

# Powerless

*MIT responds as Cambridge is plunged into darkness*

By **Jessica J. Pourian**  
EDITOR IN CHIEF

MIT, Harvard, and the surrounding areas lost power from 4:26 to 6:37 p.m. yesterday. The outage threw the Institute into darkness — classes were canceled, MBTA service was delayed, and police were dispatched to direct traffic. Emergency power remained on in dormitories and around campus. The problem is thought to be related to a transmission line in the area, said Michael Durand, NStar spokesman, to *The Boston Globe* yesterday. Nearly 17,000 customers were estimated to be without power.

## Around the Institute

All non-essential power was cut around campus. Lights remained on in dormitory hallways and stairwells, though rooms were

dark. A number of lights in the Infinite and street lamps around MIT were also off. According to an email from James Reed, the area director for Next House, dining remained open “with limited selections” during the outage, and wifi was available in the dorm. MIT Medical shut down normal services early and switched to Urgent Care. Diane L. Magnuson, Manger of Diversity and Inclusion for the medical department, said they would have done this anyway at 5 p.m. The MIT Pharmacy, which usually closes at 7 p.m., also shut down early because of the outage. Besides the early closures, everything was running smoothly, she said. Technology Children’s Center Stata and the other daycare facilities around campus have backup generators that were in service yesterday evening. Parents came to pick up

their children early, and the daycares did not experience any problems. Hundreds of students wandered about the Infinite, sitting in the few lit corners and frantically working on their slowly-dying laptops. Many chose to watch the impromptu shows, such as the crop of dancers who spontaneously appeared in Lobby 7 around 5:30 p.m. The MIT Chamber Music Society was singing in Lobby 7 around 4:45 p.m. When asked if the outage was good for business, they laughed “I think so,” said Anthony Q. Thomas ’14. “No one is in class.” Indeed, classes were canceled across all of MIT. The 6.867 (Machine Learning) evening test was canceled, though others, like 10.302 (Transport processes) were held at the last minute. 3.091 (Introduction to Solid-State

Power outage, Page 7

## 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, be-

Sanjay Sarma, Page 11

## Hobojacket no more

Hobojacket, a website by Jin Pan ’16 and Cathie Yun ’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 press time however, a visit to the website reveals a completely different site reporting to sell temperature indicating cups.

## An Apology

I thought I had a clever idea for leveraging existing college rivalries to raise money to provide warm clothing for the homeless. But I did not actually understand that my gimmick was dependent on objectifying the homeless. The site’s so-called edgy manner was designed to spread quickly, but I realize now that it also allowed my insensitivity to go viral. I wish I could rewind time to Sunday and reverse the decision to take the site live. But time is irreversible and I’ve learned a hard lesson. I’m sorry that I offended so many, and I’m disappointed in my own lack of judgment. I’ve matured a lot over the last 3 days in listening to the flood of more mature voices out there. I especially apologize for using those who can’t as easily speak up for themselves. JP.

—Stan Gill

## REPORTER’S NOTEBOOK

# J.J. Abrams on the science of stories

*Creator of ABC’s Lost gives talk at Media Lab to avid fans*

By **Stephen Suen**  
STAFF REPORTER

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*. In the latest installment of the Media Lab’s Conversation Series, Abrams sat down with lab director Joi Ito to discuss 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 excited fans 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 shit.”

J.J. Abrams, Page 13



JOI CHI ITO

## IN SHORT

**All forms related to Spring 2013 Housing on campus are due Saturday!** Remember to submit forms if you want to enter the December lottery, cancel housing, or request for a 10th term.

**Free HIV testing is available in the Coffeehouse Lounge from 10 a.m. — 2 p.m.** Free and confidential rapid testing brought to you by G@MIT and GlobeMed.

**S3 has extended hours and additional walk in hours for the end of term!** From Dec. 3 — 14, S3 will be open from 9 a.m. — 6 p.m. Monday — Thursday and until 5 p.m. on Fridays with walk in hours from 9 a.m. — 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. — 3 p.m. daily.

