By Nick Bushak

On Sunday evening, the candidates for Undergraduate Association President and Vice President debated issues ranging from housing concerns to MIT students’ relationship with the administration.

The tickets for UA President and Vice-President, respectively, Akash A. Chandawarkar ’09 and Amanda J. Maguire ’09, Jason C. Forte ’09 and Brittany A. Holland-Marcus ’10, Bradley H. Gampel ’09 and Willard J. Johnson ’09, and Noah S. Jessop ’09 and Michael A. Bennie ’10.

Most of the candidates were in accord on the need to improve UA transparency, improve the student-administration relationship, address dining concerns, and make SureHed more dependable, but the candidates’ specific perspectives on the problems varied.

Improving student involvement

All tickets voiced the need to improve UA transparency through an improved, maintained UA Web site, but the Web site was a key to Bennie and Johnson’s platform. Bennie suggested a UA “portal” which would have different depth of content for students with differing levels of interest. For example, a student only interested “a little bit” in UA affairs could see a condensed version of UA news.

Chandawarkar said that all UA meetings should be open and publicized to the general MIT population, among other suggestions. In particular, he cited how “people have no idea what the class councils are doing,” and mentioned that he is trying to get their meetings to open to the public right now through the Senate. When asked why he and Maguire have not already made more attempts to improve transparency of the UA in their past experience, given that it is a recent graduate to the board of the MIT Corporation. 

Burke senator just quit,” and executive Board every two weeks. Gampel pointed to the fact that the student question-and-answer session in the student center with the UA Executive Board every two weeks.

Gampel pointed to the fact that the Baker senator just quit, and he proposed a system for maintaining “senator accountability.” He said “some senators get very involved, and others end up doing nothing.”

“So what does the United States do? You start ripping people in newspapers. You get [them] embarrassed. You ruin their names.” Gampel said. He went on to say, “you’re not necessarily attacked to people, but we’re saying use The Tech as a device to kind of hold the senators accountable.”

Campus dining

The issue of dining was brought up on a number of occasions during the debates, but the most disagreement on the issue came after a student, Vinayak V. Ranade ’09, asked the candidates whether “dining with good food” or “community building” through dining were more important, in reference to the administration’s recent claim that dining halls will remain closed.

Blackjack Team Book Embellished; Mezrich Claims Alterations Needed

By Drake Bennett

The movie “21,” which opened last weekend as the No. 1 box office draw in the nation, is a glossy action-adventure movie that adds sex, violence, and some theatrical high living to the plot of the book on which it is based. But readers of the book, the 2002 nonfiction bestseller “Bringing Down the House,” might wonder why any embellishment was necessary. Mezrich appears to have worked more as a collage artist, sifting some facts from interviews, inventing certain others, and then recombining these into novel scenes that didn’t happen and characters who never lived. The result is a crowd-pleasing story, eagerly marketed by his publishers as true — but which several of the students who participated say is embellished beyond recognition.

“I don’t even know if you want to call the things in there exaggerations, because they’re so exaggerated,” said John Chang ’83, an MIT graduate and one of the inspirations for the character Micky Rosa, who in the book is the team’s founder and leader.

The book is pulling back to prominence at a time of big scandal elsewhere in publishing, and lots public trust in the media. Recent high-profile revelations of exaggeration...
Negligent Driving Killed Diana

By Alan Cowell

LONDON

After six months of hearings and testimony by 278 witnesses, a jury at a British inquest Monday that Diana, Princess of Wales, and her lover, Dodi al-Fayed, were unlawfully killed by the negligent driving of their chauffeur and of the photographers who pursued the couple inside their speeding Mercedes-Benz into a Paris underpass a decade ago.

The verdict of unlawful killing, by a vote of 9-2, represented the toughest judgment available to the jury, which needed only a majority to render a decision. The jury, which began to deliberate on Wednesday, was told that a verdict of unlawful killing was tantamount to one of manslaughter.

The crash, in August 1997, seized attention in Britain and around the world with rumors, conspiracy theories and allegations. Diana, who was 36 when she died, was described by Tony Blair, then the prime minister, as the “people’s princess.”

The verdict said the crash “was caused, or contributed to, by the speed and manner of the driver of the Mercedes and the speed and manner of the following vehicles.”

Overall, Clinton and Obama, both Democrats, are likely to criticize the costs of the war and a lack of political progress. McCain, an early supporter of the troop escalation who has acknowledged that his political fortunes are directly tied to American success in Iraq, will say that the “urge” is working, and is likely to add that the Democrats are ignoring the gains.

The senator is expected to demand at least a temporary halt in troop withdrawals and to speak more positively about Iran’s influence in Iraq.

