MIT chooses new digital learning lead
Sanjay Sarma to focus on campus education
By Leon Lin
STAFF REPORTER

Last week, President Reif announced the appointment of the first director of digital learning — Sanjay Sarma, Fred Fort Flowers and Daniel Fort Flowers Professor of Mechanical Engineering. Sarma will oversee efforts to enhance education with online tools, including OpenCourseWare and MITx (MIT’s contributions to edX, the venture started with Harvard).

While OCW and edX are best known for providing learning materials to the world for free, Sarma’s role will primarily be focused on improving education on MIT’s campus, where students can potentially benefit from both online material and in-person interactions. “I think that this gives us an opportunity to really improve learning,” Sarma said yesterday.

That opportunity includes experimenting with what’s known as the ‘flipped classroom,’ in which students participate in discussions, problem-solving sessions, or other in-person interaction during class. The knowledge traditionally conveyed via lecture is learned outside of class, through reading material, videos, animations, or sequences that combine all of the above, perhaps interspersed with quick questions to make sure the student is keeping up. Sarma says he wants to find the right balance between what happens in and out of class. “I don’t see it as a zero-one binary situation. Some classes will flip more, he

Sanjay Sarma, Page 11

J.J. Abrams on the science of stories

By Stephen Suen
J.J. Abrams, the producer and writer-director most famous for his television shows, which include Lost and Alias, has been involved with the creative process and the unexpected similarities between their respective ventures. I arrived at the lab thirty minutes early to secure a seat, and for good reason — the third floor atrium filled up quickly with aspiring storytellers looking for bits of wisdom and encouraged fans of the Lucas franchise looking for the answers to the ending of Lost.

But there was nobody in the room as excited as Abrams himself, fresh from a tour of the Media Lab facilities. “I cannot tell you what a thrill it is to be here,” he gushed. “A lot of what I have been involved with is telling stories about people in extremely crazy labs doing cool stuff.”

J.J. Abrams, Page 13

J.P.

AVE MARIA: NEW VP OF RESEARCH
Ex-EAPS department head Maria Zuber to assume role in January 2013
NEWS, p. 13

YELLOWCARD PLAY FULL HOUSE
A decade later, the “Ocean Avenue” stars are still going strong.
ARTS, p. 10

THE JESUS DELUSION
CSU Sacramento philosopher takes on Christianity in new book.
ARTS, p. 10

THE NIGHT THE LIGHTS WENT OUT
Our photographers capture the events of yesterday’s blackout in Cambridge.
PHOTO, p. 8

PREDICTING THE PIGSKIN, WEEK 13
Check out our forecast of the upcoming week in NFL games.
SPORTS, p. 16

SECTIONS
World & Nation… Opinion… 4
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WEATHER, p. 2
FRIDAY, November 30, 2012
PARTLY SUNNY
SAT: 70°
SUN: 71°
WIND: 12 MPH
RAIN SHOWERS
SAT: 63°
SUN: 64°
MID-CLOUDY
31°
40°
FRI: 35°
THU: 25°
WED: 27°
TUE: 46°
MON: 64°
TODAY: 52°

Sanjay Sarma, Page 11

MIT responds as Cambridge is plunged into darkness

By Jessica J. Pourian
Hobojacket no more

Hobojacket, a website by Jin Pan ’16 and Cathie Yan ’16 dedicated to donating jackets of a rival college to the homeless, has shut down amidst complaints about the ethics of the enterprise. The site, launched on Sunday, quickly went viral and saw coverage on various websites, most of which criticized the actions of Pan and his collaborators for being in poor taste, including Jezebel. The site was taken down and replaced with an apology letter, copied below, sometime Thursday morning. At including Jezebel. The site was taken down and replaced with an apology letter, copied below, sometime Thursday morning. At

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Power outage, Page 7
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By J.J. Abrams, winner of Emmy Award

This past Tuesday, MIT was graced by geek royalty in the form of J.J. Abrams, the producer and writer-director most famous for his television shows, which include Lost and Alias, and the creative process and the unexpected similarities between their respective ventures. I arrived at the lab thirty minutes early to secure a seat, and for good reason — the third floor atrium filled up quickly with aspiring storytellers looking for bits of wisdom and

J.J. Abrams, Page 13

Sanjay Sarma, Page 11

The Hobojacket website was designed to spread awareness about the plight of the homeless.
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The Tech Friday, November 30, 2012

Dartmouth names Michigan provost as its president

Philip J. Hanlon, the provost of the University of Michigan, will be the next president of Dartmouth College, starting in July.

Hanlon, 51, a mathematician whose work focuses on probability and combinatorics, will take office July 1, succeeding James H. Bean, who was named April 1 to become the president of the World Bank. The interim president, Carol L. Folt, will resume her role as provost when Hanlon arrives.

"I am thrilled to be named Dartmouth’s," said Hanlon, who graduated from Dartmouth in 1987. "I’m particularly excited to be leading Dartmouth in a period when I believe higher education is going in change in important ways." Hanlon, who earned a doctorate at the California Institute of Technology, served two years in a position at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, still teaches there in the mathematics department. He said he would continue teaching at Dartmouth, an Ivy League college with about 4,100 undergraduates in Hanover, N.H. "I’ll have to reach out to my Dartmouth department and see how I can be helpful," he said. "I like to teach freshmen."

