Nate Silver talks to a packed MIT crowd
Famous statistics guru shares his journey, plans, and philosophies

By Joanna Kao
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

A large crowd packed Bartos Theater last night to hear from Nate Silver, hosted by Seth Minnkon and the MIT Communications Forum. 

The soirée quickly reached its 300-person capacity, and many wannabe Silverites were forced to watch the live feed outside the theater.

In the two-hour event covered Silver’s career path and his plans for the future. Sprinkled with some humorous anecdotes and a few challenges, somebody who knows a thing or two about dice and莫斯门rots and sites like POLITICO, the event was split in half with Silver answering questions from Minnkon for the first half and then answering questions from the audience in the second.

Silber, statistician and polling analyst for FiveThirtyEight, began his talk by saying “It’s a real honor to be here. It’s a Ground Zero for nerds.”

Silver talked about his first post-college job as a consultant for KPMG and how he transitioned from the world of consulting to political blogging and statistics guru. Much of the talk was devoted to FiveThirtyEight, its transition to the Times, and his plans for the future.

In the second half of the talk, Silver talked about his first post-college job as a consultant for KPMG and how he transitioned from the world of consulting to political blogging and statistics guru. Much of the talk was devoted to FiveThirtyEight, its transition to the Times, and his plans for the future.

Silver took questions from the audience. Questions ranged from his thoughts on the 2012 election to his thoughts on the Times’ graphics. Fans had the chance to take photos with, and get books signed by, Silver following the talk.

If you missed the talk, check out our photo spread on page 8.

MIT ranks 11th in alumni donations

MIT Annual Fund raised $37.2 million from alumni in 2012

By Anne Cai
EDITOR IN CHIEF

In 2012, MIT raised $34.795 million per student. This puts MIT at the 11th highest fundraiser when compared to other reporting U.S. colleges and universities, according to a press release last week from the Council for Aid to Education (CAE).

Stanford University, which received the largest total contributions with $61 million in fundraising, ranked fifth with $55.745 million per student.

Yale University, California Institute of Technology, Princeton University, and Harvard University ranked seventh, eighth, 17th, and 38th, respectively.

While fundraising by U.S. institutions increased by 2.3 percent — only slightly above inflation — that increase was driven by contributions from foundations (up 5.5 percent), corporations (up 4.6 percent), and non-alumni individuals (up 3.1 percent). 47.2 percent of institutions reporting to the CAE indicated a decline in total fundraising over the past year. Overall, alumni giving declined 1.3 percent, and the average alumni giving decreased by 0.5 percent. Alumni participation also dropped from 9.5 percent in 2011 to 9.2 percent in 2012.

MIT, too, followed this trend in declining alumni giving. According to numbers provided by Steve McAlister, Director of the MIT Annual Fund, the number of capped donations (which do not count contributions past $100,000) Uncovered donations for 2011 and 2012 are not yet reliably available, as those include both commitments and pledges (future promises of giving).

SpringFest: a step up from weekends past
Less like a standalone concert, more like CPW

By Stephanie Holden
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The recent announcement of Macklemore & Ryan Lewis as the headliners for this year’s SpringFest spread like wildfire across the MIT campus. In addition to the concert, the Undergraduate Association (UA) Events Committee is working to make SpringFest, previously known as Spring Weekend, bigger and better than ever before.

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Europe won’t change to satisfy critics, EU leader suggests

BRUSSELS — The man who represents the 27 leaders of the European Union warned Thursday of widespread opposition to steps that may be necessary to keep Britain as a member of the European Union.

Herman Van Rompuy, the president of the European Council, said he saw no prospects for opening a debate in Brussels on how to address the complaints of countries like Britain that are outside the eurozone and that object to “federalist” rules governing the union.

“No do I feel much appetite for it around the leaders’ table,” Van Rompuy said, according to the text of a speech he delivered Thursday evening in London at the Policy Network, a center-left research organization.

An aide to Van Rompuy said the comments were meant to underline that there was no immediate need to change EU treaties, to prohibit the euro, and that the comments were not referring to any demands for treaty change that Britain may seek in the future.