**Balfour will be on campus Dec. 3 and 4 from 10 a.m. — 3 p.m. in Lobby 10 and on Dec. 5 and 6 in the E62 Lobby from 11:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.** for all of your brass rat servicing needs.

## 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**

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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 impending 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.

# Israeli 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 threats from hostile neighbors.

But even ardent supporters of a continent-size missile shield to guard the United States and other NATO members acknowledge the limitations of Iron Dome, which is a tactical system designed to shoot

down unsophisticated rockets — basically flying pipe bombs — with a range of less than 50 miles.

Some U.S. technical experts also say they want hard evidence before judging whether Iron Dome knocked out as many rockets as Israel has claimed. Iron Dome’s most salient feature, according to U.S. experts now examining after-action reports from Gaza, may well be its software: The system rapidly discriminates between incoming rockets that are hurtling toward a populated area and others not worth expending a far costlier Iron Dome interceptor to knock down.

The conflict between Israel and Hamas focused global attention on

missile defenses, and came as the United States and its Arab allies have undertaken a costly effort to knit together a regional shield in the Persian Gulf to protect cities, oil refineries, pipelines and military bases from a potential Iranian attack.

“This will ratify the common-sense notion that these systems can play a role in defending you,” 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.”

## 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.

—Choe Sang-hun, *The New York Times*

## 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.

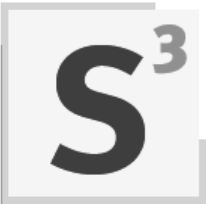
In the month since the storm, hundreds of millions of gallons of raw and partly raw sewage from Bay Park and other crippled treatment plants have flowed into waterways in New York and New Jersey, exposing flaws in the region’s wastewater infrastructure that could take several years and billions of dollars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

—Michael Schwirtz, *The New York Times*

Getting help is as easy as 1, 2, 

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

- ✓ 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.

- S<sup>3</sup>
- Community Wellness
- MIT Mental Health & Counseling
- Housemasters
- GRTs
- Area Directors
- Advisors

Working together, we’ll find a way.

| Extended Hours Dec 3-14 |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Monday                  | 9-6 |
| Tuesday                 | 9-6 |
| Wednesday               | 9-6 |
| Thursday                | 9-6 |
| Friday                  | 9-5 |

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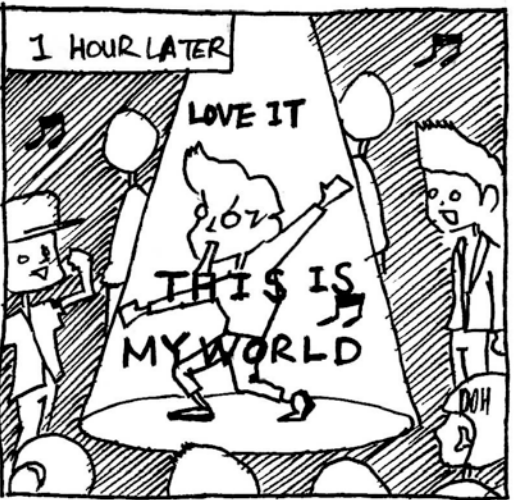
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# SKETCHY

by Dohyun Lee

## - THE HIDDEN DANCER



## PILED HIGHER AND DEEPER



by Jorge Cham



| # of periods | What it means                                                                                         |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (no period)  | Everything is normal. Relax.                                                                          |
| .            | Uh oh. You're in trouble. <i>Something is being left unsaid.</i>                                      |
| ..           | Probably a typo. Professors don't proof read their emails.                                            |
| ...          | Caution: Eye roll/sarcasm. Infer the opposite of what they actually wrote.                            |
| ....         | This says: "Why are you bothering me? I can't believe you want me to respond to this trivial matter." |
| .....        | Replying to you was so boring, I leaned on the keyboard by accident and didn't notice.                |
| .....        | Your advisor is a teenager or is going crazy. Better look for another one.                            |

!