—Tamar Levent, The New York Times

A house in Washington may solve a 1918 mystery

WASHINGTON — At first, the bricks tumbled one by one, the jaws of the excavator plucking at the home’s facade. Then the punch: the bucket rammed through a window, raking out insulation, wiring and cinder blocks that rained on the driveway below. With a diesel roar and crunch of timber, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Wednesday demolished a vacant house believed to have been built atop a chemical weapons site in what is now one of the capital’s most affluent residential neighborhoods.

"It was an unusual site to find — an unqualified glad — that they’re doing this," said Nan Wells, a representative to the area’s neighborhood council. "I’m just glad the excavator tore into this and we get to see what’s important that they are open about what they’re finding."

The demolition is what many hope will be the climactic chapter in the saga of the Washington neighborhood known as Spring Valley. The project overall cleanup is expected to cost nearly $230 million, paid by the federal government, and has in the past been marred by missteps and stubborn questions over what lies beneath.

—Terry Enary, The New York Times

US moves toward recognizing Syrian opposition

WASHINGTON — The United States is moving toward recognizing the Syrian opposition as the legitimate representative of the Syrian people as soon as it fully develops its political structure, U.S. officials said Thursday. The move could be announced in Washington next week.

Washington spent two years in a position as a vice president at a research station in what is now one of the country’s most affluent residential neighborhoods.

"I’m glad — an unqualified glad — that they’re doing this," said Munir Najjar, chairman of the board of the Friends of the Ramallah Research Station in central Ramallah in the West Bank, wishing flags and dancing, there was an underlying sense of concerned resignation.

"I hope this is good," said Munir Shafee, 36, a mechanical engineer who was there. "But how are we going to benefit from this?"

Still, the General Assembly vote — 138 countries in favor, nine opposed and 11 abstaining — showed impressive backing for the Palestinians at a difficult time. It was taken on the 65th anniversary of the vote to divide the former British mandate into two states, one Jewish and one Arab, a vote Israel considers the international seal of approval for its birth.

The past two years of Arab uprisings have marginalized the Palestinian cause to some extent as nations that focused their political aspirations on the Palestinian struggle have turned inward. The vote Thursday, coming so soon after the Gaza fighting, put the Palestinians again if briefly, perhaps, at the center of international discussion.

"The question is, where do we go from here and what does it mean?" Salam Fayyad, the Palestinian prime minister, who was in New York for the vote, said in an interview: "The sooner the tough rhetoric of this can subside and the more this is viewed as a logical consequence of many years of failure to move the process forward, the better."

He said nothing would change without deep U.S. involvement.

President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority, speaking in the assembly’s member nations, said, "The General Assembly is called upon today to issue a birth certificate for the reality of the state of Palestine," and he condemned what he called Israeli racism and colonialism.

His remarks seemed aimed in part at Israel and in part at Hamas. But both quickly attacked him for the parts they found offensive.

"The world watched a defama- tory and venomous speech that was full of mendacious propaganda against the Israeli Defense Forces and the citizens of Israel," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel responded. "Someone who says peace does not talk in such a manner."

Senate committee approves stricter privacy for email

By Charlie Savage

WASHINGTON — The Senate Judiciary Committee on Thursday approved a bill that would strengthen electronic communications privacy by requiring law enforcement officials to obtain a warrant from a judge in most cases before gaining access to messages in individuals accounts stored electronically.

The bill is not expected to make it through Congress this year and will be the subject of negotiations next month with the Republican-led House. But the Senate panel’s approval was a first step toward an overhaul of a 1986 law that governs access to emails and is said to be outdated.

The bill may be the effort to remake it. He said at the meeting Thursday that emails stored by third parties should re- ceive the same protection as papers stored in a filing cabinet in an individual’s house.

“Like many Americans, I am concerned about the growing and unwelcome intrusions into our personal life and communication by the government,” Leahy said. “I also understand that we must update our digital privacy laws to keep pace with the rapid advances in technology.”

Leahy said he had a hearing about two years ago on whether and how to update the 1986 law, called the Electronic Communications Privacy Act.

But the bill received a cold welcome in part because some law enforcement officials have opposed restricting an investigative tool that has become increasingly used.

Under the law, authorities need to obtain a search warrant from a judge — requiring them to meet the high standard of showing that there is probable cause to believe that a subject is engaged in wrongdoing — only when they want to read emails that have not yet been opened by their recipient and that are fewer than 180 days old.

But the law gives less protection to messages that a recipient has retrieved and left in his or her inbox. In some cases, officials may obtain a court order for such material merely by presenting a judge with facts sug- gesting the messages are relevant to an investigation. In other cases, prosecutors can issue a subpoena demanding the materials without any court involvement.

Leahy’s bill would generally re- quire prosecutors to obtain a search warrant from a judge, under the stricter probable-cause standard, to compel a provider to turn over emails and other private documents.

The Center for Democracy and Technology, a nonprofit organization that advocates for electronic privacy rights, hailed the committee vote as “historic.”

