fact that the said torture is purely mental — but you won't find it there. Martin Scorsese had said about his classy period piece *The Age of Innocence* that it was his most violent movie, and this case is similar.

The plot of *In the Company of Men* is as geometrically spare as the visual style the movie employs. Two mid-level office work-

ers, Chad (Aaron Eckhart) and Howard (Matt Malloy), working for an unspecified company, travel to an unspecified city on a six-week business trip. Both were recently dumped by their significant others and feeling bitter towards women in general. So they develop a plan: find a lonely, fragile, sensitive, and available woman (all in one package); seduce her (compliments, flowers, small talk, dinners, sex, etc.) and, when the six weeks are over, rudely dump her. They easily find such a woman in Christine (Stacy Edwards), a lonely secretary who also happens to be deaf.

By the time this is established (in the first fifteen minutes or so), the female halves of couples in the audience are looking at their dates with apprehension slowly turning into disgust. However, it should be made clear that this movie is *not* about men being cruel to women. It's not about men being cruel to men, either (although there are numerous

instances of this as well), it's about people being cruel to other people. It is not an accident that the two protagonists are office workers, belonging to the titular "company." It's the workplace ethos of gossip, backstabbing, and demonstrating your superiority in order to survive that made Chad and Howard into what they are. Simply put, it's a Darwinian world out there.

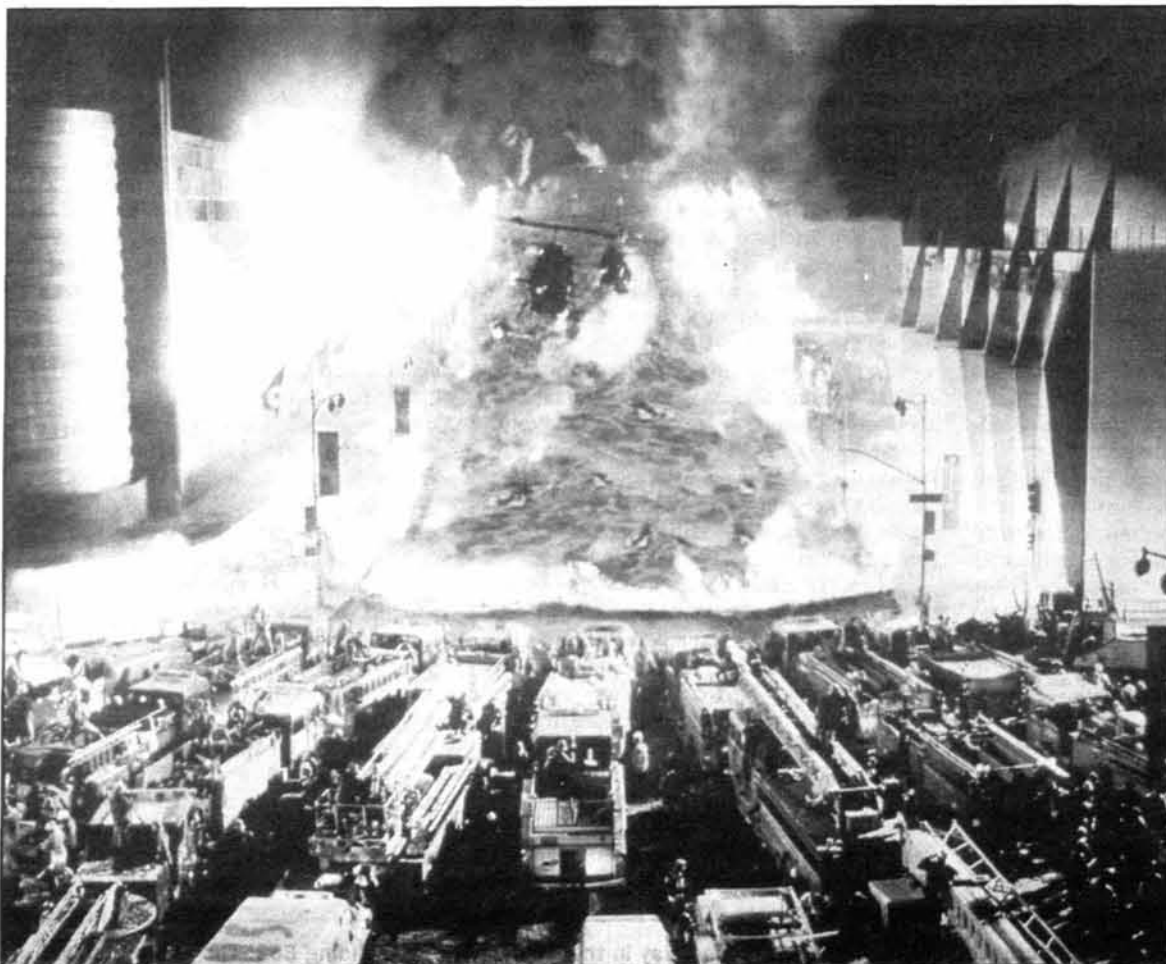
Not that the movie limits itself to exploring this issue (by the way, the phrase "explore the issue" is as much of a cliché as Chad saying to Christine "I want to nurture this relationship and see it blossom"). The ending pulls the rug from under our feet again, and shows that the movie was about something completely different altogether. When we see how these people treat each other, the effect is chilling; when we see the results of such treatment, it's shattering.

Now, I hear the voices saying "Gee,

sounds like a fun movie." Well, yes, it is, from one point of view. The acting is impeccable (we know a lot about two main characters before they even speak a single word), the dialogue is sparkling, and the story has a few unexpected plot twists.

On the other hand, it is hardly original. Chad's brilliant seducer is just an updated version of Vicomte De Valmont (there's quite a few similarities with *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* as well as *The Age of Innocence*), and the ending echoes *La Dolce Vita*.

The biggest objection, however, might be that LaBute treats his characters precisely the way they treat each other — with disguised contempt, manipulating them to serve the hidden agenda. This probably explains the bad taste in the mouth after watching this movie, not because it shows something we don't know, but because it shows us precisely what we do know.