McCain, a Republican, has the logistical advantage in appearing before his two Democratic competitors. Petraeus is set to testify first to the Armed Services Committee, beginning at 9:30 a.m., and McCain, the ranking Republican, will be the second to speak, after the committee chairman, Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich.

Clinton, a more junior member of the panel, will speak last, Obama, a junior member of the Foreign Relations Committee, which is holding its hearing in the afternoon, will be the 13th on that panel to speak, perhaps after the evening news. When Petraeus last appeared before the two panels, in September, the sessions lasted for 10 hours, ending after 7:30 p.m.

McCain’s strategy was forehad- owed in a speech he gave Monday to the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Kansas City, Mo., where he praised Petraeus and his “clear implication of his own approach to Iraq.”

“We want to send additional troops, many of them on their third or fourth tour,” McCain said in the speech, “and a great, seasoned gen- eral to lead them, with a battle plan that at long last actually addressed the challenges we faced in Iraq.”

The reduction in violence, McCain said, “has opened the way for a return to something approaching normal political and economic life for the aver- age Iraqi.”

As a result, he said, the United States is “no longer staring into the abyss of defeat.”

Politically, McCain risks looking like an eager cheerleader if he heaps too many accolades on Pe- traeus. The senator’s advisors say he will also question the general closely about the recent assault against Shi- ite militias in Basra, when more than 1,000 Iraqi soldiers and police of- ficers refused to fight or abandoned their posts.

Inflation in Asia Pressures Prices for Western Consumers

By Keith Bradsher

The free ride for American consumers is ending. For two gen- erations, Americans have imported goods produced ever more cheaply from a succession of low-wage countries, especially China and Korea, and now India and Vietnam, and China and now increasingly places like Vietnam and India.

But mounting inflation in the developing world, especially Asia, is threatening the long-term stability of the dollar, and not just in China, where rising energy and labor costs have made exports to the United States more expensive, but in the lower-cost alternatives in India too.

“Inflation is the major threat to Asian countries,” said Jong-Wha Lee, head of the Asian Develop- ment Bank’s office of regional eco- nomics integration.

Developing countries have had bouts of inflation before. Indeed, some are famous for them, like Bra- zil, which experienced triple-digit inflation in the late 1980s and early 1990s. But two things make this time different, and together promise to send prices higher at Wal-Mart and other discounters across the United States, just as the possibility of recession looms.

First, developing countries now produce nearly half of all American imports, prices rose 19.4 percent from a year ago. Inflation elsewhere is rising too.

The company just increased by up to 10 percent the prices it charges for Pier 1 imports in the United States for hand-painted vases because labor- cost costs are rising 30 percent a year.

Overall, in Vietnam, one of the world’s top destinations for manufacturing investments and one of the fastest-growing sources of American imports, prices rose 19.4 percent from March 2007 to March 2008.

WEATHER

Go Out and Enjoy

By Roberto F. Roncalle

Situation for Noon Eastern Daylight Time, Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Extended Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny. Low 34°F (1°C). High 50°F (10°C).

Tonight: Clear. Low 35°F (2°C).

Wednesday: Mostly sunny during the morning, then partly cloudy in the afternoon. Low 42°F (6°C). High 63°F (17°C).
As Olympic Torch Reaches Paris, Protesters And Scuffles Follow

By Katrine Bennhold and Jon Hovind (TNS)

A Tokyo为中国奥运火炬传递的“接力”之旅，标志着最昂贵的奥运会的开始，但是作为一个国家逐渐成熟为其公民争取权利的典范，中国的批评者，一个多元化的联盟，开始利用奥运火炬传递作为反华的宣传工具。家长们担心着，他们的孩子可能成为反华的“宣传者”。家长们在解释为什么他们决定支持奥巴马。他们说，这对一个选民身份逐渐消失的候选人来说是灾难性的。

中国的安全力量已经通过与中国的激烈辩论来强化其地位。当中国宣布奥运火炬传递将途经巴黎时，法国政府表示，预计将有数万人参加火炬传递。

但抗议者们已经准备好进行行动。他们已经准备好了应对可能出现的暴力事件，包括摩托车、滑板、甚至船只。他们在巴黎市政厅前挥舞着标语，宣称“巴黎捍卫人权”。

但抗议者们的努力并没有得到成功。在巴黎一处火炬传递的地点，一名火炬手被抗议者们包围。

中国还在与西方国家的领导人进行谈判，试图阻止火炬传递的路线更改。

The Tech

Youth Voters Supporting Sen. Obama Exhorted Their Elites to Full Engagement

By Jan Hoffman (TNS)

The daily phone calls. The midnight e-mails. And when college lets out, the “table dinner declarations”? Oh, please.

But why? Is it because Obama’s devotees just won’t give their parents a break.