Still, Van Rompuy’s remarks appeared to be a pointed warning to Prime Minister David Cameron, who in January promised British voters a referendum within the next five years on whether to stay in the Union on revised membership terms, or to leave.

Cameron’s stance is widely regarded as a bet that his country is big and important enough to win concessions from the bloc, including a change in the EU treaty if necessary. But a number of European leaders, as well as critics in Britain, have also warned that Cameron could lose that gamble and end up overseeing the country’s voluntary exclusion from the Union. Van Rompuy also faulted the British approach as overly confrontational in a bloc that has a long tradition of consensual decision-making.

“Are we going to have a whole bunch of people when you keep your hand on the door handle?” Van Rompuy said, warning Cameron, according to the advance copy of his speech.


Mississippi mayoral candidate found dead

ATLANTA, A 22-year-old man was charged with murder Thursday in the death of an openly gay, African-American candidate for mayor in the Mississippi Delta.

The Coahoma County Sheriff’s Department said in a statement that Lawrence Reed, 22, a resident of Clarksdale, Miss., was arrested after a two-month investigation into the death of Marco McMillian, 34, the mayoral candidate in the same town.

Police say they have no reason to suspect that McMillian was a hate crime victim.

Medical experts Thursday performed an autopsy of McMillian, whose body was found beside a levee this week near where he was last seen. In all, Reed was reported missing, initially his car was involved in a head-on collision this week on Highway 8.

Officials from the Sheriff’s Department released few details about how, or why, McMillian had died. The levee where he was last seen was reported flooded, and Reed’s car was in a head-on collision this week on Highway 8.

Riots in Bangladesh follow death sentence for Islamic leader

DHAKA, Bangladesh — Violent clashes between angry mobs and police, some shot to death, broke out around Bangladesh on Thursday, leaving at least 35 dead, after a special war crimes tribunal handed down a death sentence to a fundamentalist leader for crimes against humanity committed 42 years ago, during the country’s 1971 war of independence from Pakistan.

The verdict against Delawar Hossain Sayedee, a leader of the Jamaat-e-Islami party, resonated across the land. In one case brought against Sayedee and others, party leaders were politically motivated and tainted by judicial irregularities, Jamaat leaders called a nationwide strike Thursday to protest the verdict, and by afternoon it appeared that Sayedee’s party had resigned from the government, and, as party workers fought with police in the streets.

The protests for and against Jamaat have convulsed Bangladeshi politics, demonstrating that the country has still not healed from the bloody 1971 conflict, when an estimated 3 million people were killed and thousands of women were raped. Prior to the war, Bangladesh was East Pakistan, separatist from the rest of that country by a wide expanse of India; the war pit-

By Jullfkar Ali Manik and Jim Yardard THE NEW YORK TIMES

In a first, experiment links brains of two rats

By James Gorman THE NEW YORK TIMES

In an experiment that sounds straight out of a science fiction movie, a Duke neuroscientist has connected the brains of two rats in such a way that when one moves to press a lever, the other does, too — most of the time.

The neuroscientist, Miguel Ni- collels, known for successfully demonstrating brain-machine con- nections, like the one in which a monkey controlled a robotic arm with its thoughts, said this was the first time one animal’s brain had been linked to another.

“I believe it was political,” said one family member, who refused to be named. “Maybe he was a threat. They wanted Clarks-...
Japan to begin restarting idled nuclear plants, leader says

**By Yuki Terase**

TOKYO — Japan will begin reactivating its idled nuclear plants once new safety guidelines are in place, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said Thursday, moving to ensure a stable supply despite public safety concerns after the Fukushima disaster.

In a televised appearance on a national news programme, Mr. Abe pledged to restart nuclear plants that pass the toughest guidelines, which are expected to be adopted by a newly created independent watchdog agency, the Nuclear Regulation Authority, as early as July.

However, in an indication that debate over restarting reactors might resume operation, News reports have suggested that it might take months or even years to make the expensive upgrades needed to meet the new safety standards.

