MIT's Oldest and Largest Newspaper

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FSILG Assistance Has Shortfall

The Financial Transition Plan was drafted by a student-administrator committee and approved in February 2002 by Larry G. Benedict, the dean of student life. To calculate its first-year budget, student life staff collected information from each house in late 2001 to estimate the number of empty beds, capped at a fraction of the house that decreases and phases out after three years. Because freshmen have been required to live in dormitories for the past two years, fraternities, residential sororities, and independent living groups have had to fund their budgets with one less class of dues-paying residents.

By Keith J. Wieststein

SPARE A BILLION? — Hackers commented on MIT's falling endowment by erecting a giant poster at the end of the tunnel beneath the Kresge Building. The poster was inspired by a series of computer viruses that have risen in the past year, the Institute's endowment lost value.

Students Seek Stress Relief Over Break

There is a palpable feeling of the tension ebbing out of campus today. You can see the weight lifted from students' shoulders—the day after finals—because, as one student said, it’s not the only criterion. The professors teach a fresh problem-solving seminar

MIT Takes First Place At Putnam Math Test

MIT has won the 2003, 64th annual William Lowell Putnam Math Competition for the first time since 1979. The team members, selected by Professors of Mathematics Hartley Rogers Jr. and Richard P. Stanley, are Reid W. Barton ’05, Daniel M. Kane ’07, and Yves Yeung K. Zaytman ’05. Team placement in the competition is based on the ranks of the team members’ solutions. Barton and Kane were among the top five highest ranking individuals, who are named Putnam Fellows.

The six-hour, twelve problem exam takes place the first Saturday of each December, and is open to any full-time undergraduate student in the United States and Canada.

Harvard University, Duke University, California Institute of Technology, and Harvey Mudd College round out the top five teams.

Professors select team

Roger and Stanley have selected the Putnam team for many years. “I’ve been involved with it for the last fifteen years,” Rogers said. The first approximation, he said, is “to take the three people who scored the highest the previous year,” but this is not the only criterion. The professors teach a fresh problem-solving seminar.

Students eager for sunshine

Following far too many surprise storms of snow this month, warm destinations are unsurprisingly popular among those students leaving. Shubhangi Saraf ’07 will be “enjoying the warm weather” while she visits a friend at Caltech. In addition, various sports teams will be training or playing together over spring break in warmer areas. Mike Harvey ’04 is going to California with the lacrosse team. “I’ll be more excited once I get done with this problem set,” he said.}

The Weather

Today: Partly cloudy, 20°F (–4°C)

Tonight: Clear, cold, 20°F (–4°C)

Tomorrow: Sunny, 45°F (7°C)

Details, Page 2

Volume 124, Number 14

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Friday, March 19, 2004

The Tech

By Brian Loux

Weisskopf Professor of Physics Alan Guth, winner of the 2004 Cosmology Prize of the Peter Gruber Foundation for his role in refining the theories on cosmic inflation. Guth will share the award, which includes a $200,000 unrestricted grant, with Andre Linde, a professor of physics at Stanford University.

“We are extremely pleased to honor the work of Professors Guth and Linde and to pay tribute to the theory of cosmic inflation.” Guth said in a press release. “Their original ideas over more than 20 years have profoundly changed the field of cosmology.”

The Peter Gruber Foundation began presenting “awards recognizing human discoveries and contributions that effect fundamental shifts in human knowledge and culture,” according to the foundation’s web site. The U.S. Virgin Islands-based foundation issues five awards annually in the categories of cosmology, genetics, women’s rights, justice, and neuroscience.

Award honors 23-year old theory

Guth first proposed the idea of cosmic inflation in 1981 in his paper “The Inflationary Universe: A Possible Solution to the Horizon and Flatness Problems.” The theory posits a very small but extremely dense bit of matter that entered a rare state causing its gravitational field to be reversed. In essence, instead of gravity pulling objects together, this bit of matter pushed outward and created inflation. Fluctuations in the matter’s initial energy densities, once it had expanded, laid the groundwork for large cosmic structures such as galaxies to evolve.

While inflationary theories had already been postulated as early as the 1970s, Guth’s paper not only formalized them, but addressed how inflationary theory solved the flatness problem (why the universe isn’t perfectly flat) and the horizon problem (why cosmic background radiation is of almost equal density throughout the entire universe). It would later be Linde, who shares in this year’s award, who noted specific problems with Guth’s original inflationary model and would go on to correct them.

The award will be officially presented to the two winners at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. on June 4.

The TheTech will not publish next week during Spring Break. Have a good vacation!
Shell Masks Details Of Cuts In Nigerian Oil

The Royal Dutch/Shell Group has kept secret important details of its sharp reduction in oil and gas reserves, particularly in Nigeria, for fear of damaging its business relationships with the government there and the Nigerians’ desire to produce more oil, internal company documents show.

But Shell has acknowledged that the biggest adjustments in reserves include those in Nigeria, where it has failed to conceal the extent of its problems. But confidential documents from late last year show Shell concluded that more than 1.5 billion barrels, or 60 percent of its Nigerian reserves, did not meet accounting standards for “proven reserves.”

Shell disclosed two months ago that it had overstated its oil and gas reserves by 20 percent, which is equivalent to 3.9 billion barrels of crude oil. On Thursday, it pared its reserves by the equivalent of 250 million barrels more and postponed the publication of its 2003 annual report for two months to complete a review of its oil and gas assets.

Company executives are acutely aware of the potentially explosive political effect of their cuts, especially in Nigeria, a nation that set the stage for U.N. involvement in helping shape the interim government to take over.