LSC is showing *Volcano* (left), starring Tommy Lee Jones and Anne Heche, tonight at 7 and 10 p.m. and Sunday at 4 p.m. *Addicted to Love* (above), about two spurned lovers getting revenge on their ex's, starring Meg Ryan and Mathew Broderick, plays Saturday at 7 and 10 p.m. and Sunday at 7 p.m.

GAME REVIEW

Monkey Island 3

Hi, I'm selling these fine leather jackets... again

By Mark Huang

For those of us who remember that awful time five years ago called high school, the most anticipated game to hit the pirating boards in 1992 was *Monkey Island 2*. It was fast. It was slick. It was funny. It was VGA.

The Curse of Monkey Island, the latest in the installment, continues LucasArts' tradition of making nerds around the world chew their nails in impatience for the sequel. It's taken them five years to complete the game, enough time to have eaten off an arm and a good side of shoulder, but they rarely disappoint: *Monkey Island 3* is far and away the best adventure game I've played this year.

More mature gamers may remember the good old days of 320x200, when designers had to disguise the fact that their lead characters had five-pixel faces by spinning a good tale. M13 doesn't abuse its newfound appreciation for DirectX by slacking on the story, though. The demo alone took about a half-hour to complete. Some simple math, ignoring higher-order terms, reveals that the typical gamer will get at least 30 hours of good, clean fun out of M13.

The graphics are all drawn in gorgeous full-screen SVGA. Characters move fluidly on a Pentium, with no signs of jagged edges or skipping. The animation is film-quality; the screen shot is from a standard scene, not an intro. A continuous soundtrack also plays

in the background. I haven't heard the music, but the effects and speech are excellent so far. Gary Coleman has provided his talents for some of the voices, but I don't expect that Arnold will be making a guest appearance (I could be wrong).

The interface is a bit limited (you can use your hands, eyes, and mouth to do the various things that hands, eyes, and mouths do), but the puzzles, of course, require creative uses of it. The basic plot is pretty straightforward: rescue Elaine from the nefarious and apparently marriage-inclined ghost pirate Le Chuck. The usual difficulties ensue: restoring Elaine to human form after she is turned into a statue, escaping from hordes of undead, rubber-ducky-wearing pirates, that sort of thing. Much of your time will be spent listening and talking to other characters; you can speed up or slow down this process if you like. The game, like most adventure games, is primarily linear in plot,

but you may be able to continue on and come back to a particularly difficult puzzle if necessary.

It was a bit of a shock to see Guy decked out like your average engineer: clumsy, lanky, feet the size and shape of Twinkies. The familiar mundane-looking Guy most gamers have grown accustomed to (since, hell, he basically looked like Indy and every other LucasArts character to make it into VGA) has gotten a major facelift. However, the hallmark of all of the *Monkey Island* games, terrible jokes and immature humor, is still alive and well in him. At each death-

defying step, you'll always have the option of making him crack just one... last... joke.

Next week: *Diablo*

Author's note: This is the first review in a series. I will review, in alternate columns, unreleased previews, brand new games, and current games. If you're looking for someone to play a game with, or want a game reviewed, e-mail me at markman@mit.edu. A web page will be started soon with links to demo copies of all reviewed games and a forum for finding others on campus who are playing them.



FILM REVIEW

Sometimes you find a conspiracy, and sometimes they find you

CONSPIRACY THEORY

Directed by Richard Donner.
Written by Brian Helgeland.
Starring Mel Gibson, Julia Roberts, and Patrick Stewart.

By Teresa Huang
STAFF REPORTER

Richard Donner's latest film, *Conspiracy Theory*, looked better in the trailer. It had action, suspense, intelligence, and Mel Gibson. What could go wrong? Plenty. Though the film manages to be somewhat entertaining and suspenseful, it concomitantly suffers from too much plot and not enough character development.

Mel Gibson plays New York cabbie Jerry Fletcher, a paranoid man who reads newspapers between the lines to find the conspiracy behind the story, and publishes his theories in a crude underground newsletter called *Conspiracy Theory*. Aside from his five subscribers, Jerry shares his theories with unwilling Justice Department attorney Alice Sutton, played by Julia Roberts, who listens to him mostly out of pity. Although he takes his newsletter endeavor quite seriously, most people write him off as a nut case until he is suddenly and mysteriously kidnapped, leading him to believe one of his conspiracies must have been true. Drawing Alice into his quest, Jerry seeks to find the men who kidnapped him and to ultimately find the truth.

The highlight of this movie by far is Mel Gibson's characterization of the slightly crazed though lovable New Yorker Jerry. He is thoroughly paranoid and instantly suspecting of everything he sees around him. Convinced there's always someone out to get him, he finds safety in being compulsive about his own protection. His various home security rituals are especially excessive (his apartment alone easily contains more locks and booby traps than a prison), though they're simply part of his daily routine. Jerry always expects the worst, yet manages to live comfortably with his fears, leaving the audience feeling both pity and admiration for him. Gibson brings this excellent character to life through his bashful stuttering and hysterics, showing his versatility as an actor and ability to break away from common pretty boy roles.

Also excellent is Patrick Stewart as the enigmatic Dr. Jonas, whose connection to Jerry is the biggest mystery to be solved. Dr. Jonas is a chillingly rigid and ominous figure, yet his demeanor can shift to being so fatherly that it's difficult to distinguish his lies from the truth.

But while Gibson and Stewart are good, much of the rest of the movie fails. Julia Roberts gives a particularly uninspired perfor-

mance, negating any inkling of a believable relationship between her and Jerry. She's a Justice Department attorney, yet she doesn't seem all that smart at times, and the audience is never clear exactly why she is helping Jerry.

But most of all, as the movie progressed after Jerry's kidnapping scene, I found myself waiting for, well, a conspiracy theory. Publicity for the movie implied that one of Jerry's theories was actually correct, but that he didn't know which one. In actuality, as the movie develops, the *Conspiracy Theory* newsletter becomes less and less of an issue as the focus shifts to uncovering who kidnapped Jerry and why. The conspiracy theory the movie revolves around never even appears in the newsletter. In the end, the newsletter is hardly even used as a plot device while the rest of the movie becomes more and more complicated and bogged down in mystery and confusion. By the time everything is revealed, the plot is so convoluted that even the truth can't prevent the film from being altogether unsatisfying.