All of Japan’s 50 operable nuclear reactors were shut down following the March 11 triple meltdown at the Fukushima Daiichi plant, which swelled radiation across northern Japan after a huge earthquake and tsunami knocked out vital cooling systems like solar and wind.

Mr. Abe, who was appointed to office by popular mandate, has vowed to stabilize the economy and ensure a stable supply despite public safety concerns after the Fukushima disaster.

In an interview with a national news programme, Mr. Abe pledged to restart nuclear plants that pass the toughest guidelines, which are expected to be adopted by a newly created independent watchdog agency, the Nuclear Regulation Authority, as early as July. But he said that he would not build any new nuclear plants.

The government has been widely criticized for its handling of the nuclear crisis, which has led to widespread protests and a_change in the political landscape. The ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which has been in power for over 50 years, has lost support and faced criticism for its handling of the crisis.

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OPINION POLICY

Excessive symbolism in recent Brass Rats

I was glad to see in the recent article on the 2015 Brass Rats that MIT students continue to show enthusiasm for the Brass Rat. However, I am concerned by the ring design, I see a continuation of a problem seen in recent years: too much of a good thing. Unfortunately, recent classes seem to be going overboard by trying to cram too much symbolism onto one ring. A bit of clarity and aesthetics. The Brass Rat should certainly have a unique look, but the ring should not make M.I.T a unique place, but trying to commemorate national and world events just doesn’t seem like a good idea of years since a stretch. The death of Steve Jobs (2011)? Hurricanes (2015)? And with over two years before the ring will be designed to incorporate news events that happen between now and then? I do not suggest you ask your ring committee to ponder what year you will die so you can wear your ring for the rest of your life: a classy marker of your achievement at MIT, or a hodgepodge metallic tribute to popular culture? Tim M. Davison-Tournoud ’90.

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How should we attempt to prevent gun violence?

Take responsibility for your own safety

Normandin, from Page 4

Those who advocate increased gun usage are giving up on the effort to solve this problem. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it. Through violence you may murder the liar, but you cannot murder the lie, nor establish the truth. Through violence you may murder the hater, but you do not murder hate. In fact, violence merely increases hate. So it goes. Returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that. "Honestly, we don't know whether giving everyone guns would solve the problem of gun violence. But even if it did, is that really the best we can do? This country claims to be a moral compass for the world, but the best way we can answer violence is with violence? This country claims to have some of the brightest minds on the planet, and the best we can do is give our citizens sticks to beat off the other citizens with sticks? This country spends more on defense than the next 19 nations combined, but we can't convince our citizens not to kill each other? Must we truly resort to such a band-aid approach, such a brute-force solution? Why can't this country, with all of its wealth and brilliance, move forward in an effort to find and address the roots of this problem? Why don't we fix the disease, instead of just attempting to mask the symptoms?

Most political issues evoke my passion for one side or the other. It drives me crazy that we're not doing enough for education, we're ignoring the poor, and that Wall Street gets away with its white-collar crimes. Yet, on most issues, both sides have at least some value in their position. I really do believe, perhaps naively, that the vast majority of politicians and citizens honestly do want to make this country a better place; they just disagree on how to do it. But when I hear people tell me that the way to fix gun violence is to hand out guns to everyone, it just makes me sad. It makes me sad because I'm hearing from that person that they've given up on finding a real solution. They're telling me that they don't believe that we can figure out how to fix what appears to be a cultural problem. They're telling me that, even in the absence of evidence, they're willing to throw violence and fear at a problem that is, quintessentially, one of violence and fear. As a people, I have to believe that we are better than that.

Some of us are too eager to encourage gun usage when we have no idea how that will affect the problem. to such a band-aid approach, such a brute-force solution? Why can't this country, with all of its wealth and brilliance, move forward in an effort to find and address the roots of this problem? Why don't we fix the disease, instead of just attempting to mask the symptoms?

