The Year in Review 2008

By Ramya Sankar

Several important events relating to changes in housing policies and hacking incidents affected students in the past year. Student perception of being omit in several important decisions led to a student group voicing these concerns. A newly formed Task Force attempted to tackle some of these concerns in student involvement in the decision-making process.

Housing

The year began with news of converting Green Hall, the female Graduate dormitory, into housing for members of the Kappa Alpha Theta sorority. The transition occurred in the fall of 2008 when hundreds of the sorority moved into Green Hall from Sidney-Pacific, where they had resided since 2003.

Graduate residents of Green Hall were not consulted prior to the decision and only informed of it in January when they were told to vacate by June 30, 2008. Neither, then Graduate Student Council President D. Leonid G. nor Undergraduate Association President Martin F. Holmes ’08 were informed by the administration about the decision.

W1 was another hot button issue when the Phoenix Group — approximately 50 undergraduate students — planned to move into W1 after MIT Police found him and two other graduate students in the basement of the building on the night of June 7, 2008. The charges were later dropped on July 18, 2008. The incident brought back memories of an incident at the Faculty Club in 2006 where three students were charged with breaking and entering in the Camden District Court. That case resulted in the ending of the MIT Police and part of the hacking community. On Nov. 3, 2008, MIT Police removed W1 of the MIT's faculty house to an empty dorm, which would have resulted in an increase of the charges against the 14 students in W1 that remain. The student group had not been consulted on the decision. The Winslow administration didn't know when resources would be available to start and finish the renovation. While the completion date for the project is still in limbo, an inspection of the exterior will begin this spring after a generous anonymous donation was announced last month. The Phoenix Group was not consulted on how the money was to be used but rather informed of the news on Jan. 26, 2008.

Construction

Construction Abounds

Many Buildings See Expansions, Renovations

For anyone on campus over the past year, one thing can't have been visibly changing: the landscape. Over 2008, buildings were constantly being renovated — here are some of the larger changes of 2008:

Ashdown/W1

Although slated to open as an undergraduate residence in 2010, Building W1 instead finds its future in limbo with recent Institute budget cuts. The $90 million set aside for the project will in- tend Life Chris Colombo and Vice Chancellor Steven Lerman. The Winslow administration was not consulted on the decision before it was made.

Mediation

The Mediation Lab's extension has been in pro- forseveral years, originating in an initial de- sign proposal for the administration. In 2002, however, following a donor pullout in 2002, the extension was put on hold for five years. Now, after a decade of planning, the Medi- cation Lab's extension is going full speed ahead and is set to be completed by spring 2009.

The Winslow Building, designed by architect T.M. Pei, has housed the Mediation Lab since its opening in 1985. The new extension is designed by architect Fumihiko Maki and his Tokyo-based firm Maki and Associates.

The extension will span over six floors for a total of 160,000 square feet. It will feature a theater, coffee shop, cafe, research labs, and new conference and administrative rooms.

The Winslow Administration and the new building will be connected. As groups move from Weisner Hall to the new building, there will be fewer hackings and a risk of creating a new type of community that is different from what is currently on campus.

The Winslow Building is in the final stages, and internal construction, such as piping, wiring, and elevator installation, is underway.

ATM

Although it was set to reopen in October 2008, construction on the Alpha Tau Omega house still continues. The repairs were delayed due to insurance concerns, not because of struc- tural complications, and ATO hopes to present its case for a housing license to the Cambridge Licensing Commission in March 2009.

The ATO house was closed over the summer under the belief that hacking at the house was a major issue. This year, the house is currently in use, although some concerns remain. The new building is currently under construction.

Curriculum

Curriculum Changes Proposed

By Natasha Plotkin

The Task Force hopes to solicit student input in the development of its case for a housing license to the Cambridge Licensing Commission in March 2009.
February 2008

20th — Matthew F. VanDyke ’08 wins Audience Favorite and Falsest Monsta at the MTI/trade competition, which challenged students to grow facial hair during February and sell it as a “souvenir.”

27th — The day before Super Tuesday, MIT students crowded onto Silver Line buses to see Barack Obama speak outside the Seaport World Trade Center.

27th — On the 15th of February, a half-inch of snow fell on a student dorm, causing MIT to issue its first ever “snow day” notice in the Institute’s history, causing the Phoenix Group to move into the fall.

March 2008

7th — Construction began on Main Street for the new David Koch Institute of Integrative Cancer Research. The project is expected to be complete in 2010.