North Carolina Asks EPA To Act Against 13 Polluting States

WASHINGTON

A new polluting state joined three others in asking the Environmental Protection Agency to crack down on coal-burning power plants that the state says are poisoning it with dangerous pollutants.

In a move that opens a new front in the clean air wars, North Carolina has petitioned the Environmental Protection Agency to crack down on pollution that it says is seeping across its borders from power plants in Kentucky and Tennessee.

The additional 1,000 troops, which will bring the overall NATO force to 19,000, began arriving Thursday evening, the government said at a news conference that “proportionate force” would be used to ensure the troops’ safety.

In one of the most serious inci- dents on Thursday, Swedish soldiers were wounded in a firefight with Taliban forces. The troops had been deployed to help the United Nations in its efforts to stabilize the country.

NATO To Send Reinforcements To Kosovo After New Attacks

NATO ordered reinforcements to Kosovo on Thursday as peacekeepers struggled to stem a wave of ethnic violence across the area.

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Microsoft Faces Antitrust Ruling After Negotiations with EU Fail

By Paul Meller and John Markoff

Settlement talks between Microsoft and European regulators collapsed on Thursday, exposing the company to an antitrust ruling that could limit it in one of the largest global dominance in operating software — in particular, its bundling of its Media Player into Windows — has been the last major legal challenge to the company since the landmark settlement of the Justice Department's antitrust lawsuit in 2001. The case also contended that Microsoft unfairly withheld technical information from competitors, making it difficult for them to create software for business servers that works well with Windows.

A ruling against the company, if upheld in court, could mean a fine of as much as $3 billion against Microsoft. More importantly, it could force the company to make fundamental changes in the way it sells software in the European Union, the world's largest trading block. And the ruling could become a precedent for future antitrust litigation against the company.

Microsoft said it would appeal any such rulings in the European court and file a motion to halt the imposition of sanctions while an appeal proceeds. The appeal process itself could take four to five years, unless the two sides choose to settle later. Both regulators and the company said on Thursday that they had made significant strides toward a settlement before negotiations broke down.

In Heat Of Campaign, McCain Asserts His Independent Streak

WASHINGTON

From television advertisements to vice presidential 선택, the Republican attack on Sen. John Kerry this week has been sharp, unsparing and unified: The Democratic candidate is “wrong on defense.” On Thursday, one Republican senator’s response was just as sharp and unsparing, but much less unified: “No, I do not believe that he is, quote, weak on defense.”

What kind of Republican would say that? The John McCain kind, of course.

Last week, McCain’s polite but impolitic admission that he would “entertain” an offer to be Kerry’s running mate provided a good day’s entertainment for the capital’s chattering classes (until he ruled it out).

Now, his defense of Kerry, a friend and fellow Vietnam veteran, shows once again how McCain’s incorrigible independent streak and ill-disguised distance from President Bush make him one of Washington’s most unpredictable — and unavoidable — men.

“Apparently, you can’t be friends anymore with somebody who is of a different party,” McCain said in a telephone interview from Arizona this week. “I choose my friends on whether they’re entertaining, whether they’re interesting to be around, and whether they’re good and decent people. Now, with this polarization that’s going on, where both parties are running to their base, that kind of behavior is nearly unacceptable.”

Georgian President Wins Concession; Ends Blockade

Tbilisi, Georgia

President Mikhail Saakashvili said Thursday that he had won important concessions from the leader of the renegade province of Adzharia and would lift a four-day-old economic blockade.

“The sanctions will be lifted from midnight tonight because we have resolved all the issues which led to this misunderstanding between the local administration and the Georgian government,” he said after meetings with Abashidze. “The sanctions will be lifted from midnight tonight because we have resolved all the issues which led to this misunderstanding between the local administration and the Georgian government,” he said after meetings with Abashidze.

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Have you seen birds fly at 150 mph inside the MIT Rockwell Cage?

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USA Badminton Sanctioned National Ranking Tournament

March 19-21, 2004

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Semi-Finals: 6:00pm Sat Mar 20

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For more info, please visit http://www.bostonopen.com
Letters to the Editor

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Dissenting Opinions

Like Kevin J. DiGenova (“Separation of Powers,” March 16) I have read the dissenting opinion in Goodridge v. Department of Public Health. I have also read the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in Lawrence v. Texas (1996) and the California Supreme Court’s decision in Perez v. Sharp (1984). The latter noted that “the right to marry is the right to join in marriage with the person of one’s choice.” Just as the antimiscegenation laws that those cases struck down didn’t prevent anyone from marrying — only from marrying someone of another race — limiting marriage to opposite-sex couples doesn’t prevent sham marriages, it simply prevents some people from marrying the person of their choice.

In Seattle, openly gay sex columnist Dan Savage and his lesbian friend, Amy Jennewein, obtained a marriage license; all he needed, as he put it, was “a woman I don’t love and my $54.” This marriage, were it to take place, would be perfectly legal, yet it would not allow Savage the right to marry the person of his choice.

That, put simply, is the equal protection violation that the Supreme Judicial Court was addressing in Goodridge. That is the problem being denied a right that another person is granted,” to quote Mr. DiGenova. Christopher K. Davis, MIT/Broad Institute

Protectionism, Not Racism

Though I realize there was just recently a letter to the editor pleasing those submitting their opinions not to consult a dictionary (“Dictionary Duds,” March 9), I was temped to direct Mr. Nesmith to one for his article on “racism” in the outsourcing debate (“Give Me Back My Job, Foreigner,” March 16). Nesmith should realize that racism involves discriminating against people based on race, not their country. True, there are many Mexicans in Mexico, so I certainly could see where confusion might arise, but the truth is that choosing not to give a Mexican a job in order to keep American money in America’s economy is protectionist, not racist.