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So if you think you might be interested, or even if you just want to see what we do, join us for dinner in our office on the fourth floor of the Student Center (W20-483) on Sundays at 6 pm, or email us at join@tech.mit.edu
Invited Macklemore for $50,000

Spring Weekend, from Page 1

and $25 for non-MIT students.

There is also an incentive for MIT students to invite friends from other schools to attend. All non-MIT students will be asked if they received a referral from an MIT student. Any MIT student who refers five or more non-MIT friends to purchase tickets for the concert will be entered in a raffle for one free Macklemore “swag.”

The person with the most referrals will be offered a “unique and awesome concert experience,” wrote Yuschenkoff in an email to The Tech.

“Macklemore has been doing very well and selling lots and lots of tickets, so buy them fast!” said Yuschenkoff. Many schools hosting Macklemore & Ryan Lewis have sold over 4,000 tickets in their first week of sales.

“Not everyone on campus is going to like an artist, but if we get more groups involved in the weekend, everyone can say they had fun during SpringFest,” Osimiri said. “On a nice spring day, you see people on Kresge playing sports and studying outside, and when you add a concert and a carnival, MIT students are happy and have a great time!”


Last year’s total SpringFest budget $132,992
The All-American Rejects $100,500
A Rocket To The Moon $1,000

This year’s estimated SpringFest budget $149,500
Macklemore & Ryan Lewis $50,000
Opening Artist < $50,000

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arts.mit.edu/cast/sss

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20 leading sound artists
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This graphic was presented last March, as part of a contract update, showing one of the proposed layouts of the outbound side of Longfellow Bridge. During construction, half of the bridge will be closed at a time, and there will be only one lane of outbound traffic in addition to the sidewalk, bike lane, and temporary T tracks.

Longfellow Bridge during construction

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

12TH ANNUAL ORIGAMI COMPETITION

DEADLINE
March 8, 2013

PARTICIPATE
1) Fold cool origami model(s)

2) Submit model(s) to W20-443

3) Wait for judging results

** 4) Win awesome prizes! **

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QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?
origami-info@mit.edu
origamit.scripts.mit.edu
1) Much of the talk focused on the development of FiveThirtyEight, its beginnings at the New York Times, and Silver’s thoughts on its future. In 2007, Silver felt that politics was still “stuck in the stone age and not data-driven at all.” That year, he started blogging under a pseudonym, Poblano (“I always liked Mexican food”), for Daily Kos. Silver said that he went public later because he wanted to capitalize on it and also potentially shift careers. When Silver shifted his blog to the New York Times in mid 2010, daily traffic didn’t skyrocket — on his first day at the Times, he only got 500 pageviews. After a profile in Newsweek, he got 5,000 pageviews. He peaked on election day 2012 with 3 million page views — it has come back down since then. Silver’s three-year contract with the New York Times ends in July this year. Mnookin asked him about his future plans and whether he would continue into the 2016 election. “I’m in active discussions with the Times. It’s a great fit in a lot of ways. Jill is a perfect editor. Anything can happen in negotiation. But we’ll see. I’m pretty happy there,” Silver said. Silver talked about the pros and cons of working at the Times. Silver praised the graphics team that he works with to visually present his stories and praised the Times for its journalistic standards and reputation. However, he also spoke about how it could also be a downside. “Everyone comes after the Times. It’s the New York Yankees basically. The less obvious downside of that is that sometimes it’s hard to be kind of casual at the Times. “ Silver says that with a blog, you can be “farting around.” But at the Times, “you can get in more trouble for that kind of thing. People treat it as more authoritative, so it’s harder to find that voice,” Silver said.

2) The event was held in the Bartos Theater in the basement of E15 (the Weisner Building/old Media Lab). The auditorium’s near-200 person capacity was exceeded before the event began; some audience members were left standing, and others had to view a live feed of the event on a screen set up outside the theater.

3) Nate Silver signed copies of his New York Times bestselling book The Signal and the Noise for audience members following his talk. Many audience members brought their own copies, but the book was also offered for sale outside the auditorium, providing a small consolation for attendees who were unable to get seats inside.

