State of New Jersey drops Tidbit inquiry

Subpoenaed undergrad had been suspected of hijacking computers

By William Navarro

The state of New Jersey has agreed to drop its investigation into Tidbit after previously issuing a subpoena to Jeremy Rubin. It’s requiring that he turn over the program’s source code, log files, and other information.

Rubin, whose team designed Tidbit at a hackathon in Nov. 2013, wrote on his blog that he is “relieved,” but that he’s “sad that [his] showdown with the state of New Jersey went so far in the first place.” Tidbit was intended to eventually allow client websites to use their visitors’ unused processing power to mine bitcoin, according to the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

New Jersey was worried about a tool that could have on web users the state. “(Tidbit’s) own description of its services suggests that [it is], in fact, designed to hijack consumer’s computers,” the state wrote in a brief responding to Rubin’s motion challenging the subpoena.

The Superior Court of New Jersey ultimately ruled in favor of the state, citing the “broad scope” of the relevant statute.

The court expressed reservation in its opinion, however: “The Court recognizes the need for advertisements. The need for advertisements can be met in a number of ways.”

The faculty letter, too, notes that divestment should be taken as part of a broader set of actions, however, it does not discuss what those potential actions might be.

Professor Ian Condry, a signatory to the letter, wrote in an email to The Tech that “Divestment is the single, clearest, most powerful statement we can make that MIT takes climate change seriously,” and added that “divestment has to be part of a broader action plan” which includes “reduced emissions, reduced reliance on carbon fuels, and a carbon tax.”

Faculty urge divestment in open letter to Reif

Language was drafted prior to Vice President Zuber’s call for faculty action

A group of 79 faculty members has signed an open letter to President L. Rafael Reif expressing their support for divesting MIT’s endowment from fossil fuel companies.

This letter emerges as the Climate Change Conversation (CCC) prepares to release its report to the community.

Simultaneously, yet apparently independently, 21 MIT student groups have signed their own open letter to President Reif advocating for “bold and immediate action” on climate change. The student letter includes divestment as one of several recommendations, alongside launching an “MIT Manhattan Project for climate science,” and insinuating the need for advertisements.

IN SHORT

The deadline to initiate Fall pre-registration and to indicate CHH and CHHW preferences is Monday, June 15. The CHH and CHHW lottery closes after that date, and anyone initiating pre-registration after that date will face a $5.00 late fee.

LaVerde’s Market is open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. during the summer.

Send news information and tips to news@tech.mit.edu.

UROP minimum wage to increase

The minimum hourly wage for MIT’s Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program is slated to increase to $13.50 over the next two years, according to an email from Julie B. Norman, Senior Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education.

The hourly pay will increase twice to reach the minimum wage to $15.75 by June 1, 2016, and will bring the minimum wage up to $15.75 by June 1, 2017.

The increase is in line with the Undergraduate Association’s agenda. President Matthew J. Davis ’16 stated at a Council meeting last month that the UA will push for increasing student wages and advocate for increased summer UROP pay, according to a UA email. The aim is to reduce stress and financial burdens for students, some of whom “spendordinate amounts of time outside of the classroom to afford their education.”

The current minimum wage for UROP students is $10.00 per hour, and has increased only by $1.25 since 2003.

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INSIDE THE ISSUE

Read the letters to President Reif on page 5 and see who signed on.

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INSIDE THE ISSUE

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MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
YOUR DOOR TO LIFELONG LEARNING AT MIT
TRAINING & EDUCATION
FOR PROFESSIONALS

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Register for a 1−5 day intensive course and gain critical knowledge to help advance your career and impact your company’s success. Earn CEUs and a Certificate of Completion.

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- Design, Analysis, and Manufacturing
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- Imaging
- Innovation
- Leadership/Communication
- Radar
- Real Estate
- Robotics
- Systems Engineering
- Sustainability
- Trigonometry

STILL ACCEPTING REGISTRATIONS FOR SUMMER COURSES

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CONGRATULATIONS
CLASS OF 2015
Stay curious, keep learning, and build a better future.

STILL ACCEPTING REGISTRATIONS FOR SUMMER COURSES
The month of June is off to its coldest start in Boston’s recorded history. Until this week, there had never (since records were first kept in 1872) been a day in June during which the temperature in Boston didn’t reach at least 50°F. However, the high temperatures on both Monday and Tuesday, June 1 and 2, were only 49°F. The unseasonable cold began to abate on Wednesday as sunshine returned, bringing temperatures into the mid-50s. This warming trend will continue through the weekend, as temperatures slowly make their way back up to seasonable levels.

For this morning’s commencement exercises in Killian Court, expect temperatures to start off in the mid-50s °F (around 12°C), with a mix of sun and clouds as the temperature rises to the upper 60s (around 20°C) by noon. Depending on its exact orientation, an afternoon breeze could knock temperatures back down a few degrees (if the wind is off the water), or nudge them above the 70-degree mark. Overall, though, the weather should be enjoyable for graduates and audience alike, as it won’t be too hot or too windy, and — most importantly — rain is not in the forecast.