(exclamation point)

Rarely used. Displaying emotions is for the weak.

?

(question mark)

Rarely used. Professors don't ask questions, they make *statements*.

;

(connective marks)

Rarely used. Requires the use of more than one sentence.

or

# Professor Punctuation Mark Decoder

WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

# Sudoku

Solution, page 11

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   | 2 |   | 7 |   |   | 1 |   |   |
| 4 |   | 8 |   | 3 |   |   | 6 |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | 2 | 5 |   | 4 |
|   | 7 |   |   |   | 3 | 4 |   | 5 |
| 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | 6 |
| 3 |   | 2 | 5 |   |   |   | 7 |   |
| 2 |   | 4 | 3 |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 5 |   |   | 8 |   | 2 |   | 1 |
|   |   | 7 |   |   | 1 |   | 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 11

|      |  |      |     |     |    |
|------|--|------|-----|-----|----|
| 180x |  |      |     | 60x |    |
| 12x  |  | 6    |     |     | 4  |
| 1    |  | 240x |     |     | 2- |
| 18+  |  |      | 2   |     |    |
| 1-   |  |      | 15x |     | 6  |
| 30x  |  |      |     |     | 2  |

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.

[illegible]

## 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
- 22 Is a precursor of
- 26 Brillo alternative
- 31 Reasons for bowl cheers
- 32 Minimal amounts
- 34 Impels
- 35 Hardly ever
- 37 World's largest fashion mag
- 38 Nursery rhyme snoozer
- 42 Spanish surrealist
- 43 Mall business
- 44 Barely passing
- 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  
65 Thrust back  
66 Thoroughly enjoyed  
67 Presidential nickname  
68 Cost of a commercial  
69 Famous  
70 Wander about