As the race for the Democratic presidential nomination continues, the young supporters of both candidates have been carrying on a battle for their parents’ attention. The outcome of the primary has been a source of tension in many households.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton has been trying to reach her target demographic of young voters, while Sen. Barack Obama has been focusing on energizing the liberal base.

But experts say that the Obama campaign has not been as successful in reaching young voters as it was with older voters.

The Obama campaign has been struggling to connect with young voters, who are notoriously difficult to engage.

The McCain campaign has been more successful in reaching young voters, who have been swing voters in the past.

For McCain, Little Talk of Controversial Endorsements

By Neela Bhanja

When Sen. John McCain won the endorsement of the Rev. John J. Hagee in February, his campaign hoped it would shore up his conservative credentials. But the endorsement has not been as successful as it was with older voters.

The McCain campaign has been struggling to connect with young voters, who are notoriously difficult to engage.

The Obama campaign has been more successful in reaching young voters, who have been swing voters in the past.
"21' Is An Affront To MIT

The whitewashing of the cast of the movie "21" based on Ben Mezrich's best-seller Bringing Down the House is indeed wrong, and almost enough to get me to see it. However, unfortunately I got convinced by some friends into spending $8 to go and see it, only to realize that, much worse than the way the whitewashing treats Asians is the picture in which MIT is painted.

When the stories portrayed in "21" have been twisted and turned almost into complete fiction, I cannot help but feel outraged, as a member of the MIT community. Kudos to MIT for not allowing Sony to film on campus but I cannot help but wonder why is not more being done against Sony? Why are they allowed to tarnish MIT's reputation like that? Is the MIT Corporation not taking punitive legal action against them? Can you imagine if the same thing happened in some studio came out with a fictional story where an em- ployee of Technolever, Inc. (even though discrimination based on race, gender, etc. is forbidden), are allowed into the Dow Jones Sustainability Index even though they work in the business of cutting old people out of their pension money, and now, apparently, are even allowed to try to slap that image of one of the country's leading academic institutions. It is high time someone puts an end to this.

Miguel Valencia Giers

Letters To The Editor

If you were President Susan Hockfield, here's the letter that we would write concerning Star A. Simpson '06:

Dear Members of the MIT Community,

On September 21, 2007, Star A. Simpson '06, one of our students in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science and a student researcher in the Media Lab, went to Logan Airport to meet an arriving passenger. She was wearing a sweatshirt with a device made of plastic circuit board with green blinking light-emitting diodes (LEDs) in the shape of a star — the same sweatshirt that she had worn the day before at the MIT Career Fair. She was carrying clay shaped into a rose. The circuit board on her sweatshirt was similar to those created in a popular class: "9602 Circuits & Electronics.

At the airport, Ms. Simpson's MIT Career Fair outfit was made for a mistake, but was caused by arrest state troops with MP5 submachine guns while possessing a "noose device." After three court appearances, she still faces a court trial on May 23.

I remind the community and the greater public that our legal system assumes, as a bedrock principle, that anyone charged with a crime is innocent until proven guilty. I am writing to apologize for any statement by my administration that may have caused damage or distress to students, friends, and students or anyone else in the extended MIT community.

The Institute should have acted faster to pro- vide the media with a reasonable understanding of the kind of engineering and electronic art that are part of our research and teaching, some of which interfaces with the world of design and fashion. In that regard, Dr. Jane Stallberg, Dean of Engineering, and Professor Robert Picard '79 of the Media Lab for her efforts with the press and in court. As Professor Picard pointed out in an affidavit, Ms. Simpson's sweatshirt falls in the category of "wearable electronics" that have previously been considered "a mode of self expression in the commonplace in society." I myself would add that similar clothing is available in many retail outlets, including some at the MIT campus shops.

According to an interview at the Boston Globe, Professor Picard's own wardrobe includes wearable electronics such as blouses with LEDs, circuit boards, wires and batteries, and she expects colleagues in her field to wear their electronic devices. In court, Professor Picard has further stated that Ms. Simpson's sweatshirt can be reasonably considered "a method of self expression, fusing art and engineering" and that such artifacts constitute one mode of "encouraging [students] to imagine what would happen if some studio came out with a fictional story where an employee of Technolever, Inc. (even though discrimination based on race, gender, etc. is forbidden), are allowed into the Dow Jones Sustainability Index even though they work in the business of cutting old people out of their pension money, and now, apparently, are even allowed to try to slap that image of one of the country's leading academic institutions. It is high time someone puts an end to this.

Star Simpson is part of the "MIT Fam-

ily." As such, we stand by her.

Signed,
Michael McGraw-Herdeg
Associate Professor, Linguistics and Philosophy

Editors

The Tech is the student newspaper of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The Tech's policies are made by the student officers of the newspaper and the members of the Editorial Board.