4) Journalist, writer, and MIT CMS associate professor Seth Mnookin moderated the Nate Silver talk, hosted by the MIT Communications Forum. Mnookin spent the first half of the two hour talk interviewing Silver and the remainder fielding questions from the audience, both in-person and via Twitter. In the first hour, Mnookin and Silver talked about the beginnings of Silver’s career — Silver worked at KPMG, a consulting firm, right after college for several years from 2000–2003. While working as a consultant there, he began playing around with online poker and worked on a major league baseball prediction site, PECOTA (Player Empirical Comparison and Optimization Test Algorithm), for which Silver began gaining fame. In his talk, Silver said that the reason PECOTA was better than its competitors was that it could “capture the range of forecasts,” and he tried to show the intermediate steps to get the probabilities he presented. In 2003, Silver sold PECOTA to Baseball Prospectus and began working for it. He resigned from his consulting job at KPMG in 2004 and worked full-time for Baseball Prospectus.

5) Audience members had a chance to ask Silver questions during the second half of the event. Questions ranged from digital journalism to the future of Silver’s career. When asked about would happen when other media outlets had their own “Nate Silvers,” Silver said competing against other models would not differentiate him much in the long term — instead he liked the competition against the mainstream pundits who are terrible at what they do.

Watch our video! http://bit.ly/MITNateSilver
The 2013 Oscars
Recapping the 85th Academy Awards
By Yu Linlin Huang
Staff Writer

I have not missed a single Oscars award ceremony since 2002, and as a devoted viewer, it’s no surprise that I watched them again this year. Feb. 24, 2013, marked the 85th presentation of the annual Academy Awards to highlight cinematic achievements. The red carpet leading into the Dolby Theatre (formerly the Kodak Theater) held the attention of millions. ThePossible winner was attended their first rehearsal on Wednesday. One of the lucky six included the cast of “Skyfall” by Adele, “Oneday More” by the cast of Les Miserables, “All That Jazz” by Catherine Zeta-Jones from Chicago, and “Dreamgirls” by Jennifer Hudson. My favorite part was when the famous teddy bear from TED showed up and presented awards in the unmistakable voice of Seth MacFarlane (with MacFarlane’s normal caliber of offensive jokes, of course).

As always, the most prestigious awards were left to the end. Contenders for best actress included Jessica Chastain (Zero Dark Thirty), Jennifer Lawrence (Silver Linings Playbook), Emmanuelle Riva (Amour), Naomi Watts (The Impossible), and 9-year old actress Quvenzhané Wallis (Beast of the Southern Wild). The prize went to Jennifer Lawrence, who tripped on her way up to the stage to receive her Oscar. Best actor contenders were Bradley Cooper (Silver Linings Playbook), Daniel Day-Lewis (Lincoln), Hugh Jackman (Les Miserables), Joaquin Phoenix (The Master), and Denzel Washington (Flight). Daniel Day-Lewis won the category and gave an eloquent acceptance speech. Finally, the last category rolled around just before midnight EST. It’s always fun to predict the winner of these categories, and I’ve noticed a pattern from watching past awards: the one to win best original screenplay will probably also win best picture. This year, the pattern continued, with Argo winning both best original screenplay and taking home the Oscar for best picture.

I was not surprised that Christoph Waltz was presented with the Oscar for best supporting actor, followed by an Oscar to Paper Man for best animated short. Instead of leggy, homogenous models carrying the gold statues, this year’s trophy carriers were six college students who competed in an essay contest for their chance to be on the red carpet. The contestants to the essay contest were presented with the prompt: “How will you contribute to the future of film?” Over 1,100 students entered the contest, and the six winners attended their first rehearsal on Wednesday. One of the lucky six included Hearin Ko, a sophomore at Boston’s Emerson College. The co-producers Neil Mer-

THE OSCARS
Tech Predictions: Did we get it right?