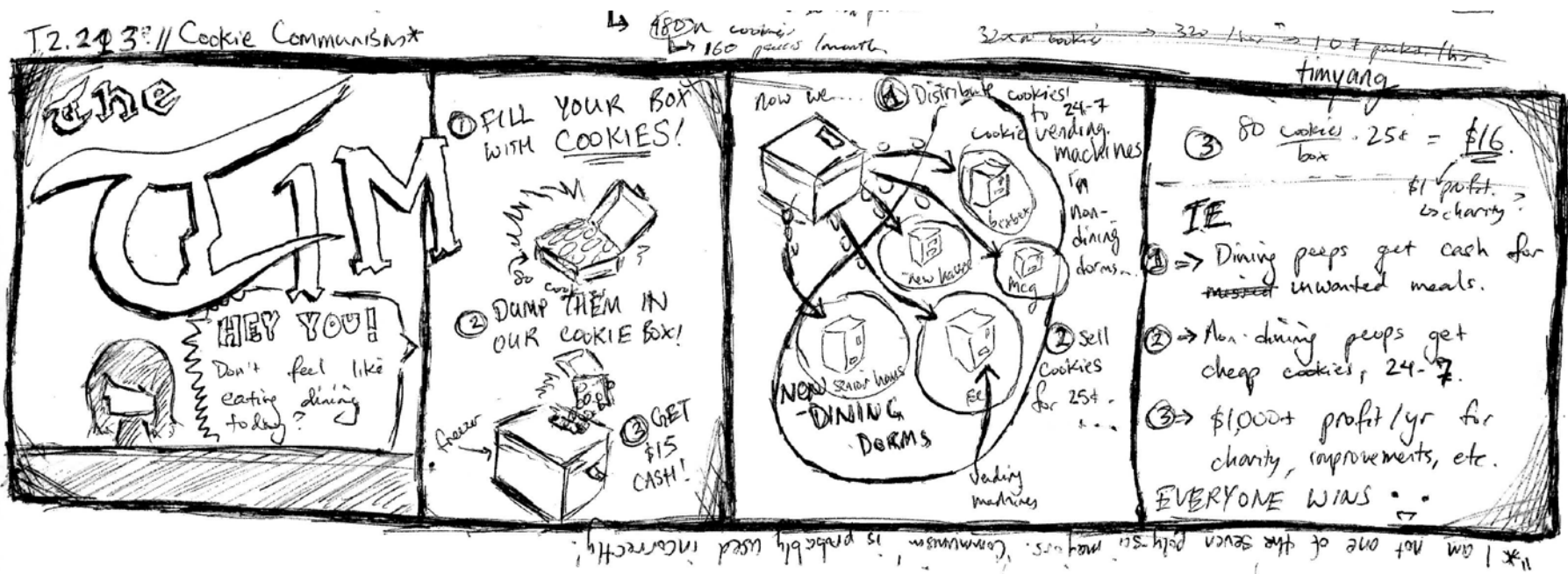
**DOWN**

- 1 Patton of King of Queens
- 2 Went first
- 3 African scavengers
- 4 Course with a lab: Abbr.
- 5 Ice org.
- 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
- 18 Become one

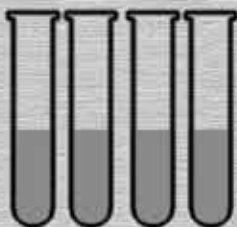
- 19 Pound sound  
23 Editorial mark  
24 Statuesque  
25 Farther afield  
27 Pert competitor  
28 Rts. advocate  
29 Editorial mark  
30 Pilot's hdg.  
33 Clearheaded  
35 Minimal hail  
36 Go by car  
38 Prom rental  
39 Eye part  
40 New Haven school  
41 Ill temper  
42 Nero's 1550  
45 Working fine  
46 Acapulco assent  
48 "Got it?"  
49 Triumphant cry  
50 Squirreled away  
52 Influential person  
54 Maui souvenir  
56 Concerning  
58 Pension supplement,  
perhaps

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  |    | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |    | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 |    |    |    | 15 |    |    |    |    |    | 16 |    |    |    |    |
| 17 |    |    | 18 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 19 |    |    |    |    |
| 20 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 21 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 22 |    |    |    | 23 | 24 | 25 |    | 26 |    |    | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 |    |    |    | 32 |    |    | 33 |    | 34 |    |    |    |    |    |
|    |    |    | 35 |    |    |    |    | 36 |    | 37 |    |    |    |    |
|    | 38 | 39 |    |    |    |    |    |    | 40 | 41 |    |    |    |    |
| 42 |    |    |    |    |    | 43 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| 44 |    |    |    | 45 | 46 |    | 47 |    |    |    |    | 48 | 49 | 50 |
| 51 |    |    |    |    |    | 52 |    | 53 |    |    | 54 |    |    |    |
|    |    |    |    | 55 |    |    | 56 |    |    | 57 |    |    |    |    |
| 58 | 59 | 60 | 61 |    |    |    |    | 62 | 63 | 64 |    |    |    |    |
| 65 |    |    |    |    |    | 66 |    |    |    |    |    | 67 |    |    |
| 68 |    |    |    |    |    | 69 |    |    |    |    |    | 70 |    |    |

- |                             |                     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 59 Media mogul Turner       | 62 Until now        |
| 60 Sunblock stat            | 63 Go after legally |
| 61 "___haw!" (cowboy shout) | 64 Opposite of COD  |



# The Case of the Missing Menorah



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**8pm, 6-120**

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# 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 session moved to 8-102 so students could prepare in spite of the outage. Dozens of students crammed into the glass-walled Course 3 lab while their peers milled about outside. Some classes and activities with start times after 7 p.m. — like MIT-SO — still met as normal. A number of PE classes and varsity practices were canceled as the Z Center remained dark. In addition, W20 was evacuated and locked soon after the power went out.

Justin Cheung '16 was asleep when the power cut. He is one of the students who has the 3.091 exam today. “I wanted to study,” he said, “but none of the printers were working, so I spent time copying pdfs from my friend by hand. And then ten minutes after I was done, the power came back.”