The Tech makes no commitment to publish all the letters it receives. Letters may be edited for length, clarity, and ease of publication. Letters should be typed, double-spaced, and should not exceed 250 words in length. Letters will be published at the discretion of the editors.

Letters to the Editor should be sent to:
Letters to the Editor, The Tech, The Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 227 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139-4307, or sent by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. All submissions are due by 4:30 p.m. two days before the date of publication.

Letters and columns, but cartoons and magazine ads will not be accepted. Unsigned letters will not be accepted.

Letters to the Tech reserve the right to edit or condense letters, shorter let-
ters will be given higher priority. Once submitted, all letters become the property of The Tech, and will not be returned. Letters, columns, and cartoons may also be posted on The Tech's Web site and/or printed in the newspaper. If you are unsure if you may disseminate this material in any other format or medium now known or later that becomes known, The Tech makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.

Guest columns are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community and have the author's name in italics. Columns without italics are written by Tech staff.

To Reach Us

The Tech's telephone number is (617) 253-1541. E-mail is the easi- est way to reach us, and your message will be forwarded to the Tech staff if you are unreachable when we attempt to contact you. E-mail messages should be sent to news@tech.mit.edu. Letters to the editor should be sent to: letters@tech.mit.edu. Please send press releases, requests for coverage, and information about errors that call for correction to news@tech.mit.edu. The Tech can be found on the World Wide Web at http://www.tech.mit.edu.
By Michael T. Lin

It’s hand having a significant other at a distant school. Maybe not as hard as, say, upgrading your computer to dual-boot BSD, but challenging all the same. Being anickle freshman with no independent cash flow and a consistent homework load sort of precludes
the possibility of regular travel for the time being, and our vacations don’t seem to line
up properly, rather like Red Leader’s proton torpedoes. (Case in point: her spring break was three weeks before ours. Curse you, Massa-
sachusetts weather that’s only hovering above freezing, even after the vernal equinox!) I continue to be thankful that MIT is so well
and fully wired that staying in contact in the electronic age is especially simple here. After
all, that’s what the Internet is for, right? Send-
ing enough Facebook music dedications to fill
dozens of mix tapes? I’ve actually been sever-
ably blocks up Mass. Ave. and wondered where the nearest Athena station was, but that’s for
another article to address. My comedy well is
only so deep, and I need to keep a good tab
on what few funny subjects I can manage to

Given how difficult it is to maintain a long-
distance relationship, I confess that I can’t help
but derive some Schadenfreude pleasure from
seeing other people’s Facebook status
to change to “single.” I know it’s not very em-
pathetic and that dating is not a competition,
but even so, it’s com-
f fort ing to know that I might actually be do-
ing something right. As a stereotypical male
whose attention has al-
ways been somewhat hit-and-miss, trying to
gauge how my girlfriend is feeling based sole-
ly on text or voice is like trying to predict
the weather based solely on how your hand feels
when you stick it out the window. You’ll have
no idea whether it’s sunny or cloudy, and by

I do think that long-distance
relationships can be worth
the while. After all, separation
(like everything else in life)
is only temporary. I can’t even be-

ing to convey how great it was to walk off
a plane after three months and see my girlfriend
rain and snow on Boston/Cambridge the day I fly out
for winter break?)

It’s also quite the confidence booster to hang out seven times in as many days and find
three months of separation to be virtually inas-
sequential with regard to relationship functional-
ity. The eventual parting tends to be more bitter
than sweet, and I am a little ashamed to admit that
I sentimentally pressed my hand against
the window when I rode away from her (chick
flick moment number two!).

The logistics of long-distance relationships
naturally vary from couple to couple, but on
the off-chance any of you out there are leery
of them, just be aware that you don’t have to

I felt somewhat disconnected from the situ-
ation. I just watched it all happen. I watched
the men push Leo up against the van, throw
him to the ground, and rip his shirt. I watched
the police arrest Leo and es-
cort him to their vehicle.
I watched my class-
mates pour on our van driver to follow the police
to the Thalathapattu Police Station, where we
spent the next four hours filing a police report.
At the end of our day, news cameras and
microphones greeted us outside of the
police station.

I realized a few things from what I now
refer to as “the showdown.” Politics — the
art of getting things done — work differently in
developing countries with weaker govern-
ments. Decisions are often made by down
and dirty combat as opposed to courts.
There are few protections for the weak and voice-
less, especially because of corruption among govern-
ment officials. Money talks. Leo tells us that
local police around the corridor were most
likely paid by the developer. This develop-
ment process lacked clarity of information.
Even after the entire dilemma, I’m still un-
sure about the

public or private status of the corridor. The
media’s pervasive power was also seen, but
its accuracy of the facts was not. One article
contained the following humorous comment from NICE: “Villagers in the area whom
(Leo) abused had beaten him up. We weren’t
there to rescue him.” Also worth noting is that
even as a United States citizen and the protec-
tions that come with it, I am vulnerable in a
foreign country.