**WEATHER**

**Commencement to be partly cloudy**

By Vince Agard
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Extended Forecast
Today: Partly cloudy, high 69°F (21°C). Winds SE at 5-10 mph.
Tonight: A chance of showers, love 58°F (14°C). Winds S at 5-10 mph becoming W.
Tomorrow: Mostly sunny, high 73°F (23°C). Winds N at 5-10 mph.
Sunday: Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 60s (20°C), becoming cooler in the afternoon.

**Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Friday, June 5, 2015**

**Solution to Sudoku**

Solution to Techdoku

Solution to Baby Techdoku 1

Solution to Baby Techdoku 2

Solution to Crossword

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**CONGRATULATIONS!**

The Susquehanna International Group of Companies (SIG) would like to congratulate the following students on their upcoming graduation. We acknowledge the hard work and commitment they have put forth to arrive at this significant academic milestone and welcome them as full-time members of the SIG team:

**SAM TRABUCCO**
Receiving a Bachelor’s in EECS and Mathematics and will be joining SIG as an Assistant Trader.

**PAUL YUAN**
Receiving a Bachelor’s in Mathematics with Computer Science and will be joining SIG as an Assistant Trader.

**ADISA KRUAYATIDEE**
Receiving a Bachelor’s in Computer Science and Mathematics and will be joining SIG as an Assistant Trader.

SIG also welcomes the students joining our 2015 Summer Internship Program:

**MARTIN MA**

**CHARLIE ALEX-BARTON**

**KEVIN LI**

**KEVIN WEN**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL!**

sig.com
Abroad, at home
What America can learn from the developing world in the fight against poverty

By Jacob London

According to recent estimates, 1.465 million American households are now living in “extreme poverty” — trying to survive on less than $2 per person per day despite the national recovery from recession. The number of such households has doubled since 1998.

At the same time, efforts to fight extreme poverty in the developing world have seen some success. Targeted educational, health, and financial interventions by researchers and philanthropic organizations have dramatically improved the lives of some of the world’s poorest people.

Of course, the underlying causes and severities of poverty vary from nation to nation, and the characteristics of extreme poverty are not always the same across borders and cultures. But there are some key similarities — three in particular — that should compel Americans to consider adopting measures that have worked well abroad.

First, here in the U.S., as in much poorer nations, rates of attendance and graduation in lower-income public school districts have lagged, and the sub-standard quality of these schools has impaired learning.

Second, the American poor are increasingly at risk for the kinds of communicable diseases, infections, and nutritional deficiencies that have plagued the developing world. Iron and iodine deficiencies, which have been shown to stunting educational attainment and earning potential, are increasing at alarming rates among the poor in the United States.

Third, like the poor in under-developed countries, America’s poorest citizens lack adequate access to financial institutions. Even those who manage to maintain a bank account have great difficulty saving. American savings rates are notoriously low, and the poor in America are often unable to save because of psychological or behavioral reasons, not just because their incomes are so small.

In developing countries, progress has been made on all of these fronts — education, health, and access to financial institutions.

Despite the success of such measures abroad, none of them has yet been widely adopted in the U.S.

Educators in poverty-stricken nations have demonstrated improving school performance by creating schools in different classrooms based on their prior academic achievement — a technique known as “tracking” has led to improved educational attainment for students of all levels of prior achievement.

Moreover, studies have shown that in developing nations, allocating a greater proportion of funding to subsidizing school lunches and supplies substantially boosts student attendance and performance, and that merit-based pay for teachers — paying teachers based on student performance — has also proven effective.

On the health front, free distribution of iodine and iron supplements in poor nations led to weight gain, improved school attendance and performance, and increased earnings.

Efforts to fight poverty in developing countries have also included setting up bank accounts and financing phones on mobile phones for the poor, and “commitment savings products” — financial contracts that prevent myopic spending and force consumers to save. Philanthropic organizations have observed that these efforts can dramatically increase savings rates.

Another success has been the micro-credit movement, which has shown great promise in developing countries by providing small business loans to those without access to conventional financial resources.

Despite the success of such measures abroad, none of them has yet been widely adopted in the U.S. “Tracking” in schools has been debated here since the 1990s, but it has never been implemented on a broad scale. If it can be successfully adopted in the poorest school districts, it could improve educational attainment apart from the additional benefits that could be derived from hiring more teachers and building new schools.

The same goes for subsidized school lunches, merit pay for teachers, free distribution of iodine and nutritional supplement, and mobile phones and financial services, all of which could prove less costly and more effective than conventional forms of American social assistance.

In the limited instances when we have tried measures at home that have worked well abroad, there have been some encouraging results. In 2008, Microfortune, the founder of a prominent global microcredit firm, launched Grammae America, a New York-based venture seeking to prove that microcredit could work for the poor in America just as it has worked in developing nations. Most of the firm’s borrowers take out loans no greater than $4,500. Though it’s far too early to know if the venture will succeed, indicators thus far are positive. In 2013, the firm hit the one million mark, with a 99 percent repayment rate. By 2014, its roster of borrowers had grown to over 110,000 people.

There is no guarantee that everything that has worked well in the developing world will work here. Some of these measures would face severe political obstacles, regardless of their prospects for success. But they should be given every consideration by American policymakers, think tanks, and philanthropic organizations. The world is better at fighting poverty. The US can too.
Dear President Reif and the Executive Committee,

We, the undersigned MIT students, write to urge MIT to take bold and immediate action against the threats of climate change.