Steven Jens M. Jorgensen '14 was in 2.005 (Thermal Fluids Engineering 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 email from Dennis Collins, director of residential life and dining, during an emergency MIT’s cogeneration plant would initially go down, activating the emergency generators. While the cogeneration 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 facilities and chief of police, mentioned that Cogen was having issues yesterday morning, though the nature of these issues was unclear.

When asked for comment by



ELIJAH MENA—THE TECH

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

*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 community members of the power outage was sent out at 5:26 p.m. yesterday. Nate Nickerson, director of MIT communications, said that MIT’s main goal was “responding to entrapments.”

“Life and safety is our top priority,” 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 English Language Studies, was in the middle of teaching when the power went out. She had an emergency 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 because there was no storm or anything. It’s like the apocalypse.”

### 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 intersections along Mass. Ave, there were non-controlled intersections (such as at the Landsdowne St. and Mass. Ave stoplight) and several accidents that further added to the normal rush hour traffic congestion.

Alan Smith, the general manager at the Marriott Hotel in Kendall, said that the hotel had generators powering emergency lighting in hallways, stairwells, and the lobby. They were passing out glowsticks for guests to use in their rooms.

“Guests are very calm,” he said, “As soon as we know what’s happening I plan on making an announcement over the PA system so

that guests are informed.”

The Clover food truck saw an increase in customers during the outage. 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 Kendall 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 employee in Course 16.

The rumor, which appears to have originated on Twitter, seems to be false. Dan Riviello, Cambridge 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.”

@MBTAdeer, a Twitter feed supposedly from the dead deer, surfaced on Thursday night. As of this writing, it has over 200 followers.

Two Green Line trains did collide yesterday morning at the Boylston Street station. Three dozen people were taken to hospitals, and nearly 200 passengers were estimated to be on board. Neither car was derailed, and no heavy damage 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 storify for more information on this topic: <http://storify.com/thetech/mit-during-the-cambridge-blackout>.

Sara Hess, Deborah Chen, Anne Cai, Stan Gill, John A. Hawkinson, Greg Steinbrecher, and Bruno B. F. Faviero contributed reporting to this article.

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The Film Experience



The Godfather

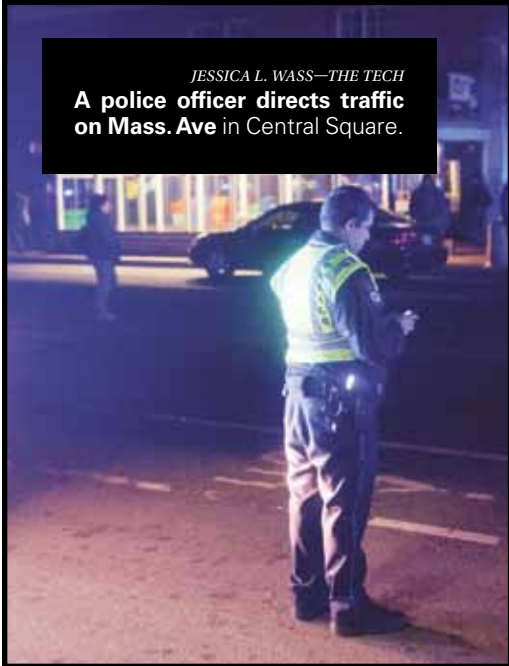
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Students make their way down a darkened hallway at MIT on Thursday evening after power went out in Cambridge.



JESSICA L. WASS—THE TECH  
A police officer directs traffic on Mass. Ave in Central Square.