Best Picture
Argo]
Les Miserable
Amour
Django Unchained
Lincoln
Zero Dark Thirty

Best Director
Ang Lee Life of Pi
Michael Haneke Amour
Steven Spielberg Lincoln

Best Actor
Daniel Day-Lewis Flight
Denzel Washington Flight

Best Actress
Emmanuelle Riva Amour
Quvenzhané Wallis
Beasts Of The Southern Wild
Jennifer Lawrence
Silver Linings Playbook

Naomi Watts
The Impossible
Jessica Chastain Zero Dark Thirty

Ten members of The Tech Arts Department attempted to predict the Academy Awards, a la Nate Silver. We weren’t quite on target.

Friday, March 1, 2013

The Oscar for best actress goes to Jennifer Lawrence, for her role in Silver Linings Playbook.

THE OSCARS

The Oscars progressed with the perfect balance of performance spectacles and award presentations.

Following the traditional Academy Awards format, the Oscars progressed with the perfect balance of performance spectacles and award presentations. Some notable performances include the song “Skyfall” by Adele, “One Day More” by the cast of Les Miserables, “All That Jazz” by Catherine Zeta-Jones from Chicago, and “Dreamgirls” by Jennifer Hudson. My favorite part was when the famous teddy bear from TED showed up and presented awards in the unmistakable voice of Seth MacFarlane (with MacFarlane’s normal caliber of offensive jokes, of course).
RESTAURANT REVIEW

HIPSTER COFFEE CAFÉ

Where to go when you need a break

By Sophie Chung

When I need a thoroughly non-MIT place to escape to, Atomic Bean Café is one of my favorite places ever. Tooling may be a way of life but I too, need my regular dose of free WiFi, delicious espresso, and even ridiculous pastries made with kale.

Right down Mass. Ave., in Atomic Bean Café you’re as likely to find people working on their laptops as you are to find chatting with the person next to them. Low-key, the background music consists almost exclusively of bands with two names (e.g. Belle and Sebastian), animal names (Grizzly Bear), or names that make no sense (Passion Pit).

What sucked me in here? A chocolate and rhubarb croissant. I didn’t know what rhubarb was either, but Google and my own taste buds quickly informed me that rhubarb is 1) a tart vegetable that is often categorized as a fruit and 2) a delicious complement to chocolate. Since then, I’ve tried a different croissant almost every time I have been there. Special treatment received upon ordering such a pastry includes: toasting it in a panini press, slices of freshly cut pineapple, and deliciously ironic glares from a cashier who looks like the offspring of April Ludgate and Ron Swanson of Parks and Recreation.

What really sets this place apart is the atmosphere. It feels more hipster than Flour, more laid back than Voltage, more relaxed than Tatte. While I love these places all very dearly in their own way, I’ll come to Atomic Bean Café when I need to crank out an essay on my laptop, decide to free-write and reflect eloquently on my life (750words.com is fantastic for this), or sip tea and pretend I’m working while actually catching up on the latest episode of Suits.

Highlights: any of the pastries made with kale — really. Vietnamese coffee. Staples: chai tea latte, clam chowder, the bacon egg and cheddar pastry.

Good for: writing, coding, catching up on emails, and impressing wannabe hipster friends.

Atomic Bean Café
904 Mass. Ave., Cambridge
Weekdays open
7 a.m. — 7 p.m.

Atomic Bean Café is the perfect place to wind down. It’s great for its chill music, free WiFi, and delicious Vietnamese coffee and specialty kale pastries.

Nomadic sculpture at MIT

This spring, a 30-pound hand-carved pink granite sculpture has come to MIT. The nomadic piece changes title according to its location, and is currently titled “I am Mit, as I am in Mit, just like a lot of other people are” with deliberate miscapitalization. While here, the sculpture will be “hosted” by a different community member each week, who will fill out a lending card to record its travels. The work is part of Amalia Pica’s current exhibition at The List Visual Arts Center, and explores concepts of collective memory, participatory art, and interventions into public space.