Weather

Cold weather to warm next week

By Shaena Berlin

A series of unsettled weather events will move through New England this weekend, bringing alternating periods of precipitation and warmth. Today and tomorrow will remain cold, however, expect temperatures to rise up to the high 30s.

The West Coast is gearing up for a wet storm cycle described by meteorologists as an "atmospheric river," cause it can transport water vapor at a flow rate 15 times as strong as the Mississippi River (NOAA/ESRL). These storm conditions are likely to cause flooding in Northern California and heavy snow in the mountains of the Pacific Northwest.

Extended Forecast

Today: Partly sunny with a high near 35° (2°C). N wind 10 mph. 

Tonight: Cloudy with a chance of a dusting of snow. Low near 27°F (-3°C). NE wind around 10 mph.


Sunday: Partly sunny in the morning, then chance of PM showers. Warmer. High near 57°F (14°C). Low around 46°F (8°C).

Monday: Mostly sunny and warm, with a high around 56°F (13°C). Low around 49°F (7°C).

Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Friday, November 30, 2012

UN, in blow to US, heightens the status of Palestine

By Ethan Bronner and Christine Hauser

UNITED NATIONS — More than 130 countries voted Thursday to upgrade Palestine to a nonmember observer state of the United Nations, a triumph for Palestinian diplomacy and a sharp rebuke to the United States and Israel.

But the vote, at least for now, did little to bring either the Palestinians or the Israelis closer to the goal they claim to seek: two states, one by side, or increased Palestinian unity. Israel and the militant group Hamas both responded critically to the day’s events, though for different reasons. The new status will give the Palestinians more tools to challenge Israel in international legal forums for its occupation activities in the West Bank, including settlement-building, and it helped bolster the Palestinian Authority, weakened after eight years of battle between its rival Hamas and Israel.

But even as a small but determined crowd of 2,500 celebrated in central Ramallah in the West Bank,遗迹 to cost nearly $240 million, paid by the federal government, and has in the past been marred by missteps and stubborn questions over what lies beneath.

—Tamar Enary, The New York Times

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Main airport and web are disrupted in Syria

By Anne Barnard and Hala Droubi
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Syria lost two major links with the outside world Thursday as the largest commercial airport in the capital canceled flights because of fighting nearby and Internet access disappeared across the country, perhaps signaling an impeding escalation by the government against the uprising, opponents of the Syrian government said.

The disruption of the airport, Damascus International — a crucial conduit for supplies, money and weapons for the government — was a measure of how intense the conflict had become around the capital in recent weeks. As security forces launched a major counteroffensive against rebels nearby, the government’s willingness to carry out military operations in the area suggested that it was feeling the pressure of rebel advances.

Keeping the airport open has helped the government project a sense of normalcy, and interrupting service creates problems, activists said, because the large planes needed for supplies cannot land at smaller military airports.

At the same time, two companies that monitor Internet traffic, Arbor Networks and Akamai, released data demonstrating that the Internet went out across the country around 10 a.m., and there was no indication by the evening that it had returned.

The Internet has been a strategic tool of the uprising and the government alike, allowing activists to organize and communicate but also exposing them to surveillance. Videos uploaded by both sides have made the conflict extraordinarily visible to the outside world.

Rebels have put the government under increasing pressure in recent weeks, taking oil fields in eastern Syria and a major air base near Aleppo, and demonstrating their growing ability to shoot down aircraft.

Top North Korean defense official replaced, South Korea says

SEOUL, South Korea — Kim Jong Un, North Korea’s leader, has replaced his defense minister with a hard-line general as part of his effort to fill the army leadership with a new generation of officers loyal to him, South Korean officials said Thursday.

Kim Kyok Sik replaced Kim Jong Gak as minister of the People’s Armed Forces, said two government officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity, citing government policy on intelligence matters. Kim Kyok Sik commanded North Korean units accused by the South of sinking one of its warships and shelling a South Korean border island in 2010. Fifty South Koreans were killed in the two 2010 episodes, although the North denies sinking the warship.

“We have enough intelligence to believe that the minister was replaced, though our policy is not to officially confirm such a matter until North Korea confirms itself,” one of the South Korean officials said.

The Associated Press reported from the North Korean capital, Pyongyang, that diplomats, whom it did not identify, said they had been informed of the replacement of the defense minister.

For months, South Korean officials have suspected that a prolonged reshuffling of the North Korean party and military hierarchy has been under way, apparently beginning with the dismissal of Vice Marshal Ri Yong Ho as army chief in July.

As sewage flows after storm, flaws in system are exposed

EAST ROCKAWAY, N. Y. — The water flowing out of the Bay Park sewage plant here on Long Island is a greenish-gray soup of partially treated human waste, a sign of an environmental and public health disaster that officials say will be one of the most enduring and expensive effects of Hurricane Sandy.

In the month since the storm, hundreds of millions of gallons of raw and partly raw sewage from Bay Park and other crippled treatment plants have flowed into waterways in New York and New Jersey, exposing flaws in the region’s wastewater infrastructure that could take several years and billions of dollars to fix.

In New York state alone, Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo has estimated that about $1.1 billion will be needed to repair treatment plants. But officials now acknowledge that they will have to do far more.