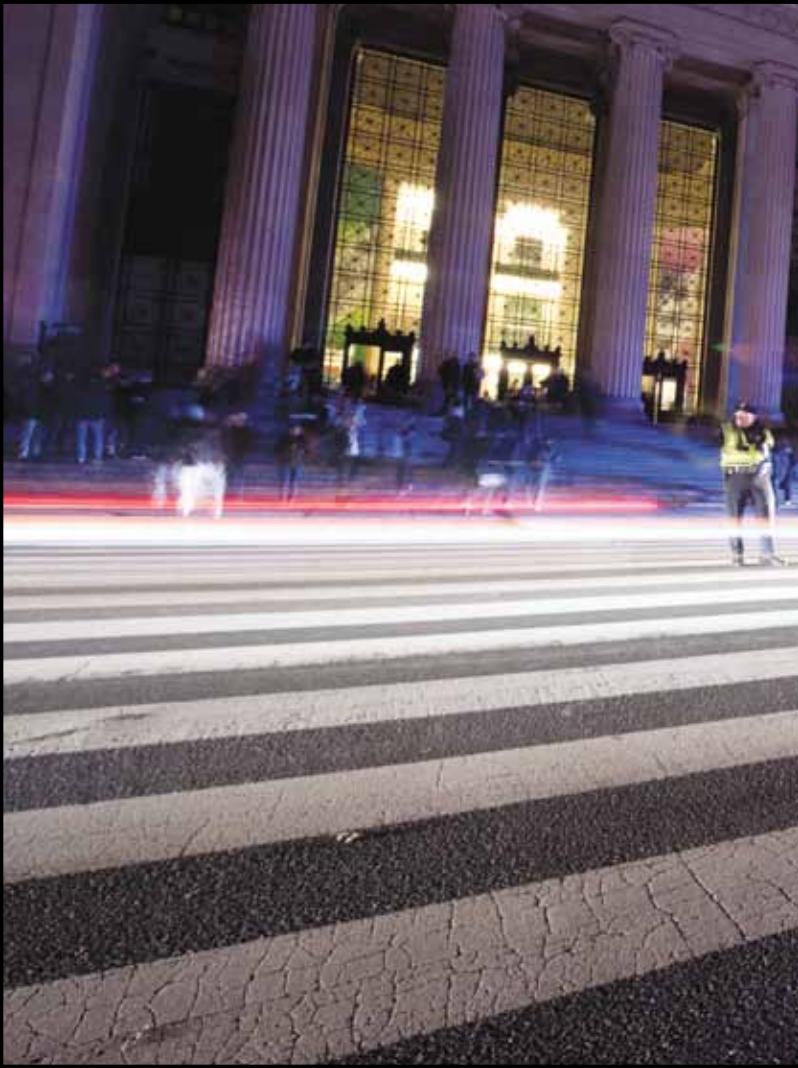
# Scenes from the blackout



A car crash occurred at the intersection of Mass. Ave. and Harvard St. at approximately 7:30 p.m. on Thursday evening. One lane of traffic was closed and directed traffic at the intersection.