7th — Expanding on its internet idle lair, a new internet service provider now allows students whose families earn less than $75,000 per year to stay online for free.

10th — MIT’s “Beauty and the Geek” premeires on the CW Television Network for its five season run. The show features a 24-year-old, Kiel-based company that owns companies with interests from chemical engineering to Internet building.

10th — The MITKoch Institute labs and offices are currently scattered around campus. It has grown from being the MIT Center for Cancer Research founded in 1974.

10th — The transformation of the west side of Vassar Street into a scenic public way, began in 2006, needed its completion in 2008. Sidewalks, lighting, and bike paths were completely reconfigured along the street. Furthermore, a crosswalk was installed for safety.

15th — The Vassar Street west project is a continuation of the Vassar Street east rededication, which was completed in 2006. The project joins MIT and the City of Cambridge and is funded by a gift from Fidelity and P. Simmons ‘53.

19th — President of Rwanda comes to MIT.

21st — Stuart Schmill ’86, previously working at MIT, took on a leadership position at the Arthur Foundation press release.

26th — Construction began on the new building for the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research continues. The groundbreaking took place on March 7, 2008.

27th — The building is located across Main Street from the Whithead and Braden Institutes. It will provide a new academic and research space for cancer research.

30th — The new Institute will have 180,000 square feet of laboratory and office space over seven levels. Six of these will be located on the first floor and the ground level will feature an exhibit on MIT’s role in cancer research.

30th — The building is funded by a generous donation from David Koch ’62, who founded Koch Industries, a Wichita, Kansas-based corporation that owns companies with interests from chemical engineering to Internet building.

30th — Koch is the nation’s largest privately owned company.

30th — The Koch Institute labs and offices are currently scattered around campus. It has grown from being the MIT Center for Cancer Research founded in 1974.

April 2008

2nd — MIT Media Lab and Bank of America announce a multi-year, $10 million grant to the Lab, which will fund the Lab’s research in general human-computer interaction.

26th — MIT’s School of Management’s new building on Main Street, which houses the central nexus of the Sloan campus, continued its construction in 2008. The new buildings will be completed in 2009 and feature, over 30 study rooms, and other facilities including lounges and conference rooms. Further, over 400 parking spaces will be provided in an underground parking garage. The building is designed to attract a large number of international students.

28th — MIT graduates, the U.S. Green Building Council, indicating that the campus is environmentally friendly and high-performance facility.

28th — The garage was built to ground level in the summer, and the parking lots were completed on the street along the street. Furthermore, a crosswalk was installed for safety.

30th — Trees have been planted between the bike path and the road. Landscape is expected to be complete in May 2009.

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May 2008

15th — MIT Media Lab and Bank of America announce a multi-year, $10 million grant to the Lab, which will fund the Lab’s research in general human-computer interaction.

16th — MIT students opened onto Silver Line buses to see Barack Obama speak outside the Seaport World Trade Center.

16th — The day before Super Tuesday, MIT students crowded onto Silver Line buses to see Barack Obama speak outside the Seaport World Trade Center.

19th — Collaboration between the MIT Media Lab and Bank of America results in a plan to construct the Center for Future Banking.

April 2008

16th — The Graduate Student Council met for the first time in their new role as a standing committee. The council discussed the status of Dorken’s pension, the possibility of a new “M.I.T. Blue” shuttle between the campus and Cambridge, and the possibility of a new food hall. The council also discussed the possibility of a new food hall.

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Obama's Election Transcends 'Politics as Usual'  
by Ethan Solomon

This year's election was not just a decision between Barack Obama and John McCain, or a decision between the liberal and conservative wings of the Democratic and Republican Party. It was a referendum on the future of the country. Hope and change versus fear and paralysis. And, as it turned out, the choice was the former. Barack Obama will be the first African American President of the United States of America. This is a phenomenon they never expected to see in their lifetimes. Barack Obama was elected President, an event that goes against everything you think you know about the American system of democracy.

I can’t profess to understand what kind of courage that took. I was born only 19 years ago and I didn’t live through it, but I imagine why my parents thought a black man could never hold the office of President of America. I never really believed a man named Barack Obama could run for the White House, but it seems now every bit of my parents’ generation and mine were right. They made me believe that anything is possible.

Obama’s victory is a testament to the power of hope and the wisdom of greatness. It is a victory for all those who believe that America is best when we stay true to our founding principles. It is a victory for those who dream and who work hard.