We inherit a warming world. In our lifetime, we will experience unprecedented climate extremes, the impacts of which will be felt around the globe. A group of over 1100 world leaders gathered in Paris this past December agreed to limit global warming to well below 2°C, a temperature rise that will have catastrophic and irreversible consequences for the planet. At MIT, we are committed to being leaders in the global fight against climate change.

Reinvesting in campus energy efficiency, which is a high-yield, low-risk investment, is one such action. Transforming our campus into a low-carbon, energy-efficient system would save millions of dollars while reducing our greenhouse gas emissions.

Engaging with our public and political leaders, in particular our Student Leadership and Legislation, and starting with an effective price on carbon. This is an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and be a leader in our community. The MIT Community has the ability to act.

As the divestment debate rages on, we must remember that the conversation is already happening in our communities and on our campuses. Student groups and organizations on MIT’s campus are calling on MIT to show leadership and divest. Student and alumni groups have called for divestment, and MIT can lead in that effort.

We call on MIT to show leadership in the divestment conversation. The principles motivating divestment are clear and enduring, and we trust you to respond to this challenge. It is our duty to act boldly, courageously, and without delay.

The undersigned MIT students and faculty (please see list below) urge the MIT community to stand together and lead the world.

Sincerely yours,
The undersigned faculty of MIT

Divestment is a signal and a moral obligation

Dear President Reif and the Executive Committee,

While the undersigned faculty of MIT, write in support of divesting MIT’s endowment from fossil fuel companies, we agree with the report of the MIT Committee on Sustainability that the divestment action would only marginally impact the endowment fund.

One of the clearest and most powerful ways to demonstrate our serious engagement with tackling catastrophic climate change is to divest from fossil fuels, as part of a multi-faceted action plan.

We support divestment – as one of the Institute’s actions – for reasons including the following:

- Divestment recognizes the scientific consensus of the dearth of drastically and rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions to avoid global warming beyond 2°C, a temperature rise that will have catastrophic and irreversible consequences for the planet.
- Divestment is the moral course of action, and also the financially-sound course of action. Divestment can unlock billions of dollars of stranded assets.

Our commitment is to act now. We are taking bold steps to prevent climate change.

Friday, June 5, 2015 The Tech

...
Statistics and the new Institute for Data, Systems, and Society
Fostering a culture of statistics should be a key priority for IDSS

By Foras Saad

Earlier this semester, Provost Martin Schmidt and the Deans of the five schools announced the establishment of the Insti-
tute for Data, Systems, and Society, headed by Professor Munther Dahleh. This exciting new entity aims to “address societal chal-
lenge[s] using analytical tools from statistics and information and decision systems,” and will officially launch on July 1.

While the inaugural letter and subse-
quent news coverage of IDSS outlined the
entity’s high-level objectives and struc-
ture, little has been said about the pro-
posed Center for Statistics. In comparison
to peer institutions such as Stanford, Co-
lumbia and Berkeley, which have long-es-

dablished statistics departments, the cur-
rent structure of statistics at MIT is highly fragmented.

From my own experience, I have en-
rolled in several well-taught statistics courses in the Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, and Brain and Cognitive Science departments. However, given the different approach as-
tumed by each department, it is challeng-
ing for students to progressively build a
unified sense of sophistication and matu-

rity in statistical thinking.

According to the proposal submitted by Professor Dahleh, The Center for Statistics plans to address this issue by offering co-
herent, centralized programs in statistics. Degrees at the PhD and Master’s levels are in their planning stages, and a full proposal for an undergraduate minor has already been submitted to the Committees on Cur-
ricula and Undergraduate Programs. While establishing world-class graduate level programs is a key priority, it is equally im-
portant for the visionaries of IDSS to devel-
op a culture of statistics that interests and engages members of the MIT community from various academic backgrounds.

New introductory courses in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science are already reflecting this goal, such as 6.4002 (Introduction to Computational Thinking and Data Science) and 6.808 (Introduc-
tion to Inference). According to Professor Dahleh, a joint effort across all Institute schools is being coordinated to offer new courses in statistics and data sciences. The idea is to extend these opportunities to departments that are not heavily quantita-
tive, such as Political Science, Anthropol-
ygy, History, and Urban Studies.

The goal is not to create an unconscious
statistician out of everyone at MIT. Rather,
we should encourage the skill of analyzing data from various fields from a statistical standpoint. Even an elementary prob-
ability and statistics requirement (a topic could lay the essential foundations for in-
coming freshmen. For example, regression methods yield useful insights when study-
ing data, and they do not require a vast
amount of mathematical machinery to get

We should encourage the skill of analyzing data from various fields from a statistical standpoint.

One common misconception is that statistics is a dry subject of mainly theo-
retical interest. But 21st century statistics is experiencing a revolution, fueled by the explosion of data and computational power. An inaugural symposium for The Center for Statistics was held at MIT ear-
lier this month, where top academics across the country discussed their use of statistics in novel areas such as cancer de-
tection and data-driven decision-making in industry. To promote these ideas among the MIT community, Professor Dahleh says the plan is to hold a regular seminar series in the future.