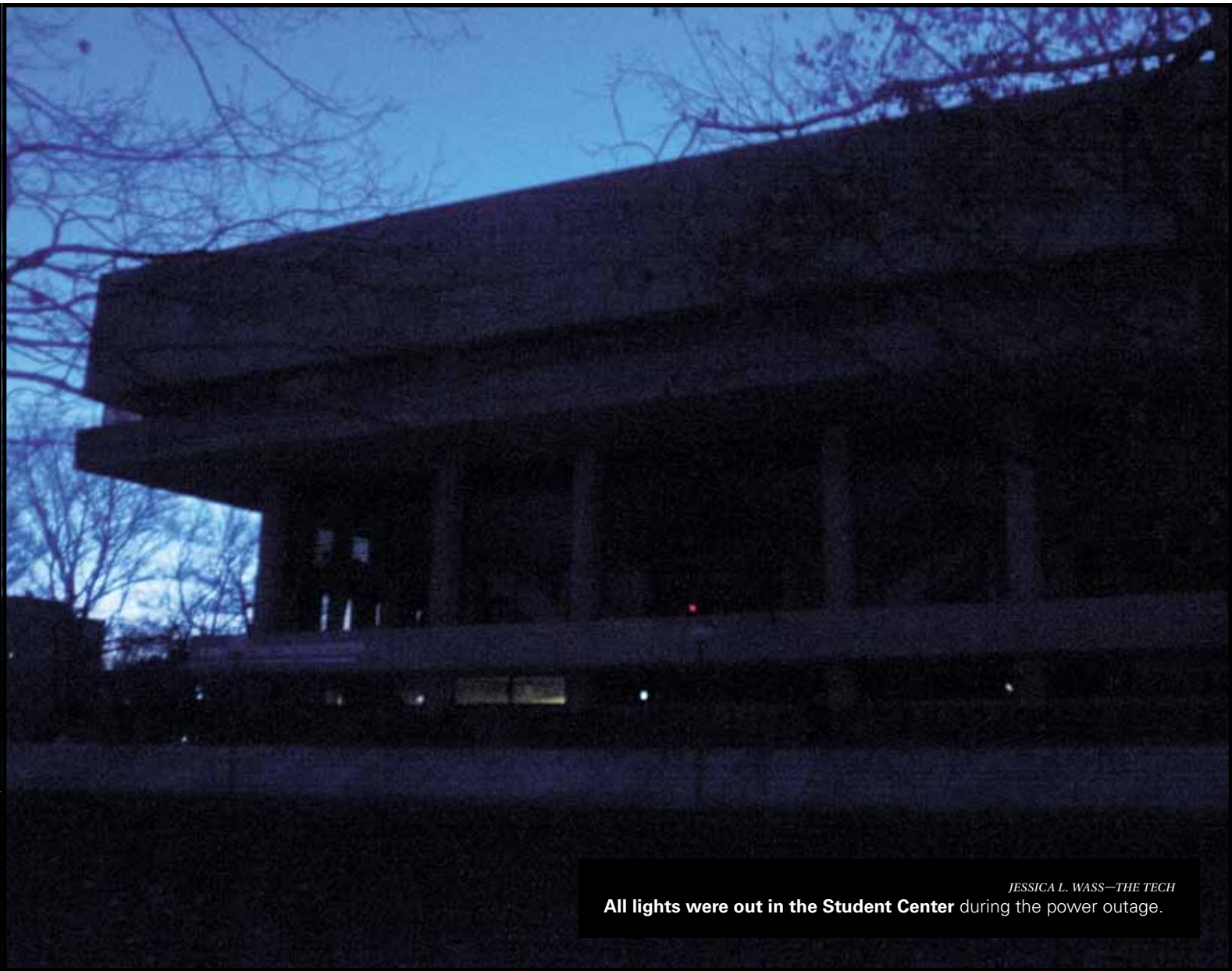


CHRISTOPHER A. MAYNOR—THE TECH  
Nicholas A. Pellegrino '12, a member of the break dance group Imobulare, performs in Lobby 7 during the blackout. Dancers from the group Constructs also performed. Many people, evacuated in the surrounding buildings, stayed in Lobby 7 during the blackout.





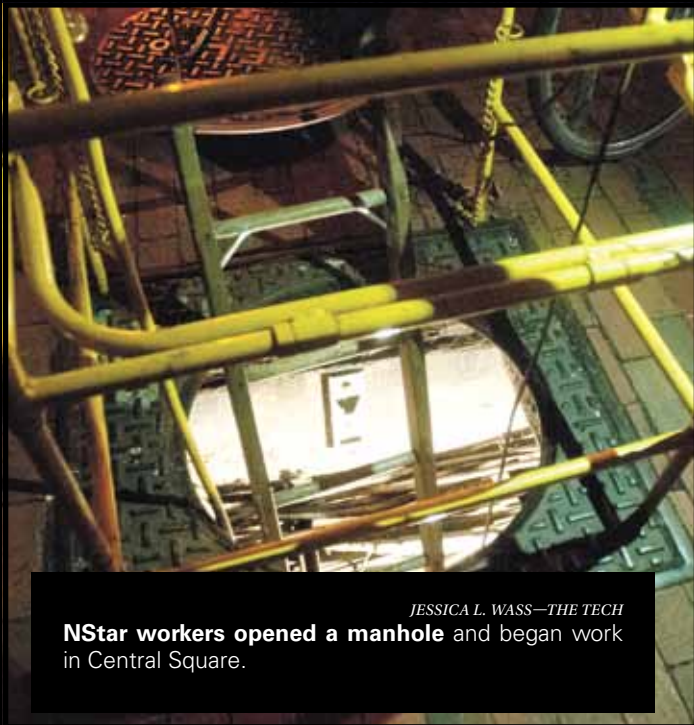
CHRISTOPHER A. MAYNOR—THE TECH  
**Infinite Corridor** Thursday