Although the premise that inspired the film is timely and interesting, the movie seems to have lost some of its vision by the time it was released. Mel Gibson's and Patrick Stewart's smart character development make the movie worth seeing if you're fans, but the rest of the movie offers little else. The truth is out there, but you won't find it in *Conspiracy Theory*.



Mel Gibson and Julia Roberts in *Conspiracy Theory*



KARLENE ROSERA

AGNES BORSZCKI—THE TECH

Brenda Star's exhibition of nonfigurative sculpture opened Wednesday in the Dean's Gallery, building E52. The exhibition will remain until October 31. Most of the pieces are for sale.

MIT dates & deadlines

Upcoming student deadlines and other important Institute dates

This service is brought to you by the Office of the Dean of Students and Undergraduate Education. If you know of important dates we have missed, please send them to deadlines@mit.edu, and we will add them to the deadlines Web site: <http://web.mit.edu/odsue/deadlines/>

Date	Who	What	Where
Monday, September 15, through Friday, September 19			
Mon 9/15	Freshmen interested in small working groups for core subjects	OME Seminar XL begins this week	7-145;3-5010
Mon 9/15	All students cross-registering at Harvard	Classes at the Harvard School of Arts and Sciences begin	SSC*, 8-6434; 14N-408; 3-4441
Fri 9/19	All students who haven't registered	\$100 late fee to initiate registration after this date	SSC*, 8-8600; E19-335; 3-4784
Monday, September 22, through Friday, October 10			
Wed 9/24	Freshmen interested in small working groups for core subjects	Deadline for enrollment in OME Seminar XL	7-145;3-5010
Fri 9/26	Seniors graduating in February 1998	Deadline to submit minor completion form (\$40 late fee)	Minor advisor; then 14N-408; 3-4441
Fri 9/26	Graduate students cross-registering at Harvard	Deadline for Harvard cross-registration petition (\$40 late fee)	SSC* at 8-6434;
Fri 9/26	Undergraduates cross-registering at Harvard	Deadline for Harvard cross-registration petition (\$40 late fee)	14N-408; 3-4441
Mon 9/29	Anyone who wants to conduct an IAP program	IAP activity registration begins	7-103; 3-1668
Tues 9/30	Students wanting family medical coverage or medical insurance waiver	Last day to enroll for family coverage and to submit health insurance waiver form	E23-308; 3-4371
Fri 10/3	All students	ADD DATE - Last day to add subjects (Add/Drop form; fee for petitioning after this date)	Advisor; SSC*, 8-8600; E19-335; 3-4784
Fri 10/3	Upperclass students applying for fall-term financial aid	\$100 fine for students who have not completed fall financial aid applications by this date	SSC*, 8-8600
Fri 10/3	Juniors and seniors	Last day to change an elective to or from P-D-F grading (Add/Drop form)	SSC*, 8-8600; Registrar, E19-335; 3-4784
Fri 10/3	All students who haven't completed registration	\$100 late fee for completing registration after this date	SSC*, 8-8600; Registrar, E19-335; 3-4784
Fri 10/3	All students	Last day to drop half-term subjects (Add/Drop form)	SSC*, 8-8600; Registrar, E19-335; 3-4784
Fri 10/10	Anyone who wants to conduct an IAP program	IAP activity registration end	7-103, 3-1668

*The Student Services Center, Building 11-120. The Center is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Friday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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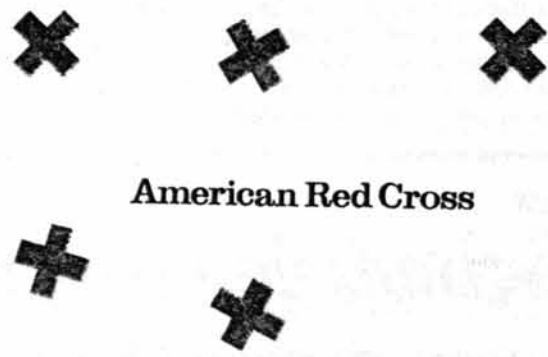
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TBP Dinner Fosters Aircraft Discussion, Faculty Interaction

TBP, from Page 1

need to address human issues in aircraft design.

While the space shuttle is the only flying vehicle that requires rebooting in flight because it doesn't have enough memory to hold all its commands, other aircraft have experienced problems with technology in the cockpit, Hansman said. As automation has increased in aircraft systems, pilots must learn new skills not formerly needed in a switch and lever-based cockpit.

While new planes have significantly lower accident rates than older, first-generation aircraft, controlled flight into terrain remains the leading cause of crashes, Hansman said. In this instance, "You take a perfectly good airplane and fly it into the ground," Hansman said.

In fact, two recent crashes of modern aircraft — the Air Inter Airbus Industrie A320 and the American Airlines Boeing 757 — were directly attributable to the automation system of the aircraft, Hansman said.

Hansman then went into further detail. For example, in the Airbus accident, the pilot of the aircraft selected a mode of the autopilot that caused the plane to descend at 3,200 feet per minute instead of on a 3.2° downward slope.

While the mistake would have been observed very quickly during the day due to the slope of the aircraft, the pilots were relying completely on instruments, Hansman said. In addition, the captain of the aircraft was using a display which did not display the feedback indicating that the plane was in the wrong autopilot mode.

Essentially, there was "insufficient feedback" to the crew, and the airplane flew into the ground. In later tests, only two out of 12 pilots tested were able to discern the mistake under similar conditions, Hansman said.

Other problems plague aircraft

Other potentially more humorous cases illustrated other problems in modern aircraft design. For example, one operator's A320 fleet began rolling uncontrollably in flight, Hansman said.

The problem was traced to the joystick-style controllers located on the side of the cockpit, Hansman said. Over time, pilots "ended up pouring coffee into the stick" when their cups in the adjacent cup holders spilled. Eventually, the devices that monitor the joystick were degraded, causing the uncontrolled rolls, Hansman said.

Many of the problems of modern aircraft come from the increasing

complexity of their computer systems. The newest commercial aircraft introduced in the world market, the Boeing 777, contains the computer capabilities of about an Intel 386 processor, Hansman said.

However, many new computer systems are "programmed based on older systems" to save on expensive certification costs, Hansman said. This leads to unwieldy systems that may not be completely error-proof.