Most of the core elements for a success-
ful statistics center already exist at MIT, over a dozen departments and research centers feature their own flavor of statisti-
tics research and course offerings. It will be interesting to see how IDSS integrates various groups across campus in a way that fosters successful collaboration. Creating a hub for sharing ideas between data scien-
tists and social scientists will bring a new dimension to both fields, as well as innova-
tive, real-life research outcomes.

IDSS is a highly ambitious and complex initiative that faces an array of academic, financial, and bureaucratic hurdles. But the project identifies a genuine short-
coming in MIT's current academic system and outlines a vision for change. Success-
fully tackling societal issues with rigorous statistical frameworks will cement MIT's academic and thought leadership, as well as nurture generations of experts in inter-
disciplinary domains for decades to come.
uppertcut by Steve Sullivan

Baby Techdokus
Solutions, page 3

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–3. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

Not Too Shabby by Bruce Venzke
Solution, page 3

Across
1 '90s sitcom star
5 Grass house
8 Something to step on
14 Across adjustment
15 Less fresh
16 Bill add-on
18 What “-phile” means
19 Start of a quote
21 Spam holder
22 Sgt. maj., for one
23 Andersen’s birthplace
26 No-nonsense, in product names
27 Pie perch, perhaps
29 __ Maria liqueur
30 Middle of quote
33 911 responders
35 Titanic star, to tabloids
36 Trinity novelist
37 End of quote
39 Farm hand, at times
40 Supernatural
41 Innocent ones
42 Overwhelm, with “down”
43 Loud complaint
44 Maximum
45 Whoopi Oscar role
46 Tree-lined promenades
47 “... en parle françaises”
48 Litigate
51 Source of the quote
52 Christian Science founder
55 Not great
56 “You can’t mean me?”
58 Card-game authority
60 Billy Bookcase seller
61 It might be followed by “fit”

Down
1 No-frills
2 One of the ABC islands
3 Another showing
4 Somewhat improper
5 Selma co-producer
6 Sudden itch
7 Certain Jeopardy! tournay player
8 “With no doubt
9 Spice in some hams
10 Exciting experience
11 Atticus Finch creator
12 Stumble
13 Common campaign promise
14 Toulouse-Lautrec’s first name
15 Something to step on
16 “Absolutamente!”
17 Vittles
18 Elongated canine
20 “You should eat dinner!”
21 Vittles
22 Billy Bookcase seller
23 Whole lot
24 “Absolutamente!”
25 “You can’t mean me?”
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63 “You should eat dinner!”

50 #6 baby boy name in 2013
52 Christian Science founder
53 Approaching
54 Text-message qualifier
55 Silencer’s sound
56 “You can’t mean me?”
Sudoku
Solution, page 3

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 3

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.
Susie: Hey Ethan!

Susie: I'm looking for a job on campus. Do you have any ideas? I like programming and computers.

Ethan: What's up?

Ethan: You should join the technology department at The Tech! We pay $14/hr.

Ethan: You get to learn valuable job skills too!

Susie: Cool, but what if I don't know that much yet?

Ethan: We've got people who can help you out.

Ethan: E-mail join@tech.mit.edu and we'll send you more info!
Schwarzman Scholars is a highly selective, one-year Master’s program at Tsinghua University in Beijing that is designed to prepare the next generation of global leaders for the challenges of the future.
The time is right: social justice at MIT

By Abigail Francis

It is with a hearty heart that I write this letter. As an institution we are standing in reflection and grief after too many deaths of our students and employees. Nationally from Ferguson to Baltimore, we are grappling with large scale racial and class injustices. I was asked to contribute to this “Intuitively Obvious” column, and it is a good time for us to consider how best to care for each other, our community, and for ourselves. This summer will mark my tenth year here at MIT. As I think about our social justice work, I am reminded of a quote from Margaret Mead: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world.” I have come to realize that it is only so long that the small group of people can continue to help keep students and each other safe, functional, productive, and whole. I believe we need more citizens, more commitment, more thought, and more institutional infrastructure to bolster the efforts of the few incredibly dedicated and talented staff, students, alumni, and faculty working to create discourse change.

Some of the most important work that I do is in supporting those who fall within the margins of the marginalized. People are often surprised to learn that roughly one in four females and one in seven males in the US will experience sexual violence, even here at MIT. We have created an Institute Community and Equity Office and broadened resources and staffing in Violence Prevention and Response and in Student Support Services. We have several offices and student groups that focus on supporting various aspects of people’s identities, and those groups are making more connections with each other. We have created Employee Resource Groups, included diversity-related awards in our recognition programs, and host an annual MLK scholars program and Diversity Summit. This list could go on.

What would it take to have our staff and faculty match the diversity of our undergraduate student body?

But if “diversity” is listed as one of the four main initiatives on our homepage, why are there still so few resources available for these efforts? How can we help that small special group of volunteers striving to move mountains with regard to equity, inclusion, respect, justice, and campus climate? What would it look like if we understood, valued, and talked about “diversity” in the same way that we talk about cancer, global initiatives, or energy? Imagine what could happen if, today, each of us thought about one area of identity or social justice where we are less comfortable—nationality, religion, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, race, size, ability, age—then leaned into that discomfort and read an article, talked to a friend, listened to a podcast, or watched a video to learn more. What if we each took action regarding something we had learned? What if we could then challenge an internal bias that we hold, offer an educational lens to a degrading joke, or intervene in a micro-aggression that we witness? Yes, this work is messy. It is uncomfortable. It is in everyone’s and in no one’s job description and academic pursuits. It is relatively unclear. But if we make the time and effort, dedicate resources, learn more, and invite someone to join us, then eventually we all move forward.