George W. Bush is only 22 days away from handing over the reins of power, and it is my hope that we are making a better choice than we have been. Barack Obama is a better choice than we have been. I say this with the least degree of equivocation...
The Year in Review 2008

The Year in Photo
   —Perry Hung
   —Maksim Imakaev
   —Omari Stephens
4. REX Jell-O wrestling, Aug. 25.
   —Alex H. Chan
5. Third Eye Blind, April 25.
   —Diane Rak
   —Ricardo Ramirez
   —Andrea Robles
8. CPW “Foameez Monster”, April 12.
   —Biyeun Buczyk
   —Kari Williams
    —William Yee
    —William Yee
    —Eric D. Schmiedl
    —Michael Luckes
The Killers — “Day and Age”

The Killers, bent on creating quite possibly one of the best albums of 2008, have put out their second effort. The Killers have all the components of their debut, but bring forward a more mature and evolved album in “Day and Age.” The 2008 album finds the Killers working together as a collective unit and developing their sound to new heights. This record is a journey of the Killers, showing the growth and maturation that has taken place since their first album. The Killers have taken their indie sound and enhanced it with the help of producer Dave Sardy, resulting in a polished, cohesive album that will likely be a favorite of fans. The Killers have continued to create music that is both catchy and meaningful, with their latest album being no exception. With “Day and Age,” the Killers have solidified their place as one of the leading forces in modern rock music.

Vampire Weekend — “Vampire Weekend”

Vampire Weekend has released “Vampire Weekend,” their third album to date, and it lives up to their previous ones. With a combination of garage rock, afrobeat and indie, the band provides a unique sound that is both catchy and complex. The album has a mix of political and social commentary, as well as personal reflection, and it showcases the group’s ability to incorporate a variety of musical genres. The album features tracks such as “Twenty Percent,” “Taxi’s Gonna Be Mafia,” “Cousins,” and “不一定疯狂,” which the band performed on Fallon. Their songwriting ability is on full display as they skillfully blend these influences to create something distinctively their own. Overall, “Vampire Weekend” is an exciting and innovative album that showcases the band’s ability to evolve and grow as musicians.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button

“A film for those who’ve always had a soft spot for the Borat thing” — Brian L. "Chewy" L multiplier. "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" is a film that is both heartwarming and heartbreaking. Based on the original short story by F. Scott Fitzgerald, the film revolves around a man born in 1861 and deemed “on his way into the grave.” Fitzgerald, the film revolves around a man who grows older as time passes him by, with his legacy in the film, with his chillingly glorious cinematography and stunning visual effects. The film’s central theme is the fleeting nature of time and the importance of living life to the fullest. The Curious Case of Benjamin Button is a touching tale of a man who learned the value of life and the importance of making the most of it. It is a film that will stay with you long after you’ve left the theater.
F

iturally, choral music is difficult to listen to. Certainly, there are techni-
cal issues that are prevalent throughout all of music — unusual dissonances,
uncompromising forms and lengths — but choral music, in particular, adds many sig-
ificant complexity.

Take, for instance, Brahms’ Op. 62 setting of Friederich Schiller’s “Nacht” that begins with an oboe solo in a surprisingly sudden D major, ac-
companied by occasional arpeggios from the strings. This is incidental music in any other context. The notes wash over the audience with no real comprehension or effect. But the music begins to take purpose and direction when the choir enters one voice at a time in Brahms’ characteristic late-romantic counterpart, co-
alizing around the somber paean: “Suech deuch Schone maer stufen.” (Even the beautiful must die).

Or we can turn our attention to a particular mo-
ment in Benjamin Britten’s Cantata Missa Suecorum, Op. 69. The scene is arresting in its turbidity: a tenor soloist sings a tender lullaby, gracefully careening between F sharp major and A sharp minor in triple meter, while a vulgar chorus chants the moral of the cantata, a meditation on the power of compassion (jar-
ning, yes, but effective). Britten depicts a composite of a multitude of voices, the varied minor keys, the tense dissonance, all of music — unusual dissonances,
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The Year in Sports

By Aaron Sampson

The sports world has certainly provided its share of memorable moments this past year. From the Super Bowl last February, to the Olympics in August, to, well, the Super Bowl again this January, there were some of the biggest headlines from 2008. In no particular chronological order:

• The Patriots’ perfect season — Despite the “Spygate” scandal surrounding the New England Patriots to start the season, Tom Brady and Co. managed to make it all the way to the Super Bowl with an NFL record run of 16 consecutive wins, including a 16–0 regular season record and first place overall.