We gave a final presentation of solutions
to the problem of illegal land development. I reflected on the fact that anyone can make
up perfect solutions, but their real life implemen-
tation, constrained to conditions like budget
and corruption, is incredibly difficult. Even if
I plan for an equitable and transparent devel-
lopment process by taking input from villag-
ers, even if fair plans are drawn up, even if I
color a map of my green map to reserve it
as open space, there is little way to ensure that
any of my perfectly logical and technical solu-
tions will be carried out accordingly accord-
ing to plan. The problems that we address are
complicated, people-involved, and more difficult
to find solutions for than anything presented
in school or theory. But that’s how the real, big

world is.

"Close your eyes to racial differences, and welcome all with the light of oneness." — Baha‘u’llah (b.1817)
Steal My Comic

by Michael Ciuffo

Steal my obscure
historical reference week!

Pygmalion, that
girl of yours is
something else;
it’s like she was
made for you!

He’s on to me...

Blobbles

by Jason Chan

Is this what love is?

The heart is for you, but
the chocolates are for me!

But the chocolate is
the only part I want...

Remember, this is how Blobbles works: you send a caption, and I make a drawing out of it.

blobbles@mit.edu
Instructions:
Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

Solution on page 10.

ACROSS
1 Calls on the carpet
2 Charged particles
3 Peke’s bank
4 Repeat from memory
5 Business outfit
6 Wallet single
7 “Chess mate” dancer
8 Actress Hagen
9 Hanoi holiday
10 Play about Capote
11 Hindu princess
12 Suspension part
13 “Chess mate” actor
14 Christie’s “sparkling” poison
15 Waist watching
16 French summer
17 “Chess mate” dancer
18 “Chess mate” poet
19 Picayune nippicker
20 Color TV pioneer
21 Solidare starter
22 Mystery pseudonym
23 Summer cooler, to some
24 “Chess mate” dancer
25 “Chess mate” dancer
26 “Chess mate” dancer
27 “Chess mate” dancer
28 “Chess mate” dancer
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DOWN
1 Picayune nippicker perhaps
2 As a result of this
3 Summer cooler, to some
4 Clamor
5 French summer
6 Faction
7 Periodic number
8 Not at home
9 Zero
10 Breastbones
11 Immature-ish
12 Modern protagonist
13 Shooter missile
14 USSF display
15 Helping hand
16 Bug movie
17 Ms. Sorvino
18 Shakespearean verb
19 Christie’s “sparkling” poison
20 Color TV pioneer
21 Solidare starter
22 Mystery pseudonym
23 Summer cooler, to some
24 “Chess mate” dancer
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99 “Chess mate” dancer

Puzzles by Pappocom
© Solution, tips, and computer program at http://www.sudok.com
UA Candidates Discuss Policies

Old Chandawarkar E-Mail Promptsroversy Over Housing

Elections, from Page 1

help foster community
All of the candidates except for Jessop and Bennie chose “dining with good food,” largely because they claimed that “you can’t force com-
munity,” in the words of Gampel. In response to the question, Holland-
Marcus said, “People hang out where they’re comfortable and we don’t want to
force people into a community that they don’t want to be in.” In Maguire,
said, “you can build community else-
where, not just in the dining hall.”

Jessop and Bennie said “commu-

ity building” was more important, but the dining hall model is restric-
tive and does not necessarily promote
community. Jessop brought up the example of Amherst College, which has 400 students and a single dining hall in which people “sit with their friends, ignoring everyone else,” ac-
cording to him.

Personal qualifications
The candidates also discussed
their qualifications relative to
other candidates. The tickets of
Chandawarkar/Maguire and Forte/
Holland-Marcus were the two most
experienced. Chandawarkar was the Class of 2009 president for two years and is currently a UA Interfrater-
mony Council Senator, and Maguire
has had two years of experience on
the UA Senate and is currently UA
Events Chair and UA Dining Vice
Chair. Forte has been involved in
the UA for the past two years and is cur-
rently the UA Senate Vice Speaker,
and Holland-Marcus is currently the
UA Public Relations Chair.

Bennie was a UA senator from
freshman year until recently when he
moved into his fraternity, while Jessop
had no previous UA experience.

Drawing on the fact that, between the
two, they had lived in Burton-Con-
er, East Campus, fraternities, and
off campus, Jessop claimed that “we
collectively have seen what different parts of campus are like.”

Neither Gampel nor Johnson
have previously held positions in the
UA. They both stressed their athletic
and fraternity experience. Gampel
said that his position as the basket-
tball team’s captain prepares him for
the position, like many of the UA administra-
tion and the team players to the
students. They also stress their strong friendships, their
personality, and their ability to com-
unicate in public forums that make them
strong candidates.