Motors and electrical equipment must be raised above newly established flood levels, and circuitry must be made waterproof. Dams and levees may have to be built at some treatment plants to keep the rising waters at bay, experts say.

Failure to do so, according to experts, could leave large swaths of the population vulnerable to public health and environmental hazards in future storms.


Getting help is as easy as 1, 2, 3

Student Support Services has extended hours and additional walk-in times from December 3rd through December 14th!

✓ For an appointment: Call 617-253-4861
✓ Walk-in hours, 5-104: 9-10am, 2-3pm

Don’t forget to take advantage of the many resources available for academic, social and personal support.

• S³
• Community Wellness
• MIT Mental Health & Counseling
• Housemasters
• GRTs
• Area Directors
• Advisors

Extended Hours Dec 3-14

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Working together, we’ll find a way.

http://together.mit.edu

Israel’s success in downing Hamas rockets draws interest

By Thom Shanker
and William J. Broad
THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON — The success cited by Israel for its Iron Dome anti-missile system in its confrontation with Hamas has re-energized U.S. missile defense advocates and generated new interest in the global arms bazaar from nations like South Korea that face a short-range rocket threat from hostile neighbors.

But even ardent supporters of the system rapidly discriminate between incoming rockets that are hurtling toward a populated area from Gaza, may well be its software: “This will ratify the common sense notion that these systems can play a role in defending regions,” said Eric S. Edelman, a former undersecretary of defense for policy in the George W. Bush administration. “It will be especially relevant as we move into an era in which there will be more countries with small inventories of rockets and missiles — and more countries that will want to defend against them in a reasonable way.”

By thom Shanker
and Hala Droubi
THE NEW YORK TIMES

Washington, DC — A measure of how intense the conflict had become around the capital in recent weeks. As security forces launched a major counteroffensive against rebels nearby, the government’s willingness to carry out military operations in the area suggested that it was feeling the pressure of rebel advances.

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O P I N I O N   P O L I C Y

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Dissents are the signed opinions of editorial board members choosing 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 sent to letters@tech.mit.edu. Hand copy submissions should be addressed to The Tech, P.O. Box 197628, Cambridge, MA 02219-6283, 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, columns, and cartoons must bear the author's signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. The Tech reserves the right to edit or condense letters, shorter letters will be given higher priority. Once submitted, all letters become 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 or published in any other format or medium now known or later that becomes known. The Tech makes no commitment to publish all the letters received.
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Friday, November 30, 2012 The Tech

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.

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Sudoku Solution, page 11

2 7 1
4 8 3
5 6

1
2 3 5 7
4

6
7 1 5
3 2 5 7
2 4 3

2 4 3
5 8 2 1
7 1 5

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Techdoku Solution, page 11

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1 30x

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4

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2

30x
2
Mini Kiddie Lit by Bruce R. Sutphin
Solution, page 11

ACROSS
1 “That’s wonderful!”
4 Milk and cookies, e.g.
9 In a lather
14 Observe furtively
15 “Spine” of South America
16 They may be sliding
17 Nursery rhyme runner
20 Hathaway of The Dark
Knight Rises
21 Trudge along
23 Is a precursor of
26 Brillo alternative
31 Reasons for bowl cheers
32 Minimal amounts
34 Impels
35 Hardly ever
36 Brave. Enough for the
nursery rhyme climber
38 Nursery rhyme snoozer
39 Eye part
40 New Haven school
41 Ill temper
42 Spanish surrealist
43 Mall business
44 Barely passing
45 Ice org.
46 They may be sliding
47 Curl up
48 “May I help you?”
51 Boils over
53 Unwind, as thread
55 Big atlas section
57 Money in Malta
58 Nursery rhyme climber
59 loudly
60 Cost of a commercial
69 Gargoyle
70 Wander about

DOWN
1 Patton of King of Queens
2 Went first
3 African scavengers
4 Course with a lab: Abbr.
5 Full
6 Feel off
7 Sitcom segment
8 Capsizes, with “over”
9 Emphatic confirmation
10 Director Howard
11 NASA affirmative
12 Prefix for angle
13 Suffix for languages
14 Barely passing
15 They may be sliding
16 Thoroughly enjoyed
17 Presidential nickname
18 Become one
19 Pound sound
21 Trudge along
22 Is a precursor of
23 Minimal amounts
24 Statue
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27 Pent competitor
28 Rts. advocate
29 Minimal amounts
30 Pilot’s head
31 Unwind, as thread
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58 Nursery rhyme climber
59 loudly
60 Cost of a commercial
69 Gargoyle
70 Wander about

Who Stole Chanukah?!

The Case of the Missing Menorah

Come to Techiya’s Fall Concert!
Sunday, Dec 2
8pm, 6-120
Free a cappella concert with refreshments
web.mit.edu/techiya
Blackout temporarily halts activity at the Institute

Sidewalks and streets congested as traffic grinds to a halt in Kendall and Mass. Ave

Power outage, from Page 1

Chemistry), which is slated to have a midterm today, had its review ses-

ties and chief of police, mentioned

that Cogen was having issues yes-

day morning, though the nature

of these issues was unclear.

When asked for comment by

The Tech, a crackly voice from the

outside intercom of Cogen said

that they were "having a plant

shutdown right now," and that

they had no time to talk.