On the off chance that there’s still some lack of clarity in the argument, it should be pointed out that there are, for example, former Americans living in India taking advantage of the relatively high wages in the tech industry when compared to the cost of living abroad don’t come back in the form of purchases of American goods, we have in effect longtime of the relatively high wages in the tech industry when compared to the cost of living there. Opponents of job outsourcing would rather an immigrant Indian in the U.S. take the job than the white immigrant in India, the money in the latter case still leaves our country, only to benefit the outsourcing corporation and not those (numerous) unemployed workers in our own country.

Here one could find racism in all of this is both puzzling and telling of Mr. Nesmith’s misunderstanding of the situation. And perhaps a couple semantic subtleties.

Asron R. Motes ’07

The Benefits of Offshoring

Mr. Nesmith (“Give Me Back My Job, Foreigner,” March 16) is right that outsourcing should not be banned, but his justifications are questionable. He compares protectionist trade policies to Jim Crow laws and other types of discrimination without acknowledging a key fact: a black man in Mississippi is an American who deserves the full protection of the American government. Our legislators are under no similar obligation to strive for economic equality across countries; call it nationalism or jingoism if you want, but our government’s first responsibility is to our own quality of life.

Yet offshoring does economically benefit the American people, although recent political pontificating indicates otherwise. Hal Varian’s March 11 column in the New York Times (“What Goes Abroad Usually Comes Back, With Benefits”), also available on his personal Web site, explains that if dollars that go abroad don’t come back in the form of purchases of American goods, we have in effect a productivity boost for the American economy as a whole.

I hope that our government doesn’t legislate away offshoring for something as short-term as a presidential election. But I hope we do it for the right reasons, instead of irresponsibly throwing around charged words like “racism.”

Amul K. Dora’04

Opinion Policy

Editorials are the official opinion of The Tech. They are written by the editorial board, which chooses to publish their disagreement with the editorial. Letters to the editor, columns, and editorial cartoons are written by individuals and represent the opinion of the author, not necessarily that of the newspaper. Electronic submissions are encouraged and should be directed to the appropriate person. Please send press releases, requests for coverage, and information about errors that call for correction to news@the-tech.mit.edu. Letters to the editor should be sent to letters@the-tech.mit.edu. The Tech can be found on the World Wide Web at http://the-tech.mit.edu.

Questions

The Tech’s telephone number is (617) 253-1541. E-mail is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. If you are unsure whom to contact, send mail to general@the-tech.mit.edu, and it will be directed to the appropriate person.

The Tech’s Ombudsman, reachable by e-mail at ombudsman@the-tech.mit.edu, serves as the liaison between The Tech and its readers. From time to time, the Ombudsman writes an independent column reflecting the complaints, questions, and concerns of the readership.

To Reach Us
Two and a half years after terrorists attacked the United States, another attack occurred on the lives and spirits of Americans. This time, mili-
tarily unknown identity brutally killed 200 innocent people in Madrid, in what many call the "March 11." 

There’s always peril in making sweeping generalizations about established or newly emerging variables — after all, September 11 was far more deadly, the Spanish government wasn’t accused of minding a terrorist public in a way that the American government was not. Hence, the specter of the hidden exposure to domestic terrorism, Spain is only one part of Europe, and so on. However, at the risk of oversimplifying a country as nuanced as Spain, the case of the two cases seems apt.

The United States, the two attacks were met by an outpouring of grief, outrage, and anger. Each populace felt unconditional horror toward the terrorists and sympathy toward their victims. This was all well and good, but this was not the same struggle. The same mindset persisted. While the United States was relatively quiescent about terrorists because they did get around to attacking Europe, the same was not true in a way that the American government was. Spain’s citizens had significant prior uncertainty as to whether the terrorists were domestic (ETA, Oklahoma City types) or international. The immediate response of the two cases seems apt.

How is this the same? First, the similarities. Both attacks were horrific. Both attacks were met by an outpouring of grief, outrage, and anger. Each populace felt unconditional horror toward the terrorists and sympathy toward their victims. This was all well and good, but this was not the same struggle. The same mindset persisted. While the United States was relatively quiescent about terrorists because they did get around to attacking Europe, the same was not true in a way that the American government was. Spain’s citizens had significant prior uncertainty as to whether the terrorists were domestic (ETA, Oklahoma City types) or international. The immediate response of the two cases seems apt.

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Nothing irks me more than crappy sushi. But is it Even Wrong?

It May Not Be Right, But is it Even Wrong?
The Boardwasher and “Blown Away”

By Dan Scocimara

“Hey, aren't you the boardwash-er?” isn’t exactly the best pick-up line in the world. It’s not the worst either, but I just couldn’t think of anything better to say. I was standing in front of a girl for whom I show up early to class to see, so I had to say some-thing. I'm her biggest fan, but that’s probably not the case.

There are guys who are good and nice and give running commentary on her board washing. It may not be pretty, but guys do that here.

I want to give another example of guys at MIT. There is a movie “Blown Away” starring Jeff Bridges and Tommy Lee Jones. The whole movie takes place in Boston and Jeff Bridges is the expert in the city's bomb squad. In the first scene, Jeff Bridges is called out of his son’s birthday party because there is a bomb at MIT. The bomb is in the computer lab, which, like most computer labs at MIT, is one computer and many desks.