Student-administration
relationship
The candidates also discussed the importance of a good relationship
with the administration.

Forte suggested working with “influential people who have the ad-
ministration’s ear.” “It will be very
hard for the administration to ignore
Ray Stata...or David Koch,” he said.

When asked about his ticket’s dis-
tinguishing factors, Forte pointed to
the ticket’s experience and existing
relationships with administrators,
saying, for example, that he has at-
tended MIT Corporation meetings and met the Corporation’s members.

Chandawarkar said that, given
his ticket’s experience, “we already
have a working relationship with the
administration.” He said that “we
should not work against the admin-
istration...[rather] we should work with
them” to find solutions that
work for both sides.

Jessop told a story about a stu-
dent’s experiences on the W1 found-
ders group committee to illustrate
his view on the general disconnect
between students and the administra-
tion. He said that the committee
was working to decide on din-
ing options in the renovated W1. He
said that the administration waited
until a student mentioned what they
wanted to hear: “they wanted to
have a single kitchen in the
basement because it was a possibil-
ity. Then, the administrators im-
mediately latched onto that point.”

He concluded by saying, “Student
involvement is not the same as stu-
dents parroting what the administra-
tion wants us to say.”

Johnson said that he has not
worked with administrators through
the UA, but he said he worked with administrators through athletics and
his fraternity. In particular, he said
that he has met with Larry G. Bene-
dict, the outgoing Dean for Student Life.

Mailing list response
At 12:46 a.m. on Monday, hours
after the debate ended, Sarah C.
Hopp ‘08 forwarded an e-mail to
the re-discuss mailing list sent by
Chandawarkar to the UA Senate over IAP. The e-mail was Chandawarkar’s
response to a survey of UA senators
that he chose to send to the entire
Senate. In the forwarded e-mail,
Chandawarkar wrote in support of
placing incoming freshmen into ran-
don dorms and moving Residence Exploration (RIEX) to sophomore
year. He wrote that “I think it defeats
the purpose of having a ‘diverse’
campus if the campus self segregates
and the MIT community-UA doesn’t take measures to prevent it.”

This e-mail was then forwarded
to several other dorm mailing lists,
including senior-haus, bc-talk, and
next-forum. It spawned a long thread of e-mails, most of which were in
opposition to Chandawarkar’s idea of
randomized housing.

Chandawarkar responded to the
thread with an e-mail to bc-talk at
2:36 a.m. that same night. He wrote that “I NEVER said this is some-
thing I would try to implement at all
(and you won’t find this in my plat-
form either), but merely threw it out
as an ‘out of the box’ and ‘radical’
idea that relates to fostering commu-
nity.” He added that his responses to
the survey were simply “answering
Martin’s brainstorming call.”

The full platform list for all
of the candidates can be found at http://
vote.mit.edu. Electronic voting be-
gins Monday, April 14 at 12:01 a.m.
and continues until Thursday, April
17, with paper balloting following
on Friday, April 18.

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Those Rejected From Colleges Find Comfort in Wall Postings

By Peter Schworm

A Chronicle of Fear and Fun

With each maddeningly thin envelope, each remorseless rebuff from another top-choice college, Kellen Mandehr knew he had won a small measure of payback. And a large measure of liberation.

“It was definitely a good feeling,” he said Monday, reminiscing by the ‘Wall of Shame,’ a hallway bulletin board blanketed with dozens of college rejection letters.

Nearly all Newton South seniors will wind up in a strong four-year school this fall. Still, the sting of rejection, particularly for high-achieving students whose sights have been trained on the Ivy League since grade school, is hard to shake.

Viewing the ‘Wall of Shame’ is meant to be sarcastic, students say. In many ways, posting the letters can be cathartic, making a personal setback public, reeling students rally together. By sharing the letters, they find comfort in a communal, almost collegial, show of solidarity against a impersonal, seemingly arbitrary system.

“It’s unifying, and kind of celebratory,” said Max Lorz-Krause, who was denied at several schools and plans to study theater at Ithaca College. “It’s a rite of passage.”

Calling the postings the Wall of Shame is meant to be sarcastic, students say. In many ways, posting the rejection letters is a way to find acceptance.

“At first, it was painful. I basically had to lie down and be out in the world for a while,” said Alex Kaufman, who said he was denied at nearly the entire New England Small College Athletic Conference, which includes Amherst, Williams, and other top liberal-arts colleges.

“There’s nothing worse than getting a rejection letter, but knowing you’re in the same boat as lots of other people, that definitely helps.”

When Sofya Rozenblat, 18, got the bad news from Dartmouth College, her first choice, she was crushed. She shed some tears. Staring at her letter on the sill the next morning, she recalled, started the healing process, she said.