A text message alerting com-

munity members of the power out-

age was sent out at 5:36 p.m.yes-

terday. Nate Nickerson, director of MIT communications, said that

MIT’s main goal was "responding to entrapments."

"Life and safety is our top prior-

ity," he said, citing people trapped in

elevators and other locations.

An elevator maintenance worker was seen opening an elevator in the

student center shortly before evacuations around 4:30 p.m.

Katie Barker, a lecturer in Eng-

lish Language Studies, was in the

middle of teaching when the pow-

er went out. She had an emergen-

cy light in the room, so the class

continued though she canceled

her later evening class.

"I don’t know what's going to

happen," she said. "It’s strange be-

cause there was no storm or any-

thing. It’s like the apocalypse."

Life and safety is our top prior-

ity, her later evening class.

"If the power went out. He is one of

the students who has the 3:09

exam today. "I wanted to study," he

said, "but none of the printers were

working, so I spent time copying

docs from my friend by hand. And

then ten minutes after I was done, the

power came back."

Steven Jens M. Jorgensen ’14

was in 2.085 (Thermal Fluids En-

gineering I) when everything went
dark. Students pulled out their

cell phones and some flashlights so

lecture could continue. "It was

interesting to see people come out

of their houses because nothing

was going on inside," he said after

class.

According to a month-old

e-mail from Dennis Collins, direc-
tor of residential life and dining,
during an emergency MIT’s co-
generation plant would initially go
down, activating the emergency

generators. While the cogenera-
tion plant should be able to restart

within a few hours, those in the

northwest area of campus who do

not rely on the cogeneration plant

may be on emergency power for a

longer time.

John DiFava, director of facili-
ties and chief of police, mentioned

that Cogen was having issues yes-
terday morning, though the nature

of these issues was unclear.

When asked for comment by

The Infinite Corridor was only partly illuminated during the power outage.

Kendall Square

Kendall Square was inundated with evening commuters trying to get home. Many travelers were debating between the subway, the bus, or a cab.

"I can take the bus home, so I

was hoping that wouldn’t be so

bad," said Mario Tate, who works

in Kendall Square. "But traffic is

horrible."

Although police were actively

directing traffic at several intersec-
tions along Mass. Ave, there were

non-controlled intersections (such

as at the Landsdowne St. and Mass.
Ave stoplight) and several acci-

dents that further added to the nor-
mal rush hour traffic composition.

Alan Smith, the general manag-
er at the Marriott Hotel in Kendall,
said that the hotel had generators

powered emergency lighting in

hallways, stairwells, and the lobby.

They were passing out glowsticks

guests to use in their rooms.

"Guests are very calm," he said,

"as soon as we know what’s hap-
pening I plan on making an an-
nouncement over the PA system so

that guests are informed."

The Clover food truck saw an in-

crease in customers during the out-
age. Shawn Salzberg, a second year

master’s student in the Media Lab,

was waiting for his dinner near the

truck. "I was in lab working on my

computer when it kind of started to

buzz and then the lights went out," he

said. "This is kind of epic."

"I planned on cooking tonight,

but now with no power I learned an

important survival tip — when the

electricity goes out the food trucks

are still open," he explained.

Outage origins

Rumors swirled about a deer

who had been struck near the Ken-
dall Tunnel and caused the trouble. "I heard some crazy story about

a deer being run over by the train

but I find that hard to be true," said

Lionel Mathelin, and MIT employ-
ee in Course 16.

"The rumour, which appears to

have originated on Twitter, seems
to be false. Dan Bivilcchi, Cam-

bridge police spokesman, said to

Cambridge Local "We’re getting a

report that it’s a transformer that

blew in Central Square. We spoke
to someone from the Red Line and

no one said anything about a deer."

On Twitter feed sup-
poisedly from the dead deer, sur-
faced on Thursday night. As of this

writing, it has over 200 followers.

Tweets from Green Line trains
did col-
lide yesterday morning at the

Brighton Street station. Three doz-
en people were taken to hospitals,

and nearly 200 passengers were es-
timated to be on board. Neither car

was derailed, and no heavy dam-
age was visible. This incident is not

believed to be related to the power

outage.

Students should call the MIT police at 617-253-1212 if they are

having any safety issues. Check The Tech’s sto"

				http://storify.com/

				jthtech/mit-during-the-cambridge-

				blackout.

Sara Hsu, Deborah Chen, Anne

Cai, Stan Gill, John A. Hawkinson,

Greg Steinbrecher, and Bruno B. F.

Faviero contributed reporting to

this article.

This text is contributed by

the Tech
Scenes from the blackout

A car crash occurred at the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Memorial Drive at approximately 7:30 p.m. on Thursday evening. One lane of traffic was blocked and a police officer directed traffic at the intersection.

Jessica L. Wass—The Tech

A police officer directs traffic on Mass. Ave. in Central Square.

A car crash occurred at the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Memorial Drive at approximately 7:30 p.m. on Thursday evening. One lane of traffic was blocked and a police officer directed traffic at the intersection.

Students make their way down a darkened Infinite Corridor Thursday evening after power went out in Cambridge.