When he gets there, he sees this girl typing over and over again that she loves her boyfriend. We learn that the boyfriend is the bomber, and the bomb will go off if she stops typing or “when the hard drive runs out of available bytes.” Jeff Bridges, at the last second, cuts the correct wire and proceeds to throw up in Killian Court. So what happened to MIT guys? How did we get to be depicted so badly?

My friend Paul carried a gray messenger bag and the weight of the world on his shoul- ders as he trudged towards the dorm one afternoon last March. Spring break was upon him, and he was a wreck.

He still had to resolve his plans for the next fall, get ready for a concocted, and finish his final collegiate golf season. Paul wondered why he had been so relieved in December, when he completed his thesis and decided to earn a master's degree in security studies and work for the CIA. Now, doubting he would be accepted to a single university, but the CIA applied for the Navy's Officer Candidate School in a desperate attempt to cover his bets.

You see, one trouble with the question “what’s next?” is that when we decide what we want the answer to be, we’re restless until we are certain we can make that answer happen. And there is no milestone that can intensify that restlessness as much as spring break.

Spring break is a breath of fresh air amidst the pollution that is our incessant business. It’s often filled with smiles and — if you’re not in Boston — sunshine and sand.

But spring break can be like TIME=0 in Super Mario Bros.: the dreadful moment when the music switches from normal to warp speed. Afterward, our hearts beat faster, heads ache more often, and deadlines jump at us like wiggled turtles. We punish ourselves for New Year’s and term resolutions we haven’t kept. We worry about not having job offers for sum- mer or fall. Or, like Paul, we stress over gradu- ate school admissions.

To ready ourselves for success and happi- ness in the remainder of the spring term, we should balance enjoying our vacation with preparing for the season it brings. Here are some suggestions to help you strike the two faces of spring break right between the eyes.

Do some work but not too much

You really want to do something during your vacation, but there are limits to how far you want to push to get work done. When it comes to break, there are two kinds of people.

Some people want to do as much as they can. They are the type of person who can knock off a paper or two and still manage to hang out with their friends and see the sights in the city. This is the type of person who would be bored if they didn’t have something to do. If this type is you, you should probably not be reading this. You already have enough to do during break week.

On the other hand, there are people who really want to get away and do something fun. They don’t really care about what is happening in their classes, but they are looking forward to the break and are excited to see what they can do. These people are the type of people who can’t wait to get away and start enjoying themselves. They are the type of people who can’t wait to get away and start enjoying themselves.

By Ian Ybarra

My friend Paul carried a gray messenger bag and the weight of the world on his shoul- ders as he trudged towards the dorm one afternoon last March. Spring break was upon him, and he was a wreck.

He still had to resolve his plans for the next fall, get ready for a concocted, and finish his final collegiate golf season. Paul wondered why he had been so relieved in December, when he completed his thesis and decided to earn a master's degree in security studies and work for the CIA. Now, doubting he would be accepted to a single university, but the CIA applied for the Navy's Officer Candidate School in a desperate attempt to cover his bets.

You see, one trouble with the question “what’s next?” is that when we decide what we want the answer to be, we’re restless until we are certain we can make that answer happen. And there is no milestone that can intensify that restlessness as much as spring break.

Spring break is a breath of fresh air amidst the pollution that is our incessant business. It’s often filled with smiles and — if you’re not in Boston — sunshine and sand.

But spring break can be like TIME=0 in Super Mario Bros.: the dreadful moment when the music switches from normal to warp speed. Afterward, our hearts beat faster, heads ache more often, and deadlines jump at us like wiggled turtles. We punish ourselves for New Year’s and term resolutions we haven’t kept. We worry about not having job offers for sum- mer or fall. Or, like Paul, we stress over gradu- ate school admissions.

To ready ourselves for success and happi- ness in the remainder of the spring term, we should balance enjoying our vacation with preparing for the season it brings. Here are some suggestions to help you strike the two faces of spring break right between the eyes.

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Positive Sinking
Drinking American Penguins

By Akshay Patil

Mr. Sinking,

I can’t drink while walking. Whenever I need to take a sip from a bottle, I am, unfortunately, convinced that how many people may give me dirty looks is far more important than the taste of my drink. I take my drinks with the utmost of stationery (Editor’s Note: not a real word). But I very readily read while walking, which is one of my teachers comment on, saying he has never understood people who could do that.

Do you have any walking limitations? Sound weirded out, the more weirded out they get.

Some people and I were watching an ad for “Joe Millionaire” in Europe, and were wondering what FOX would do when women on every continent were fully aware of the Joe Millionaire secret. We thought they would have to do the show in Antigua, and call it Joe Penguin. A bunch of women compete for what they think is a rich short man who wears tuxedos all the time. What do you think of this concept? Your suggestion, and I mean this from the very bottom of my vestigial tail, is quite possibly the coolest thing I have ever heard. Why are you even at MIT? Shouldn’t you be out making large quantities of cash as a TV executive? If the networks thought Americans liked attractive but ravenous people hanging around a New York coffeeshop, they’ll be blown away by how many will watch babes in Antarctica with penguins.

The best part is that not only will we benefit from the quality entertainment of watching money-grubbing women “get it on” with well-dressed waterfowl, but the show has a guaranteed happy ending! The penguin gets a hot girlfriend and the girl gets a penguin. Man, who could pass that up?

Maybe I’ll enter the contest just to try my luck. You really should copyright your idea though, because you never know what some sort of spin-offs might follow. “Queer Eye for the Penguin,” “Ebert and Penguin” (two wings up), “American Penguin,” or “The OC” for Penguins, it’s an insatiable market.