“It’s very therapeutic,” she said. “Letting everyone know made me feel so much better. I realized that almost everyone gets rejected, so it’s one more thing we all have in common.”

Now, the setback seems distant as she looks forward to starting at the University of Michigan.

At Newton, the Wall of Shame serves as kind of a water cooler for college-related gossip and reflection. Some sigh and shake their heads, muttering.

Some walk by and glance, then reflexively snap it back, like a car crash. Some juniors walk by and stop.

A few pore over them, reading each stock phrase of gentle letdown — ‘very real regret’ (Duke), ‘sincere regret’ (Yale), ‘so sorry to tell you’ (MIT), ‘I am sorry to bring you disappointing news’ (Wesleyan), ‘careful and concerned consideration’ (Brown), and ‘we wish you every success with your further education’ (Georgetown).

A few students have written editorial comments on the letters. “Don’t worry, I got in on the waitlist,” wrote one student rejected by Bowdoin.

The wall started four years ago by a pair of friends who both applied early to Dartmouth, Brown said. One got in, one didn’t, and a tradition was born.

Brown said the college admissions season is always filled with heartache.
Philosophy More and More Popular Among University Students

By Winnie Hu
University Students

When a fellow student at Rutgers University urged Didu Onejeme to try Philosophy 101 two years ago, Onejeme, who was a pre-med sophomore, dismissed it as “fru-fru.”

“The rational thinking behind it — thinking about stuff — I mean, who cares?” Onejeme recalled thinking at the time.

But Onejeme, now a senior applying to law school, ended up changing her major to philosophy, which she thinks has armed her with the skills to be successful. “My mother was like, what are you going to do with that?” said Onejeme, 22. “She wanted me to be a pharmacy major, but I persuaded her with my argumentative skills.”

Once scoffed at as a luxury major, philosophy is being embraced at Rutgers and other universities by a new generation of college students who are drawing modern-day lessons from the age-old discipline as they try to make sense of their world, from the morality of the war in Iraq to the latest political scandal. The economic downturn has done little, if anything, to dampen this enthusiasm among students, who say that what they learn in college can translate into practical skills and careers. On many campuses, debate over modern issues like war and technology is emphasized over the study of classic ancient texts.

Rutgers, which has long had a top-ranked philosophy department, is one of a number of universities where the number of undergraduates majoring in philosophy is ballooning; there are 100 in this year’s graduating class, up from 50 in 2002, even as overall enrollment on the main campus has declined by 4 percent. At the City University of New York, where enrollment is up 18 percent over the past six years, there are 322 philosophy majors, a 51 percent increase since 2002.

“If I were to start again as an undergraduate, I would major in philosophy,” said Matthew Goldstein, the Rutgers philosophy professor who advises undergraduates. “For me, philosophy has attracted students who are drawing modern-day lessons from the classical texts, or what is known as armchair philosophy. Some, like Onejeme, the pre-med-student-turned-philosopher, who is double-majoring in philosophy and, say, psychology or economics, in recent years, and go on to become doctors, lawyers, writers, investment bankers and commodities traders.

As the approach has changed, philosophy has attracted students with little interest in contemplating the classical texts, or what is known as armchair philosophy. Some, like Onejeme, the pre-med-student-turned-philosopher, who is double-majoring in philosophy and, say, psychology or economics, in recent years, and go on to become doctors, lawyers, writers, investment bankers and commodities traders.

“Some of these students make the world a smaller place and force us to look beyond the bubble we grow up in,” said Christine Bullman, 20, a junior, who said she chose philosophy because it emphasizes the verbal and logical skills prized by law schools — something the Rutgers department encourages by pointing out that its majors score high on the LSAT.

Other students said that studying philosophy, with its emphasis on the big questions and alternative points of view, provided good training for looking at large societal questions, like globalization and technology.

“All of these things make the world a smaller place and force us to look beyond the bubble we grow up in,” said Onejeme, 22, a junior, who said she chose philosophy because it emphasizes the verbal and logical skills prized by law schools — something the Rutgers department encourages by pointing out that its majors score high on the LSAT.

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Smile!

There are tons of great events going on this weekend. Drop by our office on the fourth floor of the Student Center and check out these events:

Thursday, April 8. 9:30 p.m. – 12:00 a.m.: CPW Festival at Johnson Athletics Center
   See a sneak peek of Friday’s issue.

Friday, April 9. 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.: Open House at The Tech Office
   Meet the staff. Challenge them to a round of Halo 3, Guitar Hero 3, or Super Smash Bros. Brawl.

Saturday, April 10. 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.: Activities Fair at Johnson Athletics Center
   Grab a piece of cake and find yourself on the front page of The Tech.