Nicholas A. Pellegrino '12, a member of the break dance group Imobilare, performs in Lobby 7 during the blackout. Dancers from the group Constructs also performed. Many people, evacuated in the surrounding buildings, stayed in Lobby 7 during the blackout.
A car crash occurred at the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Memorial Drive at approximately 7:30 p.m. on Thursday evening. One lane of traffic was blocked and a police officer directed traffic at the intersection.

All lights were out in the Student Center during the power outage.

NStar employees did repair work on the electric grid near the Central Square subway station.

People overlooking Lobby 7 stand silhouetted against emergency lights.

A policeman directs traffic in front of 77 Mass. Ave. Traffic was bumper to bumper from the Harvard Bridge to Central Square.
The resurrection as a case study in evidence versus faith

A philosopher argues against the main belief of Christianity in Atheism and the Case Against Christ

By Roberto Perez-Franco

In his recent book Atheism and the Case Against Christ, Matthew McCormick, a professor of philosophy at CSU Sacramen- to, takes issues with the most fundamental claim of Christianity: Jesus came back to life after being dead for three days. But saying that McCormick “takes issues” with the resurrection claim is an under-statement. He uses 288 pages to take the critical-thinking equivalent of a chainsaw to this very problem, and what follows is not nice. I am not sure how a believer might feel when reading McCormick’s book, but for me, an open atheist, following his grinding argument against the evidence for the resurrection was like watching him beat a dead horse and then extract from the resulting pulp at least a dozen different, compelling reasons to not just doubt, but reject altogether the historicity of the resurrection on the basis of insufficient evidence. How then, in the remain- ing of other religions, since, he con- cludes, the evidence is usually fantastic and unsupported claims. McCormick, all the while, tout the moral advantages of athe- ism, particularly the benefit of being able to think through problems on the basis of facts, instead of wishful thinking.

From cover to cover, McCormick’s compre- hensive refutation felt to me like overkill. Who, after all, takes the resurrection to be truly a historical fact? I did not have to wait for long to be reminded who.

McCormick uses 288 pages to take the equivalent of a chainsaw against the resurrection claim.

Take the Pope, for example. In his latest book on Jesus, published last week in 20 languages and an instant bestseller, Benedict XVI asks, “is what we profess in the Creed true?” But if you are not familiar with the Creed, you don’t know what you are missing. It is a public affirming of a series of fundamental Christian beliefs, including Jesus’ birth from a virgin and his resurrection from the dead. “The answer is an unequivocal yes,” says the Pope: both the vir- gin birth and the resurrection of Jesus are historical truth. How does he know this? It is not because he has found sufficient histori- cal evidence to support these extraordinary claims, but because these beliefs are cornerstones of his faith and are supported by scripture, which is taken again by faith as being true. If you are wondering why you should care about other people deciding what is true based on faith instead of evidence, I submit this example for your consideration. This December’s issue of GQ includes an interview with GOP preferito Marco Rubio, with a Cosmopolitan-style gotcha question: “How old do you think the Earth is?” Accordingly, Rubio answered in Palm-speak by distanc- ing himself from science (“I’m not a scien- tist”), invoking Scripture as his reference (“I can tell you what the Bible says”), and de- claring the subject beyond our reach (“It is one of the great mysteries”). In Christian circles, doubting the true geological age of the Earth is a proxy for doubting evolu- tion through natural selection, which is itself a defense mechanism for affirming the existence of a Creator. So, when Rubio answers a question about the Earth’s age based on faith and ignoring all the scien- tific evidence, he is publicly affirming his religious beliefs at the expense of scientific facts.

In a searing op-ed piece, Paul Krug- man PhD ’77 characterized Rubio’s “inabil- ity to acknowledge scientific evidence” as “symptomatic of a much broader problem,” namely “the anti-rational mind-set that has taken over his political party,” and urges us not to forget Rubio’s answer when the 2016 election comes. Such predilection of faith over evidence, of truthiness over truth, “may, in the end, set America on a path of inexcusable decline,” warns Krugman. I agree with him. McCormick mounted such a formidable attack on the pivotal claim of the predominant religion in this hemisphere, because the case has to be made over and over again, until it sinks in, that faith-based policies should not be ac- cepted by rational thinkers. The pressing need to stand this ground is the underlying reason for McCormick’s all-out defense of reason above faith. And I see it as a good fight. May his chainsaw stay sharp.
Sanjay Sarma, from Page 1

cause they are more amenable to flipping”

Some classes at MIT are already flipped, such as 8.01 and 8.02 (Physics I and II, respectively), the standard freshman physics class.

In the spring, 8.02 will meet its standard freshman physics class (Physics I and II, respectively), the flipped, such as 8.01 and 8.02 flipping. “I've now met maybe 30 professors who for 10, 15 years have been producing online material for their students.” In his new position as a “convener and synthesize,” as President Reif called it, Sarma will try to organize all of this innovative activity. “(Digital learning) will be shaped by the community. You’re going to have undergraduates, graduate students, professors, researchers — we will collectively take the great work that was initiated with the edX concept and tailor it to maximize education and learning,” Sarma said. He hopes to do that by “putting together a cohesive plan so that we can start scaling it” — scaling digital tools beyond the individual classes they were first developed for so that they can be used in more MIT classes or even by students across the world via edX.