This column was written and performed by a professionally trained individual in a highly controlled environment. Please do not attempt this column without the adult supervision. If any part of this column should come in contact with your eye, mouth, or other sensitive area, please e-mail sinking@mit.edu immediately and gargle salt water for five minutes. Stay safe people.

By Ruth Miller

We may attend MIT, but we’re still college students. We produce enough hormones that they literally ricochet off a wall and we calcula-
tate the force of impact. With the help of hormones and calcu-
lating, love/hate can strike any time, any place. Eventual-
ly, someone forsake their neighbors for their ani-
mals.

The term “floor-cest” is coined, link-
ing this party for two with that famous export of a certain region (cue fiddle music) to illustrate how wrecked out the neighbors are.

Floor-cest is the cute first cousin of suite-
cest (or wing-cest), which is invariably worse. The smaller the number of people available to be screwed over the more wrecked out the game.

Zero sum residential living. Because why would anyone do this? How could someone forsake their neighbors for their ani-
mal urges? The obvious answer is that they don’t particularly take the wants of their neighbors into consideration before following their hormonal urges. This isn’t exactly in-
tracrine family dating, but the case does stand that it can be incredibly uncomfortable for everyone involved.

Let first me qualify the term “dating.” Everyone has their own idea of dating, but most can be placed on something I’ve dubbed the Miller Dating Continuum ranging between “life consuming” and “stealth.”

Couple A: Andrew meets Crystal. Andrew begins spending time with Crystal. Andrew begins spending so much time with Crystal that his friends start to think he has changed. Eventually he stays home from an awesome trip to be with another friend to be with Crystal. Andrew’s idea of dating Crystal falls into the “life consuming” portion of our con-
tinuum. Couple B: Jason and Susie are friends. Jason and Susie decide to pursue a more romantic relationship. Their dates are few and far between, and neither of them is fond of public displays of affection. After a few months, mutual friends are surprised to find out Jason and Susie have been dating. This style could be referred to as “stealth.”

The key here is balance. Andrew can be happy with Crystal. He can also be happy with his friends though, else he wouldn’t have cho-

en to develop the friendships with them that he has. Jason and Susie’s friends are happy for the couple and can accept a rea-

sonable decrease in the amount of time they spend together. Both these styles make the people dating hap-
pier, but at a varying level of expense to other friends.

In the case of floor-cest, the roles of the players have drastically changed. Neighbors can’t escape any residual weirdness of a relationship.

Floor-cest should be regarded closely by the associated style of dating. Back in high school, when mutual friends started dating each other, they would be dig to all at first and we’d have to break them up. But if they continued to have their own lives, we’d eventually get used to the idea of them dating. They would either break up or so we could have some more time, or they would stay together and make each other happy.

Strong voices of the “no suite-cest ever” argument often don’t take the issues presented by the Miller Dating Continuum into account. If a suite couple leans towards the “life con-
suming” end, I pity their neighbors who shall know no solace. The suite essentially loses two residents, who now only live as shadows occasionally lurking in the bathroom or public areas. I am strongly inclined to agree with the case against this sort of dating. If a couple stays near the “stealth” side, their relationship with each other and the rest of the floor does not change. The floor isn’t too inconveni-
enced, but the couple might not get all they want out of their relationship and this isn’t fair to them.

If a couple can compromise and maintain a healthy relationship with each other and the rest of the floor, then why not date? Let’s face it — we all have a need for human contact and however noble that form of contact might be, it can make the people involved a lot hap-
pier.

I’m not saying conjugial visits during finals week would be appropriate, but we all know what it’s like when a good friend of ours starts a new relationship at the center of the dating continuum. They’re excited, happy, and easy to get along with. Aren’t these good qualities in a suite-mate?

By Christy Houghton

We produce enough hormones that they literally ricochet off a wall and we calculat-
ting, love/hate can strike any time, any place. Eventually, someone forsake their neighbors for their animals.

The term “floor-cest” is coined, linking this party for two with that famous export of a certain region (cue fiddle music) to illustrate how wrecked out the neighbors are.

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Zero sum residential living. Because why would anyone do this? How could someone forsake their neighbors for their animal urges? The obvious answer is that they don’t particularly take the wants of their neighbors into consideration before following their hormonal urges. This isn’t exactly intracrine family dating, but the case does stand that it can be incredibly uncomfortable for everyone involved.

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Tau Beta Pi
The Engineering Honor Society
Massachusetts Beta Chapter

congratulates its new members

Agrawal, Priya
Anderson, Christopher
Bashir, Omar
Bethke, Brett
Bosshekar, Christina
Bradley, Michael
Chaudhari, Aadel
Chen, Nancy
DiBianco, Christopher
Fiche, Ninamia
Fierman, Heather
Fox, Emily
Gallup, Benjamin
Gaynor, Whitney
Gerber, Meredith
Guo, Philip
Hager, Elizabeth
Huang, Nathan
Ho, Monica
Chuan Hai Hsiung
Johnson, Erik
Kam, Brandon
Leeds, Daniel
Li, Pamela
Lin, Katherine
Loejo, Daniel
Maloney, Maza
Muir, Rafael
Meli, Ali
Mnacek, Anna
Nabou, Joanna
Nelson, Ichani
Packard, Constance
Park, Matthew
Parnass, Aaron
Patil, Akshay
Pereira, Carlos
Rokish, Michael
Rufin, Justin
Sachdev, Ishan
Sanchez, Gabriel
Schwartz, Emily
Selbst, Andrew
Shah, Priya
Shakhshir, Saad
Shaw, Anita
Smithmesky, Jesse
Stevenson, Marlyn
Santier, Kristen
Thomson, Arvindra
Tschante, Matthew
Woo, Ram
Wu, Jun
Young, Vincent
Zamfirescu-Pereira, John Dalbert