As a result, "humans are forced to compensate for errors in the sys-

"Humans are forced to compensate for errors in the system,"

— Professor R. John Hansman Jr. PhD '82

tem," thus increasing the workload on the crew. While many pilots can easily handle the difficulty of dealing with an imperfect system, other less-skilled pilots "are along for the ride" and may make critical mistakes, Hansman said.

Discussion over planes, students

After the half-hour lecture, the assembled students and faculty were able to mingle and discuss aviation and faculty-student affairs.

One problem that hinders interaction between faculty and undergraduates through residence groups is the differing schedules that the groups have compared with faculty members, Hansman said.

Others agreed. "We had a faculty associate with our dorm... They felt they weren't doing anything because our schedules conflicted," said Brandon W. Porter G. "When the faculty-student relationship is set up it works really well."

"The easiest relationships tend to be around research," Hansman said. The dinners "are exactly the kind of thing we should do more of."

Discussion also focused on Hansman's work leading the International Center for Air Transportation, as well as his role as chair of the Task Force on Student Life and Learning.

The interaction was exactly what organizers of the event had intended. "I think that's exactly the spirit we wanted to have," Kamvyselis said after the dinner, "I think it went really well."

Membership Has Its Privileges*



The Graduate Student Council is composed of:

- at least two representatives from each graduate department and program
- one representative from each of Eastgate, Westgate, Tang, Ashdown, Edgerton, and Green Hall
- two representatives living off-campus
- five at-large representatives

What do representatives do? As a voting member of the GSC General Council, you will bring the concerns of your group to the attention of the GSC and its committees. You also report back to them on the activities of the GSC and other Institute-wide issues that affect them. There is only one required meeting per month, the GSC General meeting, held on the first Wednesday of each month.

To become a representative, just collect the signatures of 20% or 20 members (whichever is less) of your constituency. Application forms can be found outside the GSC office in Walker Memorial (50-220), or on the GSC web page at:

<http://www.mit.edu/activities/gsc>

For more information, check the web page or email gsc-vice-president@mit.edu. Applications are due by 9/30. Remaining seats are open until filled.

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Dress - informal. Atmosphere - relaxed. You are welcome to either bring your resume or C.V. to the presentation or submit it at a later date. For additional information, please contact Katherine Padgett at 800-221-1026, ext. 8826.

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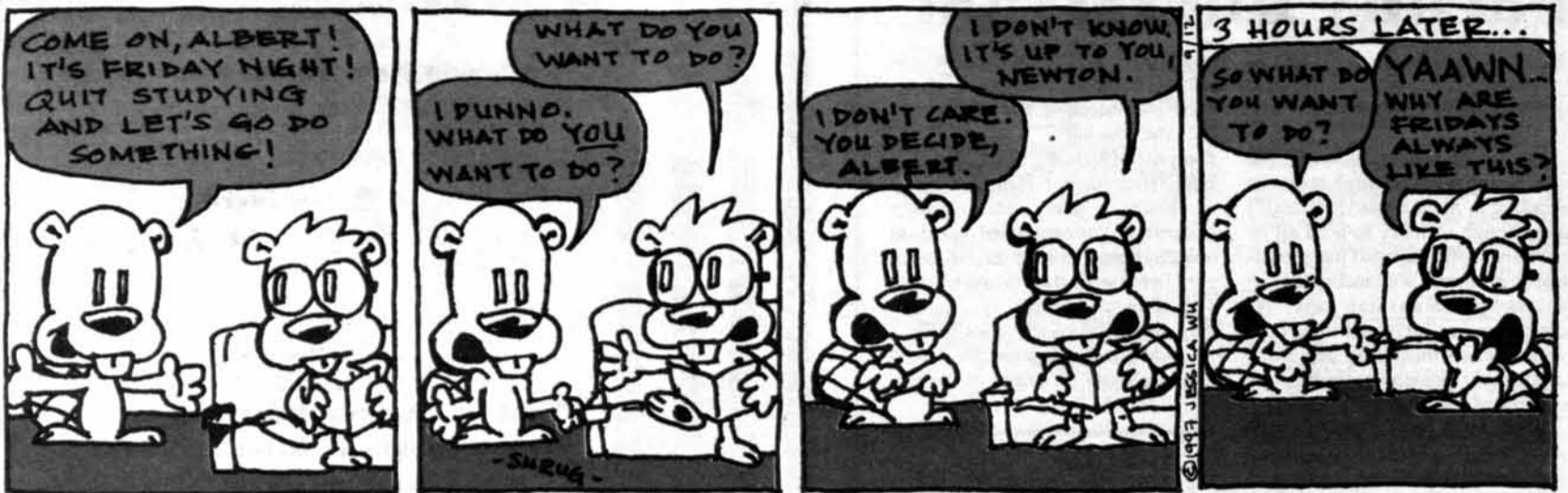
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RHINO MAN

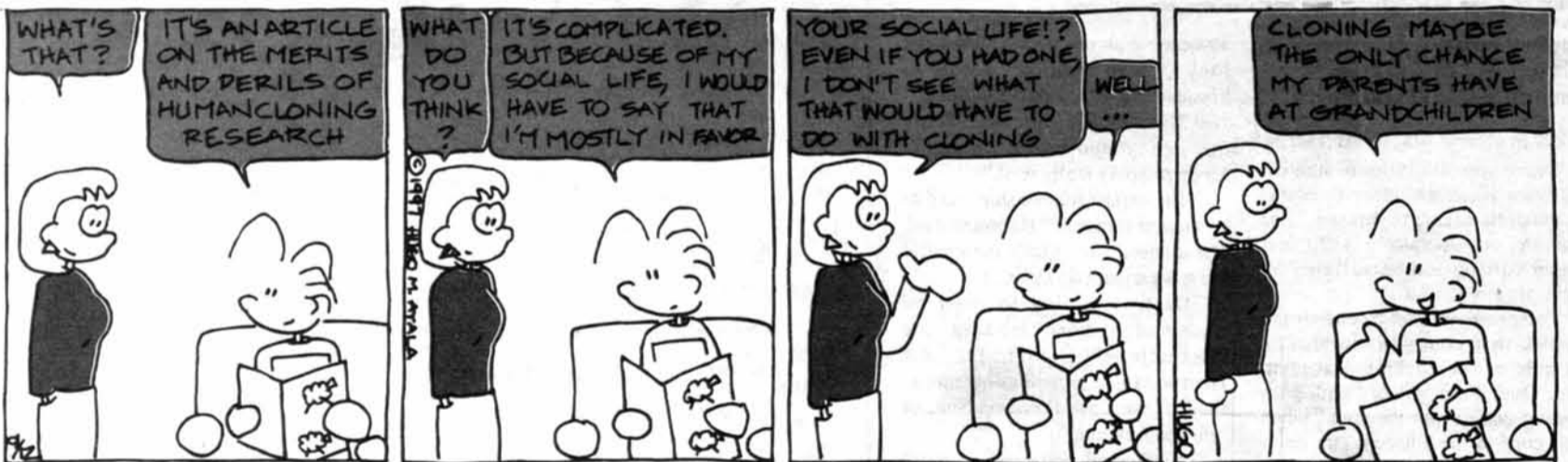
THE STORY SO FAR: The assassin Cupid has captured Rhino-Man with the intent to use his head as a trophy for the mysterious Mr. G. He is now meeting with Mr. G, discussing "complications" which arose during the abduction.