41st Annual
James R. Killian, Jr.,
Faculty Achievement Award Lecture

“The Early History of the Moon”

Tuesday, March 5, 2013
4:00 pm
Room 10-250
Huntington Hall

Maria T. Zuber
Vice President for Research
E.A. Griswold Professor of Geophysics
UPPERCUT by Steve Sullivan

Sudoku Solution, page 14

8 4 1
4 1 6 3
2 5
4 9 3 8
7 6 1 3
8 9 4 2
4 7
7 2 4 1
6 9 5

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.

Techdoku Solution, page 15

15+ 12x 2- 6x 1
11x 12x
10x 10x 3
9x 9x 1-
2+ 60x
20x
4x

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.
Baby Techdoku Solution, page 15

Apprentice Techdoku Solution, page 15

Novice Techdoku Solution, page 15

Sensei Techdoku Solution, page 15

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains one of each of the numbers 1 to 3, 5, 7, and 9 respectively. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.
MIT Interfaith Dialogue

Tuesday, March 5, 2013, 7:15 pm

W11—Main Dining Room, Corner Amherst and Mass. Ave.

Dessert will be available. All are welcome.

e-mail: ora@mit.edu
call: 617-610-1060
visit: studentlife.mit.edu/rl/addir

Addir is co-sponsored by the Office of the Chaplain to the Institute in cooperation with the Board of Chaplains. If you need disability accommodations, please contact ora@mit.edu

Was Abraham the Common Father of Jews, Christians and Muslims?

Biblical Scholar: Prof. Jon D. Levenson
Harvard Divinity School
Albert A. List Professor of Jewish Studies

Addir is a word in Ancient Samaritan that means “bridge.” The Addir Fellows Program aspires to build bridges of dialogue and understanding. Addir is co-sponsored by the Office of the Chaplain to the Institute in cooperation with the Board of Chaplains.

Linked genetic base for mental illnesses

Five types of mental illness linked

By Gina Kolata

The psychiatric illnesses seem very different — schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, autism, major depression and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Yet they share several genetic glitches that can nudge the brain along a path to mental illness, researchers report. Which disease, if any, develops is thought to depend on other genetic or environmental factors.

Their study, published online Wednesday in The Lancet, was based on an examination of genetic data from more than 60,000 people worldwide. Its authors say it is the largest genetic study yet of psychiatric disorders. The findings strengthen an emerging view of mental illness that aims to make diagnoses based on the genetic aberrations underlying diseases instead of on the disease symptoms.

Two of the aberrations discovered in the new study were in genes used in a major signaling system in the brain, giving clues to processes that might go awry and suggestions of how to treat the diseases.

“What we identified here is probably just the tip of an iceberg,” said Dr. Jordan Smoller, lead author of the paper and a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital. “As these studies grow, we expect to find additional genes that might overlap.”

The new study does not mean the psychiatric illnesses seem especially prevalent. They found a few unusual disruptions of chromosomal material containing 1 billion DNA letters. The question: Did people with psychiatric illnesses tend to have a distinctive DNA pattern in any of those locations?

Researchers had already seen some clues of overlapping genetic effects in identical twins. One twin might have schizophrenia while the other had bipolar disorder. About six years ago, around the time the new study began, researchers had examined the genes of a few rare families in which psychiatric disorders seemed especially prevalent. They found a few unusual disruptions of chromosomal material that were linked to psychiatric illnesses. But what surprised them was that, while one person with the aberration might get one disorder, a relative with the same mutation got a different one.

Solution to Crossword

From page 11

Solution to Sudoku

From page 11

Exceptional Egg Donor Needed

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Alumni donations decreased in 2012

Overall annual fund increased, but lower alumni participation

Donations, from Page 1

not count contributions past $100,000) from MIT’s undergraduate and graduate alumni decreased 7.6 percent from $40.3 million in 2011 to $37.2 million in 2012. The percentage of undergraduate alumni participation also decreased from 36 to 35 percent, while graduate alumni giving remained essentially the same.

The total MIT Annual Fund donations sum to $50.3 million.

However, the total MIT Annual Fund donations in 2012 sum to $50.3 million — an 8 percent increase from the previous year.