and its new officers

President
Erik Johnson
Vice-President
Ranu Woo
Corresponding Secretary
Elizabeth Hager
Recording Secretary
David Ziegler
Treasurer
Rafael Mediana
Publicity Chair
Main Maloney
Eligibles Chair
Meredith Gerber
Career Fair Chairs
Priya Agrawal
Historian/Webmaster
Justin Rufin

initiated and elected on February 21, 2004

The MITFSC presents our annual

Figure Skating Show

Featuring the MIT Figure Skating Club
and guest skaters from Boston

Saturday, March 20th 7 PM
Johnson Skating Rink
FREE!!
March 19, 2004

Filler Space @ HOME

Trio
by Emezie O korafor

Trio
Hey, Rick... Rick! Are you giving yourself a bad hair day? I hope you're not... You REMEMBER YOU ALWAYS WANTED A DOG? WELL, WE FINALLY GOT ONE... IT BOUNDS YOU!

Honey, you've been sitting at that computer all week. Why don't you go outside and get some fresh air?

Yeah? And what's your point, Robert? Do you have a problem with my head catching fire? Huh?

You really think so? Thanks, Bobby.

Jealous?! Of those mindless girls that are following Rick around like zombies? Ha! What do I care? I'm not attached to Rick or anything. He can hang out with whichever girls he wants to hang out with, that jerk!

Whoa, calm down! Your head is starting to catch fire!

Err, uh, no! Actually, the orange flame really brings out the brown in your eyes!

Helping the Unfortunate is my calling
by Brian Loux

So I proudly offer you...
Jobs for Everyone
Porn Movie Director
(free solving for everybody)

Ok, Ok, for this scene, here's what I want. You put your penis into her vagina.... and you fake like you're enjoying it.

Ok, action!

Fascist Popsicle Stand
by Saurabh Asthana

Fascist Popsicle Stand
A few hundred years ago I've been seen running around with a popsicle through the forest. The people of the village say I'm an important person. How is that going to be? I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. I feel important. I'm going to be important. 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(18.334), which exposes students to problems similar to those on the Putnam exam. One of the members of the 2003 team, Kane, had participated in the seminar last fall. Rogers noticed that he was “very good” and they decided to choose him although they have “very rarely put a freshman on the team.”

Rogers said that winning also “depends on a little bit of luck,” because “with the teams at the top, it’s always been close.” In addition, he said, stage fright and fatigue can also come into the picture, making the results of the competition unpredictable.

Rogers said that he is “very pleased” with MIT’s win but that since MIT had come in second many times, they “knew that it had to happen.”

MIT had a total of 120 participants, with 19 in the top 70, according to Rogers. An interesting outcome this year, he said, was that the number of combined MIT and Harvard students makes up more than half of the top 70 performers on the exam. “It just indicates the concentration of talent at MIT and Harvard,” he said.

Rogers said that in the recent past he and Stanley have not held any structured preparation prior to the test. 18.034 is “probably reasonable preparation,” Kane said, referring to the differential equations class. He said that his experience in high school math competitions and the math olympiad were useful.

Awards, celebration to come

Rogers said that a celebration would probably be held by the Putnam organizers after spring break. “In the past they have had a dinner for the team at a club in Boston,” he said. The MIT math department will be awarded $25,000, and each team member will receive $1000. In addition, Barton and Kane will receive $2500 as Putnam Fellows.

A total of 3615 students from 479 colleges and universities in the US and Canada participated in the Putnam Competition.

**Winning Teams**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>Team Members (in alphabetical order)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>MIT</td>
<td>Reid W. Barton, Daniel M. Kane, and Yevgeny K. Zaytman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Harvard University</td>
<td>Gabriel D. Carroll, George Lee, Jr., and Alexander B. Schwartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Duke University</td>
<td>David G. Arthur, Nikifor C. Bliznashki, and Oaz Nir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>California Institute of Technology</td>
<td>Zhiluo Liu, Po-Ru Loh, and Po-Shen Loh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Harvey Mudd College</td>
<td>David J. Guelker, Jason Murcko, and Andrew G. Niedermaier</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MIT Students Who Placed as Individuals**

Students are ranked by name within each grouping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 5</th>
<th>Reid Barton ’05</th>
<th>Honororable Mention Timothy G. Abbott ’06</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Daniel M. Kane ’06</td>
<td>Nikolay V. Andreev ’05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Punyashlokha Biswal ’05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 6-16</td>
<td>David A.G. Pritchard ’04</td>
<td>Po-Ning Chen ’05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emmanuel I. Stoica ’05</td>
<td>Makaym Fedorshuk ’04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pramokh Khangurn ’05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 16-26</td>
<td>Vladimir Barzov ’06</td>
<td>Sean P. Markan ’05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zhongtai Wu ’05</td>
<td>Virgil C. Petrea ’07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yevgeny K. Zaytman ’05</td>
<td>Shubhangi Saraf ’07</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nikhil A. Savale ’07</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David G. Shin ’05</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gary L. Sivek ’05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A total of 4361 students from 479 colleges and universities in the US and Canada participated in the Putnam Competition.