by Zachary Emig



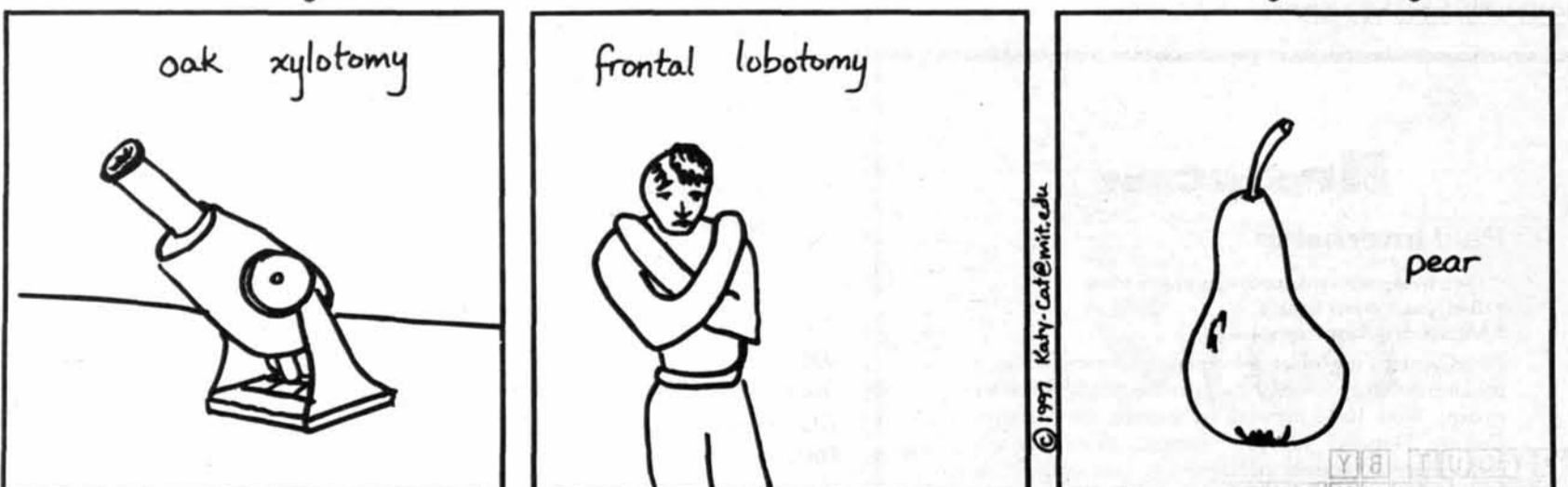
Off Course

by Hugo



Noun Poetry

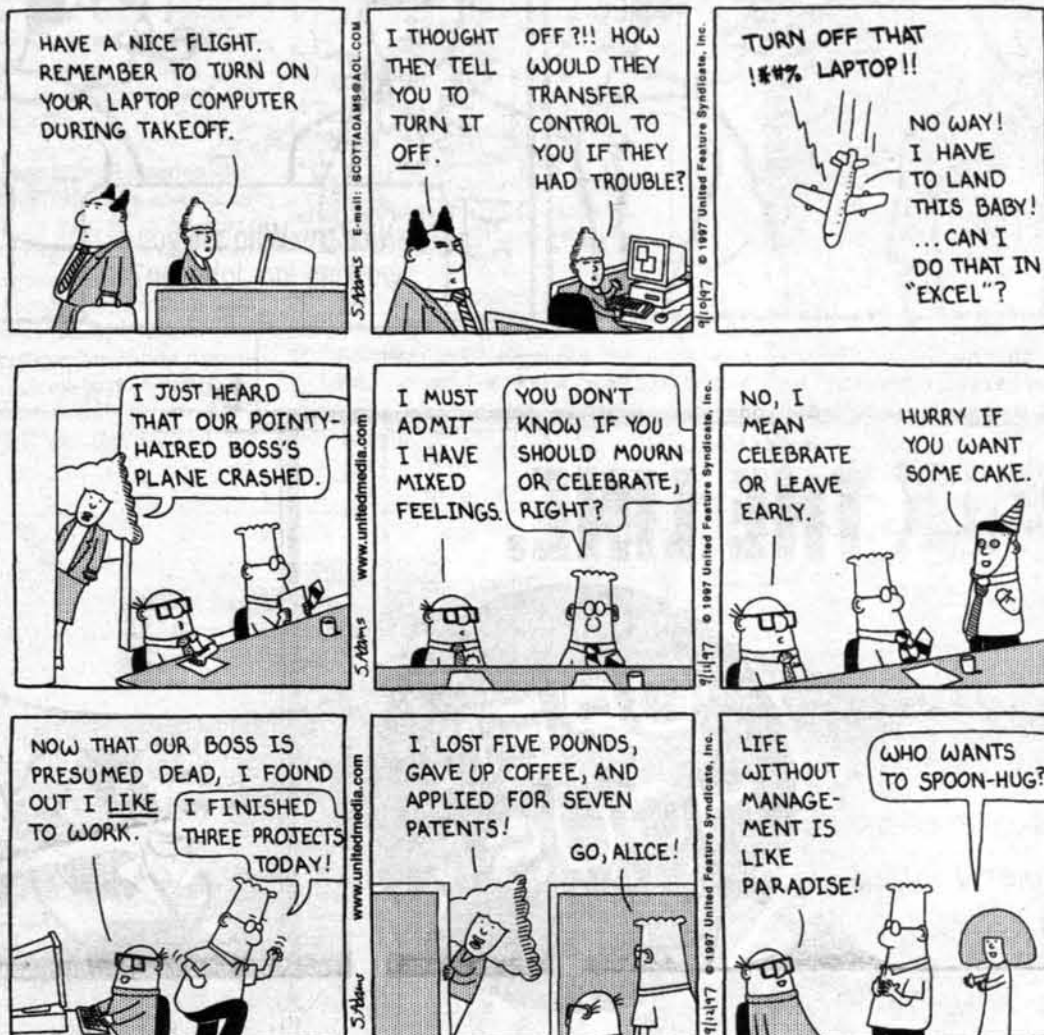
by Katy-Cat



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CONTRIVIA ?

Nobel Prize Winners

Congratulations to Maitreya Dunham and Shastri Sandy who both knew that the country which has given birth to the most Nobel prize winners as a fraction of its population is the Caribbean island nation of St. Lucia. They each won a pair of tickets, two sodas, and large tub of popcorn courtesy of LSC.

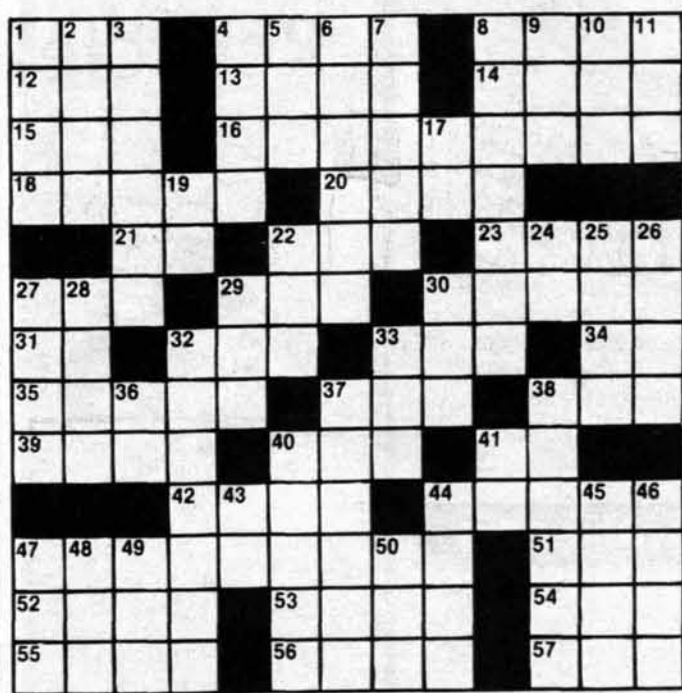
Two Nobel laureates have been born in St. Lucia, which has a population of 144,000. Sir Arthur Lewis (b. 1915 - d. 1991) won the Nobel prize in Economics in 1979, and the poet Derek Walcott (b. 1930) won the Literature prize in 1992. Roughly estimated, if the United States had that per capita rate, there would have to be more than three times the total number of Nobel laureates and everyone would have to be an American!

Showing this weekend at LSC:

- Fri 7 & 10 p.m. *Volcano* in 26-100
- Fri 7:30 p.m. *Laura* in 10-250
- Sat 7 & 10 p.m. *Addicted to Love* in 26-100
- Sun 4 & 7 p.m. *Double Replay* in 26-100: *Volcano/Addicted to Love*

This feature was brought to you by the CAC Program Board. Winners can claim their prizes at the Source in the Student Center. Today's factoids are from the MIT Quiz Bowl team.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 1 Finis
- 4 Angry groups
- 8 Olla
- 12 Sheltered from the wind
- 13 Assist
- 14 Great lake
- 15 Atlas
- 16 Avoid
- 18 Area
- 20 Cab
- 21 Smallest state (abbr.)
- 22 Small amount