This winter we organized a peaceful protest and panel discussion about if and how Black Lives Matter at MIT. Following the event I made a list of “the ten racist things I saw while planning an event about race at MIT.”

And here’s the thing: I’m on that list twice. Sometimes the hardest and most important aspect of this work is how we transform ourselves along the way. That includes being honest, compassionate, accountable, and patient with ourselves and with others. Because there is so much work to do. We put this event together in just two weeks and then 430 people showed up. The momentum is here. The time is now. Remember, “the time is always right to do what is right!” We collectively own the responsibility to shape the future towards more respect and caring for one another. I look forward to continuing this work, and I hope you will join me.

Abigail Francis is the Director of LBGTQ Services at MIT.
More than two dozen groups performed at this year’s Spring Boston Calling festival held during the last weekend of May. Headliners included Grammy Award winning soloist Beck, and Boston’s own Pixies. Other well-known groups included Vance Joy, St. Vincent, Tenacious D, and Marina and the Diamonds. A wonderfully eclectic mix, Boston Calling proved yet again their remarkable ability to cater to Boston’s diverse tastes. Boston Calling Fall 2015 will be held September 25-27 with performances by Alt-J, Hozier, Ben Howard, and many more. More information and tickets are available at bostoncalling.com.

Gerard Way sings to a cheering crowd in front of a massive pink and orange monkey backdrop.

Marina and the Diamonds sings in a sparkling violet jacket and a headband spelling “Froot”, the name of her newly released album.

Jason Isbell, the singer-songwriter and guitarist from Green Hill, Alabama performs to a grooving crowd.

Australian singer Vance Joy smiles during a song in response to audience’s enthusiasm.

Kyp Malone of the Indie rock band TV on the Radio plays bass during Day 3 of the music festival.

Tunde Adebimpe, of TV on the Radio, conducts the audience during the group’s performance.

St. Vincent performs songs from her 2014 album, “St. Vincent”.

Lead guitarist and vocalist Kyle Gass of the American comedy rock duo Tenacious D sings the group’s top hit, “Bither”.

Two audience members walk towards the Red Stage as others relax on the brick between shows.
The Grief of Others

TMIT alum’s sophomore film is slight, but admirable

By Nevin Daniel

I had the opportunity to attend a screening of The Grief of Others with the director Patrick Wang. Wang studied economics and concentrated in music and theater arts at MIT, and went on to direct theatre and recently, film. His first film, In the Family, was critically lauded and rightly so. The Grief of Others, his latest film, just showed at the Cannes Film Festival. Wang left early from the screening I attended at Harvard to go to the Festival, as a result, I did not get the chance to ask him about the film. But I did get the chance to ask the author of the eponymous novel on which the film is based, Leah Hager Cohen, about one of the film’s final shots.

The “Others” in The Grief of Others primarily refer to the Ryries family: John, Ricky (a female), thirteen-year-old Paul, and seven-year-old Biscuit (also a female). They are joined by Jessica, John’s older, pregnant teenage daughter from a previous marriage. Jessica, beautiful and affable, is invited by John to stay with the family during her pregnancy.

If the Ryries are the others, their grief is the loss of their baby: it is born missing part of its brain and dies soon after birth. The loss is unaddressed by John and Ricky.

In the emptiness, latent resentments and insecurities in their relationship festers, and the children act out. John gets irritable and drunk often. Ricky is cold to him. Biscuit skips school. Paul, bullied for his weight, withdraws further into his shell. Here and there is the occasional fight.

The direction of causation is important here. The film is constructed as if the family’s silence is the cause of their unrest: the unrest depicted. But it is untrue. The story is that the family’s unrest is the cause of their silence: it is appreciated. It does indeed feel as if we are peering into the lives of others.

It is unfortunate that these moments are few and far between. There is simply not enough dimension to the family’s grief to sustain such prolonged, enigmatic treatment.

This is only made terribly clear by the film’s other major storyline. At the beginning of the film, Biscuit, her back in the camera, is throwing something into the Hudson. She falls in (though, like many of the events in the film, it is unclear at the time). A shy, sensitive young man named Gordie joins, puts a wall between his dog, Biscuit, from the water and brings her home. He is invited in and meets Jessica. Jessica begins to spend time with him.

Gordie lives alone with his dog in his family home. His mother has been gone a long time, and his father has recently passed. He is an orphan.

Is Jessica interested in Gordie? Is it questionable?

I did get the chance to ask the author of the film’s final shots. It was sad. I asked Leah Hager Cohen whether she thought that was the way life is, or whether we might expect greater empathy, involvement, or a way to truly and meaningfully engage in such moments with the grief of others.

She replied that she believed that we share our griefs with others, we enforce a common empathy. True, though somewhat of a cop-out.

I didn’t press. I felt uncomfortable enough as presumably the only person under 40 in the audience, much less the only person to ask about the meaning of the film’s final shots. Afterward, I was offered an uncorrected but immeasurable film of the entire film’s grief of others is the same as our own.

So let’s talk.