**Putnam Win Ends 24 Years of Being Ever So Close**

Putnam, from Page 1

**Putnam, from Page 1**

Free food on Sundays

join@the-tech.mit.edu

An unlocked gun could be the death of your family.
Please lock up your gun.

www.unloadandlock.com

**Winners must be willing and able to display their work in the Wiesner Student Art Gallery. The show will hang in the gallery during Commencement, from mid-May 2004 through June 30, 2004.**

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http://www.web.mit.edu/saa/schneider/
cating the papers strewn across the table. The MIT Women's Crew Team will be training in Florida.

Of course, for some, it is the warm weather that is unwanted, and they are bravely willing to venture into even more snow. Maria E. Hidalgo '04 will go snowboarding in Utah with her roommate. “I’ve been excited about it since December,” she said.

Daniel G. Oreper ‘04 will be going skiing in New Hampshire this year, after a failed attempt last year to throw together a trip at the last minute. “I like extreme locations of all kinds,” he said, and added that “there’s nothing better than the crisp air of the mountains.”

“I feel that at MIT one often lacks the ability to do physical activity. I missed that,” Oreper said. He hopes to strengthen his legs while skiing to help him prepare for playing soccer in the spring.

ASB provides community service

Approximately 70-80 students will participate in Alternative Spring Break, which is in its eighth year of providing community service trips over spring break.

Luis E. Vidal ’06 ASB Treasurer, said ASB is doing six service trips this year to the Cumberland Trail, Mt. Pleasant in South Carolina, West Virginia, California, Costa Rica, and Miami. Vidal will be going on the Environmental Conservation trip to help build part of the Cumberland Trail. “I’m looking forward to it,” he said. He also said he “probably will bring some work because I’m taking a lot of classes.”

Jennifer J. DeBoer ‘05, ASB publicity chair, said that ASB “usually works for an already established service organization,” such as Habitat for Humanity. She arranged the trip to San Carlos, Costa Rica, where they will be “working at a local orphanage teaching art.” The goal is to show them “different education than they’re used to” and introduce a “different way of thinking.”

Students applied in December to participate in ASB.

Campus expected to be sleepy

Students who are staying at MIT generally have one objective on their minds: to get some much-needed rest. “I’m going to recover from this semester,” said Jessica E. Rosenkrantz ‘05.

Parmook Khungurn ’06 will “catch up on sleep,” “play video games,” and even do “a little bit of classwork.”

Another student who chose not to make the long trip home is Stephanie C. Cross ’05, who is from Hawaii. “When you’re there and over jet lag, it’s time to come back,” she said. As a result, Cross will hibernate inside and sleep. “Oh yes, I can barely remember the last time we had a break,” Cross said.

Sara D. Bissonnette ’04 is staying here because she is taking an acting class at Harvard. Beyond that, though, “sleep is fun,” she said. In addition, she will maintain a low-key week by playing video games and hanging out with many of her friends who are also staying on campus.

No matter what, spring break offers a brief window of time when we can all breathe deeply and relax.

Students Miss Video Games, Moms During Holiday

Spring Break, from Page 1

Up, down, charm, strange, top, bottom.

Work it any way you want in Quark.

join@tt.mit.edu
W20-483, 617-253-1541

There's a lot to know about qualifying for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). You need to work and earn less than $34,692. If you have children, they must meet three qualifying tests. And that's just to name a few. But the most important thing to know is you can get help figuring it all out. Visit us on the web, call 1-800-TAX-1040 or ask your tax preparer. When it comes to getting help claiming everything you honestly deserve, consider it done.

Internal Revenue Service
www.irs.gov/eitc

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Council for the Arts at MIT Grants Program is accepting applications for its next deadline

April 2, 2004

Please contact Susan Cohen (cohen@media.mit.edu) to set up an appointment to discuss your application

We STRONGLY RECOMMEND that you set up an appointment
(proposals submitted for this deadline cannot support projects with a start date before May 13, 2004)

Currently registered MIT students, MIT faculty and MIT staff are eligible to apply
All types of arts projects are supported: visual, literary and performing arts

For more detailed information, read the Grants Guidelines on the web at:
http://web.mit.edu/arts/grants/grantguide.html
You may also submit your application from the web at:
http://web.mit.edu/arts/grants/grantform.html

The Council for the Arts at MIT is a volunteer group of alumni and friends established to support the visual, literary, and performing arts at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Since its founding in 1972 by MIT President Jerome B. Wiesner, the Council for the Arts has worked “to foster the arts at MIT...and...to act as a catalyst for the development of a broadly based, highly participatory program in the arts.” Approved by the President of MIT to three-year terms, Council members serve as advocates and advisors to MIT’s Associate Provost for the Arts.
Budget Forecast Assumed Rush Would Stay Constant

MIT thought rush would do as well By October 2002, this assumption had turned out to be overly optimistic. FSILGs received about 290 pledges in 2002, compared with an average of about 344 for the years before 2002, according to Council. Instead of staying the same, the number of empty beds increased, from 190 last year to 260 this year. In December 2003, the student life office notified the fraternities that there was not enough money budgeted to satisfy the program’s formula, and reduced this year’s payments by 20 percent.

The student life office’s description of the shortfall as “due to MIT’s financial constraints” runs somewhat counter to remarks by high-level administrators earlier in the year, that MIT’s financial problems would not affect student life. “The effect is going to be about zero on the things you might be concerned about in student life,” President Charles M. Vest told the Undergraduate Association Senate. "That group is just too small and the numbers would not affect student life."