But Sarma can also strike a slightly different tone from others involved in the new rush for online education, who are often out to “reinvent” or “revolutionize” learning. Sarma just wants to take full advantage of the resources available. He thinks it will take some work to determine the best way to use digital learning in a flipped classroom, and hopes that “we can move the needle so that we're optimizing.” He pondered, “Does a video replace reading? I don’t know. Maybe a video will help. The idea is not to enforce a modality.”

For Sarma, “the technology, the format — all that is a way to present it.” It’s a means to an end. “The point is, let’s use digital learning to enhance learning at MIT.”
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Room 32-124

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J. J. Abrams entertains a packed crowd at MIT Media Lab

J. J. Abrams shares philosophy of storytelling, his creative process, & his opinion of the future of media

In his mind, the intentions and motivations of the characters are always clearly defined. He's always cognizant of what needs to get done, but is also open to new possibilities. Perhaps the most compelling metaphor Abrams had for storytelling was that of wandering through fog. "It is interesting to see how this agile storytelling philosophy plays out in the process of script writing. When asked about how he responds to fan response on the internet, Abrams said that he gauges online opinion to make adjustments, much like how image performance changes from night to night. His best moments as a writer, he explained, are when he is excited by an idea and the viewers just get it — when he throws a baseball at the audience and they catch it. Sometimes, even if you never see the ball, you can feel the feel of it."

Aiming to further expand his metaphor of story creation, Abrams referred to Zuber as an "open-book" author. He explained that while Bad Robot does that end at iterating "what was the intent?" … you've got to start writing. That's the sort of reaction you never see anymore, because people know when it was real. That's the sort of reaction you need to get."

The movie, which involved climbing the Eiffel Tower, had a dream a couple times in my life, where there's another part of your house that you didn't know existed — and you get to explore it!" He explained that we are seeing a move away from TV and towards media convergence. "There is no TV versus something else. There is just one thing."

"The thing it comes down to, despite all the pyrotechnics, is that the chills you get — there's this thing you think you could happen — you just get into it."

"What does Abrams mean by "the chills"? He recalled a screening he went to at UCLA, where they showed the 1923 silent film Safety Last! The movie, which involved climbing stunts on a skyscraper, had the audience screaming and cheering, because they knew it was real. "That's the sort of reaction you never see anymore, because people know when something's fake — when something's been blue- or green-screened. "Everywhere's been demystified," Abrams griped. He sees it as the job of storytellers to mystify in an age where everyone knows everything — or, at least, have access to all the answers. (Unfortunately, we could not reach Abrams for comment as to whether or not yesterday's blackout was, in fact, part of a viral marketing campaign for Revolution.)

But there are always those lingering ques-
tions that will never be answered. One audi-
ce member, who came to the talk hoping to
demystify his experience of Lost. "What did the polar bears mean?" he asked, to much
laughter from the audience. "Were the un-
answered questions a storytelling tool, or
or"?

Abrams reassured him that the loose ends were "definitely not oversight!" Having left the show early on to work on Mission Impossible 3, Abrams said to take up any questions about the show with co-writer Damon Lindelof in
stead, who was conveniently not present at the talk.

Nevertheless, Abrams seemed to be satis-
fied with how the series turned out. "[Linde-
lof] answered the emotion of the show."

He drew parallels to Quentin Tarantino's Pulp Fiction, where the entire story is driven by an enigmatic heist whose contents are never revealed. Abrams asserted that there is nothing that could possibly be in that case that would be satisfactory to the audience. To him, the ending of Lost was not about resolving the whole story, but about settling questions with emotional arcs of the characters.

When asked what he hopes people will say about his work 100 years from now, Abrams said, "The truth is, I hope they say that they were stories that had a big heart, and made me feel something."

Despite all his success, Abrams will prob-
ably tell you that he's still stumbling through the fog of the creative process. At the very least, Abrams' fans don't seem to mind, as he continues to churn out compelling and pro-
vocative stories. Each and every time, Abrams manages to produce a unique kind of fiction-
all magic from the fog. And yes, the occasional smoke monster.
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We value education, and we live in one of the best school districts in the world. We hope that our child will be gifted, as each of us is, and that he/she will have a positive impact on the world.
Kates’ points lead MIT past Tufts
Men’s basketball wins 70-60 against Somerville rival

By Phil Hess

Mitchell H. Kates ’13 scored a season-high 27 points to help No. 1 ranked MIT to a 70-60 victory over nearby rival Tufts University in men’s basketball action in Rockwell Cage. The Engineers held the Jumbos to just 36 percent shooting as they improved to 5-0 with the victory. Freshman Ben Ferris was the only player in double figures for Tufts with 17 points as the Jumbos saw their record evened at 3-3 for the season.

MIT started the game strong, getting six points from Will Tashman ’13 as the Engineers built an 8-0 lead over the first four minutes. Ferris hit a trey for Tufts’ first points of the night and the two teams played evenly from there for most of the first 20 minutes, with MIT unable to pull ahead by more than seven points the rest of the half.