Saturday, April 10. 3:00 – 9:00 p.m.: Open House at The Tech Office
   After the fair, come grab dinner and a movie.

join@the-tech.mit.edu
W20-483
Mezrich Argues That His Work Is Still Non-Fiction

April 8, 2008

April 8, 2008

THE TECH

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MIT Interfaith Dialogue Program

Spencer Meek, Mitchell Silver, Professor of Philosophy, U/Mass Boston and Tufts University

Professor Silver is the author of “Respecting the Wicked Child: A Philosopshy of Secular Jewish Identity and Education” and “A Plausible God: Secular Reflections on Liberal Jewish Theology”, both published by the Religion and Wheelhouse Press.

INTERFAITH $ESSIONS ON RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND SECULARISM AND THEIR EFFECTS ON CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS IDEAS


The talk will be held on Tuesday, April 17, 2008, at 7:30 pm, in the West Dining Room, Ashdown House (Corner, Mass. Ave. and Amherst St.).

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A close match. The match was even until after the first changeover, when Hoover led 4-3, but the Engineers’ serves were broken twice in an 8-3 loss. Assistant Coach Pedro Pinto remarked that despite the big lead indicated by the score, each game was very close, and Diskin and Pikhart were just unable to capture the important points during those close games. Finally, Leslie A. Hansen ’10 and Mariah N. Hoover ’08 earned a tough 8-6 win at first doubles, putting the Engineers ahead 2-1 overall. The entire game was neck and neck, and the Bantams were even ahead at times. Hansen and Hoover stuck it out, however, with Hansen putting away the final shot of the doubles play.

In singles, Hansen started off in the top slot with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Brenna Driscoll. Hansen commented that the win was not easy, as her opponent hit with a lot of pace and was “moving [her] around [the] court” a lot. In the second singles position, Hoover struggled through her first set, losing 6-3 to Amanda Tramont, who in Hoover’s words “came out on top.” Hoover, however, fought back and eventually won the second set, where she started off winning the first three games before her 5-2 lead turned into 5-4 before she finished it off. 6-4. It happened again in the second set, where she started off losing the first three games before coming back and ultimately winning in a second-set tiebreaker.

Finally, at sixth singles, Pikhart defeated Sydney Meckler in a three-set affair that ended in a 10-point tiebreaker, 6-2, 3-6, 11-9. Matsuzaki commented that her game was “precise,” and assistant coach Karla Piek attributed a number of unforced errors to her second-set loss. In the final 10-point tiebreaker, Pikhart faced two match points, trailing 9-7, but she reeled off four straight points to finish the match.

At number five singles, McCree played a close and long match that resulted in a 6-4, 7-6 (5) win. “It’s the best I’ve played in a while,” McCree said, commenting that each of her really long points reminded her of the classic “butterfly drill” in tennis where two players alternate hitting down the line and crosscourt such that they are constantly running back and forth along the baseline. McCree’s match was “streaky,” she said, where she would win several games in a row, and then her opponent would do the same. This showed in her first set when her 5-2 lead turned into 5-4 before she finished it off. 6-4. It happened again in the second set, where she started off losing the first three games before coming back and ultimately winning in a second-set tiebreaker.

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Rasin Voted Most Improved as Men’s Gymnastics Takes Sixth

By Mindy Brauer

The men’s gymnastics team finished in sixth place with a score of 310.300 at the Eastern College Athletic Conference Championship hosted by the U.S. Military Academy this past weekend. In the individual competition, Boris Rasin ’09 placed eighth in the pommel horse (13.300) as Joshua S. Coblenz ’08 captured ninth in the parallel bars (13.150). In addition, Rasin was voted the Most Improved Gymnast by the league’s coaches.

In the all around, the Engineers captured 12th through 15th place. Coblenz led the charge with a tally of 79.050 as Rasin finished at 79.000. Thomas S. Caldwell ’09 posted a score of 76.950 while Jacob T. Shapiro ’11 came in at 75.150.

MIT secured a fifth-place finish on the pommel horse with a team total of 50.500. Rasin tied for eighth with a mark of 13.550 as Caldwell ranked 17th with a 13.000. Shapiro notched a tally of 12.200 while Coblenz contributed an 11.750. Jesse M. Ashcraft-Johnson ’11 also represented MIT in the event, finishing with a score of 10.700.

Shapiro led the way for the Engineers on the vault with a 13.800 as the team posted a total of 54.500. Coblenz finished right behind him at 13.700 while Caldwell (13.650) and Rasin (13.350) rounded out the group.

On the rings, MIT compiled a mark of 53.850. Coblenz was the team’s top performer as he tied for 14th with a 13.950 while Shapiro recorded a score of 13.700 to tie for 17th place. Shapiro registered a 13.450 as Caldwell scored 13.450.

Gymnastics, Page 15