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MIT, IFU differ on commitment

Part of the reason fraternities have been upset is that, almost to a person, students and administrators have differed in their understanding of the actual commitment MIT made in 2002. Administrators insist that MIT’s commitment was to spend $1.5 million — an amount never reported in The Tech or discussed in the Financial Transition Plan itself — and not necessarily to fully fund the Transition Plan’s formula. “We committed an amount of money, and that’s what we have spent,” said Chancellor Phillip L. Clay PhD ’75. “I certainly think the documents were very clear a couple of years ago that year one would be 750 [thousand dollars], year two would be 500, and year three would be 250,” he said. “I don’t think there was any notion that we would allocate however much was decided would be good.” Clay said. “In lots of ways around MIT, we’ve discovered we need more money than we have.”

The Financial Transition Plan describes “what was anticipated we would do,” Council said. In the end, though, the plan’s formula is “a guideline,” he said. Perhaps as might be expected, students say their understanding was different: that MIT had committed to follow the Financial Transition Plan as written. “That was obviously our understanding,” said Daniel H. Daneshvar ’05, the Interfraternity Council president. “I think most fraternities are pretty upset about this,” he said. “There’s obviously a disconnect.”

"MIT reassured us that they would find the money," said Pius A. Uzamere II ’04, the Undergraduate Association president. “I think MIT reassured us that they would find the money," said Pius A. Uzamere II ’04, the Undergraduate Association president. “I think most fraternities are pretty upset about this,” he said. “There’s obviously a disconnect.”

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Some fraternity members likened the shortfall to a bait-and-switch operation. “They buy the fraternity system’s easy compliance with having freshmen on campus by claiming they want to make sure no house fails financially, and then as soon as the original students involved are graduated, the amount changes,” Brian T. Netter ’05, who lives at Tau Epsilon Phi, wrote in an e-mail. “The committee will say something about extending the financial aspects of the transition,” said Professor Patrick H. Winston, co-chairman of the task force. “We think that the transition is over.”

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The task force is expected to release its report by the end of the semester. "I think there’s a probability the committee will say something about extending the financial aspects of the transition," said Professor Patrick H. Winston, co-chairman of the task force. “We think that the transition is over.”

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Don’t forget to laugh once in a while
How Do You Measure the Growth of A Child?

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Public Administration, Political Science
Health Sciences, Pharmacy, Nursing, School Counseling
Bioinformatics, Biotechnology
Business, Accounting
Computer Science
Criminal Justice
Engineering, Information Systems, Telecommunication
Humanities & Social Sciences
Education, Journalism
Public Administration, Political Science
How can you help?
Join The Tech.

Vitaliy Pereverzev ’06 hurls the ball towards his Bates College opponent during his first match after having his eligibility reinstated by the NCAA. Pereverzev won his first match since last spring 7–5, 6–3, and also won his doubles match alongside Michael H. Ogrydziak ’04. MIT soundly beat Bates 5–2, and improved their season record to 4–3.

A Cambridge Police officer is loaded into an ambulance Tuesday night after running his vehicle (seen in background) into a tree in front of the MIT nuclear reactor on Albany Street. The officer was having heart trouble at the time of the accident.

We are nice people
join@the-tech.mit.edu

FRIENDS DON’T LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK.

~ A Student Association

Put it together and be an Arts Scholar!

Apps available in E15-205 & 10-280 & web.mit.edu/arts/special_programs/artssapp.html
Deadline: April 9, 2004
Questions? nbozard@mit.edu Sponsored by the Council for the Arts at MIT
In the most fun and compelling match of the season, the varsity men’s volleyball team ended its season by pushing Harvard to the very edge of defeat. In what was supposed to be an easier match (at least on paper) for the much taller Harvard squad, the Engineers played some of their best volleyball of the season and showed that they are a program on the rise.

From the first points of the match, it was a back and forth battle that stayed close throughout. Harvard was able to win the first game 30–28, but the Engineers fought back in the second game, winning in convincing fashion with the score of 30–25. MIT continued to keep the pressure on and built a 28–26 lead in the third game, but their opponents made a last minute run and stole the game 30–28.

With their backs to the wall, the Engineers refused to lie down and came out fighting in the fourth game building a nice lead late in the third game once again. Harvard again made a late run, but this time MIT slammed home a nice lead late in the game building a nice lead late in the fourth game. The deciding fifth game was more of the same intense fighting for every point, which saw the Engineers stay aggressive throughout and almost pulled off an amazing win. However, Harvard proved to be a bit stronger on the day taking the fifth game 15–12.

Rob McAndrew ’05 and Kahir Makkad ’05 led the offense with 27 and 17 kills, respectively, while Jordan Wan ’06 dished out 50 assists in the effort. Carlos Dorta Quinones ’04 and Hao Hu ’04 anchored the defense with 16 and seven digs, respectively, while strong role play by defensive specialists Joseph Yu ’04 and Jason Park ’05 were also key in the effort.

The team ends its season with an overall record of 12–14, which is the first ten win season and best record for the program since 1993. The squad actually came one point away from finishing 300 for the first time in 11 seasons as well. Although a 500 season was one of the goals for this season, the more important goal was to build a solid foundation and team culture from which the program could move forward. This last match shows how much the team has grown and how far the program has come in a single season. We can’t know what potential it has to be a force to be reckoned with in the future. The Engineers played some of their best volleyball of the season and showed that they are on the rise.

I am no longer alone in my Zags enthusiasm. It’s time for the Bulldogs from Spokane, Washington, to take what is rightfully theirs, a national championship. Off of a 27-2 season including a perfect run west through the Coast Conference, Gonzaga enters the tournament a number two seed in the St. Louis region with sights on Zag-fueled basketball immortality. The great guard play of Blake Stepp and Kyle Feldbush will lead the Demons to glory against any opponents and shooting, and their superior coaching will allow us to rise above the proverbial pile in the brackets.