Pitch Perfect 2

Pitch Perfect 2 is far from perfect

The sequel is just a bigger, louder, and cruder version of the original

By Ka-Yen Yau

Pitch Perfect 2 is the long-awaited sequel to Pitch Perfect, released in 2012. The film opens with the Barden Bellas, now seniors in college, performing for Barack Obama. The team is back together for one last big performance: the semester final. They are all excited to enter the career world after they graduated.

The film touches upon the students’ potential failure and going unnoticed were the scary reality of life-after-graduation. As college seniors, the main characters confessed that they had no idea what they were planning to do after college. Although most of these issues were dismissed with jokes, these questions resonated with a large part of the audience. As college students, we have to ask ourselves “What will I do after I gradu- ate?” all the time; watching the students of Barden Bella universe bumble around, we are both comforted by the fact that we are not the only ones clueless, and we are inspired to try it out for figure.

But in all, the movie was fun. The most enjoyable to listen to were the characters who were lovable, and the plot’s twists and turns were surprising. Though the serious themes were laced with jokes which, although crude, offered a good time for us to laugh about ourselves. It served as a great reminder that sometimes, laughing at ourselves (and at fictionalized, hyper-real versions of ourselves) is the best way to get over our prejudices, self-hate, and anxieties.
Poltergeist (2015): lots of action, some comedy, hardly any horror

Gil Kenan pays tribute to the 1982 classic

This remake of Steven Spielberg's Poltergeist (1982) sees a jobless couple and their three children move into a new home that fits their budget. Griffin, their ten-year-old son, lives in the attic, where he experiences frequent nightmares and finds frightening clowns in the closet. To make things worse, he also finds his younger sister Madison talking to mysterious objects through the TV in the middle of the night. “They’re here,” she claims ominously. Her parents disregard her nervousness and her youngest daughter’s sleepwalking until one night, their house is attacked and Madison is taken. The Bowens discover that their house was built on what was an old cemetery, moved to make way for construction. To cut costs, the construction company moved the headstones but left the bodies — leaving the Bowens to deal with some extremely unhappy poltergeists looking to move out of the limbo they are stuck in.

The remake has some stimulating visual and sound effects — the scenes featuring the eerie clowns were particularly enjoyable. Kyle Catlett, who stars as Griffin, is convincing in his nervousness and in his role as a protective, if scared, older brother. Kennedi Clements makes an adorable Madison, compelling the audience to be concerned. The other characters and the plot, though, leave much to be desired. Sticking pretty close to the original, the changes in the remake mostly detract from it — the eccentric and enjoyable character Tangina is replaced by a tacky TV show ghost-cleanser, played by Jared Harris, making the experience much less scary and much more like parody. Sam Rockwell and Rosemarie DeWitt, playing the parents of the kids, do an unconvincing job pretending to care that their child has been taken. On the plus side, there was no hysteria, but their parental instinct kicked in so late in the film that it had me wondering if they were the ones behind the kidnapping.

The inclusion of comedy was interesting, with some scenes being quite funny, but it seemed to add a lot of misplaced moments of humor and lent a very strange mood to the setting.

The 2015 remake pays homage to the 1982 original with action-packed sequences and great effects. Although quite enjoyable, it is, however, not half as scary as the original. I would recommend watching this movie for entertainment, but don’t expect any nightmares.

HH✩✩✩
Poltergeist
Directed by Gil Kenan
Starring Sam Rockwell, Rosemarie DeWitt, Kennedi Clements
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Court: subpoena is legal under statute
Court worries investigation may discourage ‘cutting edge’ research

Tidbit, from Page 1

has serious concerns that the [State
of New Jersey], with this investiga-
tion, may be acting to discourage
creative and ‘cutting edge’ new
technology. [I]t appears that the
Tidbit program and other similar
creative endeavors serve a useful
and legitimate purpose.” The court
also acknowledged, though, that
the software “could also be subject
to abuse and misuse.”

Rubin and others believe that
the subpoena might have done
more harm than the State of New
Jersey intended. He wrote that an-
other company, 2L, has raised $106
million dollars toward their plans
to use consumer devices to mine
bitcoin. “Had we not stopped operations
due to the burden of fighting the
subpoena, who knows? Perhaps we
would have been able to capitalize
on our first-mover advantage.”

He’d had high hopes for the
software: “Tidbit’s design hoped to
eliminate the need for advertising
on websites, also eliminating the
incentives for websites to violate

their users’ privacy to make advertis-
ements more lucrative,” he wrote
on his website.

MIT faculty members, admin-
istrators, and students had all sent
letters to the state of New Jersey
requesting that they withdraw the
subpoena.

“We urge your office to reexam-
ine the need to subpoena and im-
pose interrogatories on the Tidbit
students’ President L. Rafael Reif,
Provost Marty Schmidt PhD ’88,
and Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart
’88 wrote in a letter to John J. Hoff-
man, New Jersey’s acting attorney
general.

“[An undue chilling effect aris-
ing from the subpoena and inter-
rogatories served on Mr. Rubin will
have adverse consequences in New
Jersey as surely as at MIT.”