MIT led 27-20 with 4:26 left after a pair of free throws from Ryan L. Frankel ’16 when Tufts put together its first run of the night. A three-pointer from sophomore Oliver Cohen started an 8-0 spurt that gave the Jumbos their first lead of the game when sophomore Tommy Folliard hit another trey with three minutes to go that made it 28-27. MIT answered with a run of its own, finishing the half on a 9-0 run that was highlighted by a three-point shot by Kates as time expired to take a 36-28 lead into the locker room.

Tufts missed its first five shots of the second half which opened the door for MIT to extend its lead. With three minutes gone Kates went on a personal 8-0 run, hitting a pair of three pointers and then stealing a Tufts pass and taking the length of the court for a layup that gave MIT a 46-30 lead and forced a Jumbos timeout.

From there Tufts could not get the deficit back under double figures until the final five minutes of the game; going on a 9-0 run started by five straight points by freshman Stephen Haladyna. A pair of free throws by Ferris brought Tufts to within seven at 63-56 with four minutes left, but MIT came back with a dunk by Redfield and a layup from Kates to push the lead back to 11 with 2:33 to play and effectively end the Jumbos’ threat.

In addition to Kates and Redfield, Tashman also reached double figures with 18 points for MIT, which in total shot 59.6 percent. Redfield also led MIT in rebounding with seven, helping the Engineers to a 34-28 edge on the boards. In addition to leading Tufts in scoring, Ferris also led the Jumbos with nine rebounds.

MIT will take its 5-0 record on the road on Thursday when the Engineers travel to Providence for a 7:30 p.m. game at Rhode Island College.

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Sophomores + Juniors—Apply by December 3, 2012
National football league: week 13

Packers to defeat Vikings; Patriots will dominate Dolphins; 49ers to beat Rams

By Austin Osborne

Seattle Seahawks @ Chicago Bears
Sunday, Dec. 2 1 p.m. Western Time

Jacksonville Jaguars @ Buffalo Bills
Sunday, Dec. 2 1 p.m.

Minnesota Vikings @ Green Bay Packers
Sunday, Dec. 2 1 p.m.

Tampa Bay Buccaneers @ Denver Broncos
Sunday, Dec. 2 4:05 p.m.

Green Bay Packers may have the highest scoring game this week. They'll be in a do or die situation with their division rivals, the Atlanta Falcons, last week, and they contin-ued to pull off a surprise this season. This game is a matchup of two potentially high-scoring offenses. If Doug Martin can find some holes in the Broncos' defense, the Bills will be in good shape. The bad news for the Broncos is the fact that they are in the league in terms of passing yards allowed. Peyton Manning will be coming off back-to-back losses by almost 40 points. A formula for Minnesota. Green Bay was overpowered in their playoff matchup by the Chi- cago Bears. They couldn’t stop the Gi- bson’s, and our fantasy footballers had to find new ways to compete. This week, the Bills may be in a defensive battle, so expect them to get back on track and keep pace with the Bills for the division title.

Indianapolis Colts @ Detroit Lions
Sunday, Dec. 2 1 p.m.

Denver Broncos @ Houston Texans
Sunday, Dec. 2 4:05 p.m.

Allison Collins vs. Sam Bradford

San Francisco 49ers @ St. Louis Rams
Sunday, Dec. 2 4:25 p.m.

The 49ers were the subject of a lot of controversy last week when they replaced QB Alex Smith with former year QB Colin Kaes- pern. It is very uncommon for a team as good as the 49ers to bring in a replacement quarterback halfway through the season. The Lions lost a crucial game last week against the Texans when they were able to replace their quarterback half- way through the game. However, the Lions moved on for the 49ers, as Kaepernick led them to a big win with 200 rushing yards and three total touchdowns. They won’t be able to score like that again, but they will be out to prove that they can put up a fight. Kaepernick does add a new dimension to the 49er offense. He is incredibly athletic and can put up a lot of points for defenses trying to game plan for him. He will play against the Rams, the team he played against in his first game this season. The Rams are coming off a victory over the Browns in Week 12. They will have to contain Kaepernick and ensure that he is not able to take advantage of some of the formations the Rams use. Kaepernick should be able to move the ball on the Chargers, especially through the air, where San Diego ranks among the worst 20th in the league. San Diego has basically lost all chances to make the playoffs, and they may be better off playing this week, especially after their crush- ing loss last week against the Rams. Considering that Cincinnati has everything to lose, while the Dolphins need to find a way to gain, the Bengals should pull this one out.

Cleveland Browns @ Oakland Raiders

Philadelphia Eagles @ Dallas Cowboys
Sunday, Dec. 2 4:25 p.m.

The Eagles lost again last week and are at 2-9-1 at the end of the year. They have a chance to win their next game in the division rivalry, the Atlanta Falcons. They have won all three games last season, and the Falcons are coming off a close game with the Panthers. This game doesn’t seem to be that close this time around.

New York Giants @ Washington Redskins
Monday, Dec. 3 8:35 p.m.

The Giants proved all their doubters wrong. They are finally in the first place in their division after one week. They have won both games they have played.

The Los Angeles Chargers are coming off a loss to the Raiders last week. The Chargers have been struggling all season, but they just don’t have enough talent on defense to stop down any team defensively. They are 26th in pass-