- 23 Rye husk
- 27 Negative word
- 29 Even
- 30 Make happy
- 31 Either
- 32 Drink slowly
- 33 Golfing implement
- 34 Einsteinium symbol
- 35 Claw
- 37 Tavern
- 38 Pismire
- 39 Dash
- 40 Drain strength
- 41 200 (Roman)
- 42 Formerly Persia
- 44 Inn

DOWN

- 47 Injection protection
- 51 A Gershwin
- 52 Molten Rock
- 53 Tennis necessity
- 54 Seven (Roman)
- 55 Stamp
- 56 Denmark native
- 57 Even (poetic)

- 30 Ever (poetic)
- 32 Shaped line a cone
- 33 Rap
- 36 Southern state (abbr.)
- 37 Yellow fruit
- 38 Moving
- 40 Mixed vegetables
- 41 Mountain state (abbr.)
- 43 Ruthenium symbol
- 44 Hand out
- 45 Great lake
- 46 Placed
- 47 Instrument Landing System (abbr.)
- 48 No (Scottish)
- 49 Eggs
- 50 Number



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS FROM LAST ISSUE

SOLUTIONS IN THE NEXT EDITION OF THE TECH

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from the secret files of
Max Cannon

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Good idea. Why don't I just put everybody's flags up, leaving a clear trail of my route? My enemies would love that, wouldn't they?



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I see. Been out in the warm sunshine for awhile, have we?



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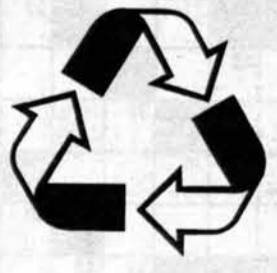
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Financial Aid Issue Still to be Resolved, Imbalances Abound

Financial Aid, from Page 1

mula can underestimate the ability of one family to pay tuition, while overestimating the same ability of another who has pooled their assets into savings, Hudson said.