Last week’s settlement re-
quired Rubin to disclose a minimal
amount of information and agree
to pay a $25,000 fine in the event
that Tidbit violates the agreement
by engaging in “unfair or decep-
tive acts” or accessing computers
of persons in New Jersey without
consent.
Letters are part of larger conversation

Student letter garners signatures from some graduate living groups

Prof. Emeritus Noam Chomsky, who has spoken publically in favor of divestment on several occasions, also signed the letter.

Among the faculty who signed the letter was Associate Professor Scott Aaronson. "Signing this petition wasn’t an obvious choice for me," Aaronson wrote. "I’m sensitive to the charge that divestment petitions are ... a way for activists to feel morally pure without either making serious sacrifices or engaging the real complexities of an issue."

However, Aaronson said that he decided to sign the petition after seeing that the organizers had "a clear-eyed understanding of what they were trying to accomplish and why.

"They know that divestment can’t directly drive down oil companies’ stock prices, but it can powerfully signal to the world a scientific consensus that, if global catastrophe is to be averted, most of the known fossil-fuel reserves need to be left in the ground, and that current valuations of oil, gas, and coal companies fail to reflect that reality," he wrote.

The student letter was organized by the UA Sustainability Committee, the Sustainability Sub-committee of the GSC, Fossil Free MIT, and the MIT Sustainability Club.

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New curriculum offered for students doubling in 6-1 & 8

Three 2015s majored in EE and Physics; combined major will provide substitutions, lighten course load

By Alexandra Delmore
ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR

The Department of Physics and the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science have recently announced changes to the curriculum for undergraduates double majoring in Electrical Engineering (Course 6-1) and Physics (Course 8). According to Associate Department Head of EECS David J. Perreault, the changes will streamline the 6-1 and 8 double major. The changes came about after faculty and students expressed interest in improving the curriculum. “It was both a faculty and student initiative,” Perreault said in an email to The Tech.

The new track for the 6-1 and 8 double major is based on the 8-Flex option in physics and allows students to replace some of the requirements for 6-1 with classes from Course 8.

Students double majoring in 6-1 and 8 can now fulfill the requirement for one of two required 6-1xx subjects (6.01, 6.02, or 6.03) by taking Vibrations and Waves (8.03), which is a requirement for 8-Flex.

Electromagnetic Energy: From Motors to Solar Cells (6.007) can now be replaced with Quantum Physics I (8.04), satisfying one of the three required foundation classes in 6-1 and a required class for 8-Flex.

One of the three header subjects in 6-1 (6.011, 6.012, or 6.013) can now be replaced with Quantum Physics II (8.05), which can be chosen from among two other Course 8 subjects to fulfill a requirement in the 8-Flex track.

In 2014, 2013, and 2012, five students double majored in 6-1 and 8 per year. This year, three students are graduating with double majors in 6-1 and 8. All other requirements for both the 6-1 and 8-Flex majors remain in place. These substitutions are only valid for students majoring in 8-Flex and 6-1 and do not apply to Course 6-2 or 6-3 majors.

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Layzer, from Page 1

Laying story” to gain more support as she wrote in a Boston Review article in 2012.

“You have to fight ideas with ideas,” Layzer added in a 2013 interview with MIT News.

Within the field of environmental policy and politics, Layzer’s work ranged widely across topics, including clean air and clean water regulations, land protection, species conservation, and climate change. She had also become increasingly focused on issues of urban sustainability, including studies of food systems.

Layzer wrote three books and published numerous articles, among other scholarly accomplishments, while teaching highly regarded classes at MIT under- and graduate students.

Layzer’s colleagues remember her as a person driven by a strong sense of ethics and possessing exceptional intellectual qualities.

“Besides being a brilliant scholar and exceptional writer, Judy was also a dedicated — and demanding — teacher,” says Professor Eran Ben-Joseph, head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning. “She was an inspiration and a role model precisely because she expected the best from her students, her colleagues, and herself. She was tough, but always fair, stern, but always caring.”

Ben-Joseph adds: “Judy was motivated by intellectual curiosity and a zeal for academic inquiry, but more importantly she was driven by an underlying sense of ethics and a core belief that we would be wrong — period, no qualifications — to destroy the planet and its natural systems. She was a true friend who would always make you laugh and a scientist who would always make you think. She was a person of genuine integrity who will be sorely missed.”

Influential work, popular teaching

Layzer received her undergraduate degree in economics from the University of Michigan in 1985, and her PhD in 1999 from MIT’s Department of Political Science. Her doctoral thesis, “Sense and Credibility,” examined a series of environmental-protection disputes, ranging from the controversy over acid rain to restoration of the Florida Everglades.

In her work, Layzer detailed how science is a foundation for environmental advocacy, while noting that policy decisions are often settled by the relative strengths of the opposing coalitions. However, science-based advocacy, she asserted, can influence the strength of those opposing groups.

Her thesis research became part of her first book, “The Environmental Case: Translating Values into Policy” (CQ Press, 2002), an influential work now in its third edition. Layzer added considerable new material, on climate change and other topics, to the later editions.

Layzer’s second book, “Natural Experiments” (MIT Press, 2008), examined whether recent approaches to conservation across the U.S. have been effective; she concluded that some of these programs are less likely to produce environmental improvements than policies enacted through traditional top-down political means.

In her 2012 book, “Open for Business” (MIT Press), Layzer examined how conservatives sometimes have succeeded in environmental debates by tapping into, among other things, public mistrust of regulation to argue for opening up federal lands for further development.