Alumni donations go into the Annual Fund. Prior to 2009, this was the MIT Alumni Fund, but the board of the Alumni Association voted to change the name, "reflecting the fact that we now count parents, students, and friends as well as alumni as donors in the MIT Annual Fund,“ according to the FY2009 Report to the President.

From FY2005 to FY2008, MIT’s capped donations from alumni donors increased from $28 million to $42.3 million, taking a dip in FY2009 to $32.9 million, in line with the global recession. Alumni donations and participation then increased again through 2011, but both figures dropped again in FY2012, as aforementioned.

These decreases in alumni giving and participation in 2012, according to the CAE report, could in part be attributed to the increasing number of living alumni of record for which institutions have valid addresses, as they may be keeping better records of their alumni.

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Basketball to play for DIII title
Men’s team earns fifth consecutive tournament bid

By Phil Hess

It was good news for the MIT men’s basketball team on Monday when the Engineers heard their name called as the recipient of an at-large bid to the 2013 NCAA Division III Men’s Basketball Tournament. It will be the fifth consecutive season that MIT has played in the tournament, which includes a memorable run to the NCAA Final Four a year ago. The Engineers, ranked No. 24 in the final regular season poll by D3hoops.com, will play a first round game on Saturday, March 2 at No. 12 ranked St. Mary’s College in Maryland.

MIT finished the season with a 20-5 record, the fifth straight and the sixth in the last eight seasons the Engineers have reached the NCAA Tournament second on the team in scoring with his 14.8 ppg average. Kates is also the MIT career record holder in assists and steals. Matthew M. Redfield ‘15 was selected as the NEWMAC Player of the Week awards. Averaging a double-double with his 10.6 rpg and 10.8 rpg averages and the NEWMAC leader in rebounding, Tashman bumped his averages up to 19.6 points and 12.7 rebounds over the last nine games, which included a season last eight-game win streak to close out the regular season. As the MIT career leader in rebounds, Tashman became the first MIT player to reach 1,000 points and 1,000 rebounds in a career this season.

Another L08-point career score, Mitchell H. Kates ‘13 leads MIT in steals and assists and comes into the NCAA Tournament second on the team in scoring with his 14.8 ppg average. Kates is also the MIT career record holder in assists and steals. Matthew M. Redfield ‘15 was selected as the NEWMAC Player of the Week twice this season and was also effective over the last nine games during which he averaged 10.4 points and 9.6 rebounds per game. Justin M. Pedley ‘16 found a groove with his three-point shots in MIT’s season-ending surge, hitting over 46 percent of his attempts and averaging 10.7 points over the span.

MIT will face a St. Mary’s College team that finished 24-3 and is making its fifth overall, and fourth straight, NCAA Tournament appearance. The Seahawks garnered a spot on this year’s bracket after capturing the 2013 Capital Athletic Conference championship title with a 79-70 overtime win over Wesley College. St. Mary’s owns an 8-4 record in NCAA tournament play and advanced to the Elite Eight in 2011. St. Mary’s has four players averaging in double figures in scoring, led by sophomore Nick Laloue who averages 13.1 points a game and is shooting 44.8 percent from three-point range and averaging 3.8 assists.

Junior Donn Hill, senior Devin Spencer and junior Brendan McCull also average in double-figures for the Seahawks, who are undefeated at home this season at 13-0.

MIT and St. Mary’s will square off on Saturday night at 7:00 p.m. in the Michael F. O’Brien Athletics & Recreation Center Arena on the St. Mary’s campus.

By Phil Hess

It was good news for the MIT men’s volleyball team on Monday when the Engineers heard their name called as the recipient of an at-large bid to the 2013 NCAA Division III Men’s Basketball Tournament. It will be the fifth consecutive season that MIT has played in the tournament, which includes a memorable run to the NCAA Final Four a year ago. The Engineers, ranked No. 24 in the final regular season poll by D3hoops.com, will play a first round game on Saturday, March 2 at No. 12 ranked St. Mary’s College in Maryland.

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