Loan, grant balance questioned

Another issue, is the argument for a greater balance between the amount of federal support that comes in the form of grants and the amount that comes in the form of loans.

In the last reauthorization that took place in 1992, the amount of grants was increased to be more comparable with that of loans; however, discrepancies still exist.

Ninety percent of Institute loan money comes through federal programs in comparison to ten percent of grant money that is federally funded, Hudson said.

Even if it was not delayed, the

reauthorization of federally funded financial aid would be unlikely to cause any great ripple effect. While the chance of an increase in funding is unlikely, the chance of a decrease, also "remains slim as well," Hudson said.

Programs in the tax system have also done a great deal to take fuel out of the coming debate centered around reauthorization of the act. "A lot of the effort to provide educational benefits has been done through the tax system," Hudson said.

While a tax break may also result in a decrease of financial aid for those eligible for both, the effect of the tuition tax break on systems of financial aid in colleges and universities across the country will not be felt until after tax forms are filed in April 1999 and financial aid decisions can be based on the 1998 income figures, Hudson said.

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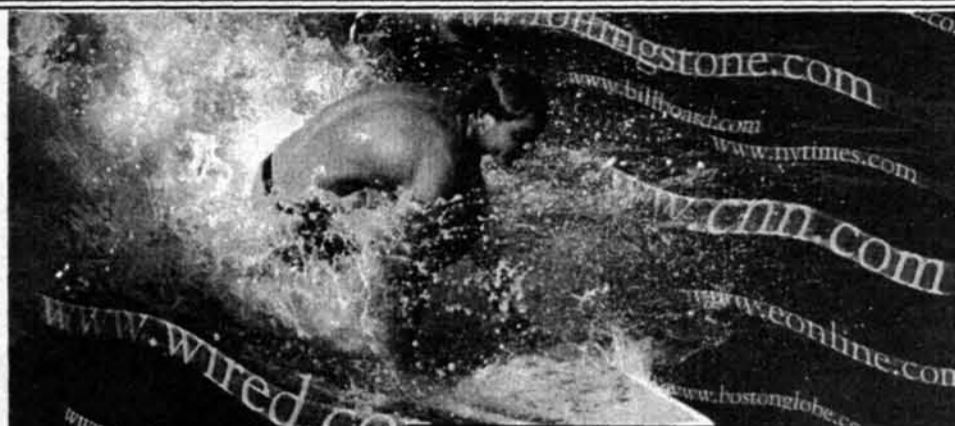
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Students Unhappy With Client Team, Lack Authority

Housing, from Page 1

mit a report. "We're very disappointed," he said. Vernon M. Ingram, chairman of the client team and professor of biology, supported the statement that the team has no final authority. "The client team does not make decisions, it only makes recommendations," he said.

Hohnke also criticized the makeup of the group. "The emphasis is on an Ashdown House style and housemaster facilities," he said. This style of housing is contrary to what the GSC had found students desired through its surveys.

However, "plenty of different people expressed opinions" and defended the diversity of the team, Ingram said. The group is "looking for a consensus in the framework of what graduate students on campus already have," he said. "I am optimistic that something good will come of this."

Students express dissatisfaction

"The official graduate student representative has no voice... the administration is steamrolling this issue," Hohnke said. The surveys cited by GSC were "not being addressed," he said.

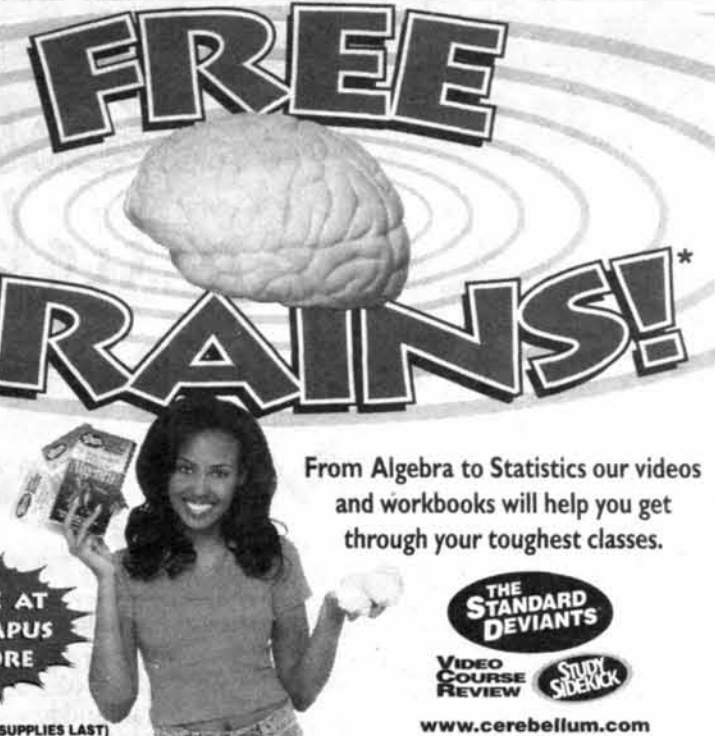
"There should be stronger representation of graduates and undergraduates in the Institute," said J. P. Mellor G.

The new dormitory will bring the Institute closer to its goal of housing 50 percent of graduate students. Currently only 30 percent of graduate students live in Institute housing.

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figs. 1,2 Come to the MIT List Visual Arts Center anytime between **September 2 through 16*** to view over 300 framed prints and photographs available for registered MIT students to borrow for the course of the academic year. To hang in your room, apartment, or office!



fig. 3 Fill out a card listing your top three choices and your name will be entered into a lottery.



fig. 4 Drop your card into the ballot box at the front desk of the gallery.



fig. 5 Impartial List Visual Arts Center staff will conduct the lottery on September 16 and post the results by 6 p.m. The gallery will not be open this day.



fig. 6 Pickup of artwork will take place on September 17 and September 18 during the hours listed below.**

* Hours: Mon. - Th., Sat., Sun. 12 - 6 p.m.; Friday, 12 - 8 p.m.

** Students must be registered at MIT, full-time status, to borrow artwork.

A valid MIT I.D. is required for pickup of artworks on September 18 and September 19.