• The Giants win the Super Bowl — but the Patriots fell short of winning it all at the hands of Eli Manning and the New York Giants, in an unforgettable (or, for Pats fans, very disappointing) Super Bowl XLII.

• Kansas wins NCAA Men’s Basketball Championship — In the Final Four to feature four number one seeded teams, Kansas upsets the best team of each of the four divisions, finishing with a nine point deficit with two minutes remaining and edging out Memphis in overtime. Certain sports fan groups remain in denial.

• The Celtics win the NBA Championship — Despite the most anticipated and heated finals matchups in recent memory, Boston, with its trio of Ray Allen, Kevin Garnett and Paul Pierce, defeats the League MVP Kobe Bryant and the Los Angeles Lakers in the NBA Finals.

• Nadal wins Wimbledon — In what some consider to be the greatest tennis match ever, Spanish Rafael Nadal defeats number one seed Roger Federer in the Wimbledon final. The match lasted for nearly five hours, with Federer making the first and only final set loss for Nadal ever outside of the French Open.

• Spain wins Euro 2008 — Yes, it is true. The dominant European powerhouse can finally bring a championship to its title-less country.

• Phillies win the World Series — Behind the pitching of Cole Hamels, the Philadelphia Phillies win the World Series, to the delight of its star-studded city. Celebrations were狂欢urous, surprising Philadelphia fans.

• The United States regains the eating title from Japan, after downing the city.

• The Patriots’ perfect season — Despite the “Spygate” scandal surrounding the New England Patriots to start the season, Tom Brady and Co. managed to make it all the way to the Super Bowl with an NFL record run of 16 consecutive wins, including a 16–0 regular season record and first place overall.

Laura Capone

Laura Capone, senior associate dean for the Division of Student Life, served MIT for 19 years in a variety of roles including assistant director of the Benefits Office, director of the Office of Federal Financial Aid, and director of the Office of Student Life. Capone has been with MIT’s student affairs unit for the past 14 years, most recently as the associate dean of student life.

Kjell A. Tovander ‘09

Kjell A. Tovander was born in Sweden in 1988. He studied at the University of Chicago and received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Economics and Business Administration. He is currently a second-year graduate student at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he is pursuing a Master of Science degree in Management. His research interests are in the fields of financial economics and corporate finance.

The Year in National Science

Two thousand and eight saw a number of impressive performances from MIT’s student athletes, both noteworthy individual achievements and successful seasons for several varsity teams. Across all MIT athletics, the Institute set a new record in Academic All-American honors with 11 selections for the 2007-2008 season.

James M. “Jimmy” Bartolotta ’09 has been leading the men’s basketball team in his first season, while developing a historic personal performance. Bartolotta broke the record for total career points on December 6, surpassing the 1997 graduate Michael Hammett set in 1991. Bartolotta also set a new record for points in a single game when he scored 47 points against Cornell University on November 10. DeRon M. Brown ’10 was named MIT’s first football All-American in six years after a season in which he set school records in rushing yards and touchdowns. Brown finished the season with 1,816 rushing yards and 17 touchdowns. Brown also carried the ball 251 yards on 27 carries against Massachusetts Maritime Academy, the second-highest total in MIT history.

The men’s soccer team also had a record-breaking season, finishing the regular season with a 6-2-4 record and making it to the NCAA Division III Championship Tournament. It was MIT’s first appearance in the tournament since 2003. The team also went undefeated for a record 13 games and received three Academic All-American honors.

Both the men’s and women’s cross country teams had great performances in 2008. The men finished eighth at the New England regional championship, while the women secured a spot in the NCAA championship for the first time in the program’s history. Competing in Hanover, Indiana in November 22, MIT earned an impressive tenth place finish.

Several of MIT’s club sports had highly successful seasons in 2008 as well, sending competitors to national competitions and earning top honors. The MIT Sport Taekwondo Club travelled to Stanford University in April to compete in the National Collegiate Taekwondo Association Championships. With a team of 25 competitors, MIT took first place in the novice division, third place in the championship division, and first place overall.

Cycling also competed at the national level with the MIT’s women’s ultimate Frisbee team. The team travelled to nationals in Boulder, Colorado after defeating the University of New England Women’s Regional Team. MIT Cycling captured the 2008 Division II national championship after taking first at nationals, finishing with a total of 25 points, and second at the national championships. MIT also sent a team to mountain bike nationals this season for the first time in several years.

The women set a new record for Academic All-American honors with 11 selections for the 2007-2008 season.