Layzer taught at Middlebury College from 1998 until 2003, when she rejoined MIT as an assistant professor in DUSP. She was promoted to associate professor in 2007, and to full professor in 2014; she also became head of MIT’s Department of Urban Studies and Planning in 2010.

Layzer gave talks at academic and policy conferences both around the U.S. and internationally, and won the world championship seven times between 1985 and 2002, as well as the national championship seven times between 1995 and 2022.

Outside the classroom, Layzer was known to friends (and competitors) as a world-class ultimate frisbee player. The Boston-based club team she played for, known as “Lady Godiva,” won the U.S. national championship seven times between 1995 and 2002, and won the world championship in 1998.

Layzer is survived by her parents, David and Jean Layzer, and by her four siblings: Camlyn, Emily, Nicholas, and Jonathan. She was 59 years old.

Layzer is survived by her parent, David and Jean Layzer, and by her four siblings: Camlyn, Emily, Nicholas, and Jonathan.

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A year of many firsts for MIT sports

From football to pole vaults, MIT teams score big this season

By Souparno Ghosh

From the football team scoring a last-minute field goal on the way to their first ever NCAA playoff victory, to the women’s lacrosse team erasing a five goal deficit in the last twelve minutes and clinching their maiden New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) Championship, to breaking a pole vault record at the New England Division III Track and Field Championship, MIT student athletes scaled new heights (pun intended) in the 2014-15 year. While some usual suspects continued their domination — like the men’s tennis team winning their 17th consecutive NEWMAC title — there were a number of new frontiers reached this season. Here we take a look back at some of the ‘firsts’ for MIT sports.

Men’s football goes unbeaten in regular season and clinches first NCAA playoff win

The men’s football team went 9-0 with 7-0 in the New England Football Conference (NEFC) to record their first ever unbeaten season in program history. As many as fifty student athletes from MIT were named to the NEFC All-Academic Team. The Engineers were not quite done yet as they pulled off a thrilling victory in their first ever NCAA playoff appearance against Husson University. Matt Iovino ’17 first blocked an extra point attempt to keep Husson’s lead to just three points. Tucker Cheyne ’17 then converted a 38 yard field goal to take the game to extra time, in which QB Peter Wil- liams ’15 hit Seve Esparrago ’16 for a game winning touchdown. Elliot Tobin ’17 claimed an honorable mention All-American from DIII football, in addition to being named NEFC Offensive Lineman of the Year.

Women’s lacrosse clinches first ever NEWMAC Championship

The women’s lacrosse team overcame old nemesis Springfield college by hammering in six goals in the last twelve minutes of regular season to clinch their first ever NEWMAC crown and consequently a debut at the NCAA playoff. The Engineers dominated Regis College in their maiden NCAA playoff appearance, recording a resounding 19-5 victory. Leading the charge for the Engineers were NEWMAC Rookie of the Year Emily Young ’18, who broke the program record for both points and goals scored, and Kira Schrott ’16, who was named to Intercollegiate Women’s Lacrosse Association (IWCLA) all-region first team. Hannah Levy ’17 and regular season’s Most Outstanding Player of the Tournament Christine Iang ’16 also made key contributions to one historic season.

Softball team reaches NEWMAC Regional Championship Finals

Riding on some nasty pitching by Ellie Fodor ’15, who finished with 143 strikeouts, a miniscule 1.39 ERA, and a perfect game this season, the MIT softball team recorded their best finish (second in NEWMAC) in program history, notching up a record 29 victories. The Cardinal and Gray also recorded impressive victories over Elms College and Wesleyan College in the NEWMAC Regionals before falling to eventual champions, Tufts University. The Engineers were powered by Tori Jensen ’16 and Amanda Lee ’18, both of whom notched 35 RBIs, with the latter leading the team with 47 hits and a .285 average.

Women’s tennis reaches NCAA Elite 8

The women’s tennis team made it to the NCAA Elite 8 for the first time in program history when they overcame the more heralded Washington and Lee University. MIT closed out the regular season with a 15-5 record and made its third consecutive appearance in the Division III NCAA Championship. During the course of the season, Michelle Dutt ’15 notched her 100th career win. The MIT women’s tennis team was also awarded the Intercollegiate Tennis Association (ITA) Sportsmanship Award for the month of May.

Track and field team shines at multiple events

The MIT women’s cross country and track and field programs were awarded the Deb Vecerus- ter Program of the Year Award by the U.S. Track & Field and Cross Country Coaches Association (USTFCCCA). The team finished second at the Cross Country Championship and fourth and fifth at the Indoor and Outdoor Track and Field Championships respectively. Coach Halston Tay- lor was deservedly named Coach of the Year. Cimran Virdi ’16 capped a sensational season with her first outdoor pole vault title at the NCAA Championship to add to her tally of two indoor titles. She also jumped an NCAA DIII record of 14-0 in the New England Divi- sion III Championship. Virdi was rightfully named the Field Athlete of the Year by the USTFCCCA. Joining her on the USTFCCCA honor roll was Track Athlete of the Year, Maryann Gong ’16. Gong won the 3000m at the Indoor National meet, along with first place finishes in the 1500m in the NEWMAC Championship and the 5000m at the New England Divi- sion III meet.

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