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Dickson Continues Duties from Bedside

Dickson, from Page 1

"We were in touch with him up until Tuesday night," Crowley said. "Wednesday was the first day we did not talk to him."

In fact, Dickson was even doing some work in the hospital, Vest said. "When I talked with Bill on Saturday, he was studying a set of architectural proposals we are in the process of reviewing," he said.

"I think he was doing less than normal, since he was not in meetings, but he was talking with people on the phone and looking at plans," Crowley said.

She said she was not sure when Dickson would begin regular contact with MIT again or what arrangements would be made during Dickson's recovery.

However, Dickson will be doing some work in the several weeks before he returns to MIT. "I believe he intends to set up an office at home," Crowley said. "There are laptops and fax machines, so he can do his work that way."

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3-Year	4/1,423	4/566	4/1,423	5/274	5/1,423	5/1,423
5-Year	4/924	4/364	4/924	5/158	N/A	N/A
10-Year	4/441	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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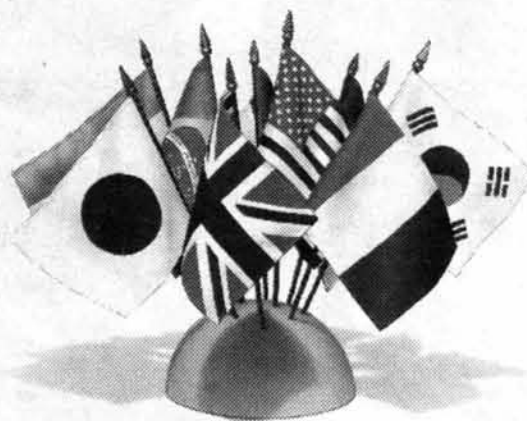


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Hillary Carter '00 struggles for the ball in Tuesday's game against Plymouth State College. The Engineers lost 0-3.

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SPORTS

Tuna's Return to Foxboro is the Big Catch of the Week

Column by Chris Brocoun
SPORTS COLUMNIST

Week three in the NFL has been rudely overrun by a certain little matter of pride. For some reason, the great city of Boston is going nuts because the lowly Jets are coming to Foxboro to play The Almighty, do no wrong Patriots.

A WORD ON SPORTS

Now, why on earth would a city get so worked up over this lopsided game? Could it be, perhaps, that Boston fans carry a bit of a grudge and just can't wait to stick it to good ol' Bill Parcells.

It would be too much to ask for a gracious, thanks for all you did while you were here, nice to see you around again. Instead it is never mind that Parcells did play a fairly significant role in getting the Pats on track, he betrayed us and so now we must beat him down.

In all seriousness, the Patriots aerial attack led by Drew Bledsoe should have little trouble with the N.Y. Jets and Neil O'Donnell. But now that the game has been hyped beyond all reasonable proportion,

one has to consider the Tuna Factor. Maybe it should really be called the Soap Opera Factor. What everyone really needs to do is calm down and play some football. I suppose that since there aren't that many marquee matchups this week, football fans everywhere will just have to stomach all the gab, and just pray for a good game.

The picks, week three:

Arizona just squeezed out a close victory over Washington's arch-rival, the Cowboys. Washington lost a close game last week to a bruising Pittsburgh ground attack. Arizona is looking better but Washington still wins in a close one.

The Giants are just a mess. Take Baltimore.

The Chiefs squeezed by Oakland on Monday night. An impressive victory for a team looking for something to jump start them. Look for Kansas City to give the Bills problems all day.

Carolina beat Atlanta 9-6 last week. Note to both teams: despite all the rule changes this year, touchdowns do in fact still count for

seven big ones. Take Carolina over San Diego with a few touchdowns too.

Detroit playing Chicago is another classic NFC Central matchup. Too bad neither team is very good. Take da Bears.

The whooshing noise heard all over Green Bay this past week was not a phantom tornado. Instead it was several Packer players experiencing post-Philly-traumatic-ego-deflation syndrome. After a serious attitude readjustment, the Pack will stomp the Dolphins this week.

San Francisco is still alive, despite injury and concussion. The Niners should continue to prove that Ditka outside Chicago just isn't Ditka.

The Raiders are playing Atlanta in Atlanta. The significance of this is...? Take the Raiders.

Tampa Bay in the Metrodome. I don't mean to be harsh but, the Vikings are literally going to pillage.

Denver should walk all over St. Louis in the Mile High City.

Seattle and Indianapolis are playing in the latest installment of 90210. For our sake, hopefully

they'll both be killed off! Take the Seahawks.

The Jets and Tuna versus the Patriots and Pete Carroll. See above. Patriots much, Jets little.

Monday Night Special: Philadelphia surprised Green Bay

last week. Arizona upset Dallas. Nothing like a potential wild one here. I can't figure out why I'm picking Philly for the upset... Oh yeah, because I despise Dallas.

Last week: 9-6, season record: 9-6.



Monica Taylor '01 zooms past a defender from Plymouth State College. Despite her efforts however, the Engineers lost 0-3.

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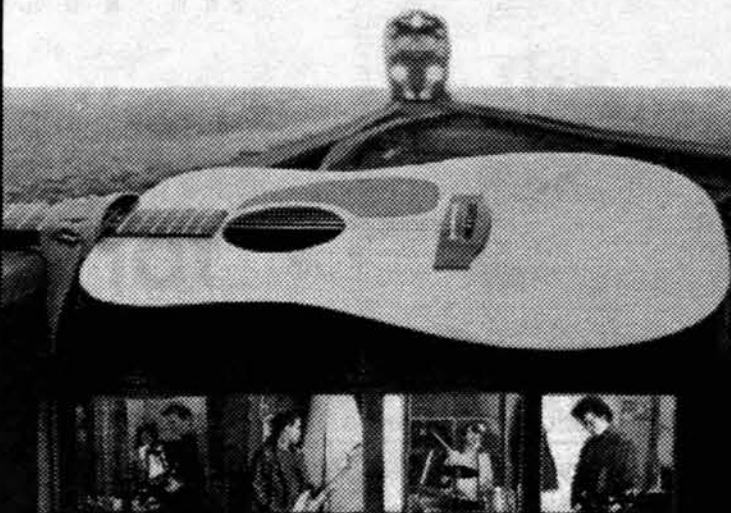
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