JESSICA L. WASS—THE TECH  
All lights were out in the **Student Center** during the power outage.



TAMI FORRESTER—THE TECH  
**d Memorial Drive** at approxi-  
as blocked and a police officer



JESSICA L. WASS—THE TECH  
**NStar workers opened a manhole** and began work  
in Central Square.



JESSICA L. WASS—THE TECH  
**NStar employees did repair work on the electric  
grid** near the Central Square subway station.



ELIJAH MENA—THE TECH  
**A policeman directs traffic in front of 77 Mass. Ave.** Traffic was bumper  
to bumper from the Harvard Bridge to Central Square.



CHRISTOPHER A. MAYNOR—THE TECH  
**People overlooking Lobby 7 stand silhouetted**  
against emergency lights.



# MechE professor will be first director of digital learning

*Sarma to focus on improving on-campus education, plans to experiment with ‘flipped classrooms’*

**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 classes. In the spring, 8.02 will meet its



BRYCE VICKMARK  
**Professor Sanjay E. Sarma**

edX twin 8.02x, which is currently under development, according to Professor Deepto Chakrabarty. 8.02x will feature clips from Walter Lewin lectures and content developed by John Belther, who also helped develop Technology-Enabled Active Learning (TEAL). It’s likely that 8.02 students at MIT in the future will be sharing this content with thousands of 8.02x students worldwide, learning from the same lectures that MIT students attended in years past, only on their laptops rather than in 26-100.

As of yesterday, Sarma did not wish to reveal just yet what other classes MITx would offer come 2013. “I want to make sure I am comfortable with the list,” he said.

But Sarma is interested not just in the new MITx but also in better pedagogy more generally. “Actually MIT has been innovating in education for nearly 100 years —

more than 100 years,” he said. “Experimental Study Group (ESG) is an incredible innovation in learning. TEAL is an incredible innovation in learning. It’s very unique to MIT.”

Sarma is no stranger to innovation in education. According to MIT News, he has been promoting interactive teaching methods in mechanical engineering classes for more than a decade. Sarma wrote or significantly altered the curricula for several Course 2 classes, including 2.31 (Introduction to CAD, CAM, and FEM, no longer offered), in which students put mechanical parts they built themselves under destructive testing. He has also won a number teaching awards, including a MacVicar Fellowship in 2008.

For Sarma, digital learning is just another tool to help students learn more effectively. “I was talking to a colleague this morning about how you would teach entrop-

py. I haven’t thought about how to teach entropy for 20 years. Whether it’s digital, or flipped classroom, or whatever, I have a reason to think about it. What I’m really excited about is the pedagogical innovation.”

“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 synthesizer,” 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 ponders, “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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### Solution to Sudoku

from page 5

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

### Solution to Techdoku

from page 5

|   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 1 |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 |

### Solution to Crossword

from page 6

|           |         |        |
|-----------|---------|--------|
| OOH       | SNACK   | IRATE  |
| SPY       | CHILE   | DOORS  |
| WEEWILLIE | WINKIE  |        |
| ANNE      | PLOD    |        |
| LEADSTO   | SOSPADS |        |
| TDS       | TADS    | FORCES |
|           | SELDOM  | ELLE   |
| LITTLE    | BOYBLUE |        |
| MIRO      | RETAIL  |        |
| DMINUS    | ROLL    | YES    |
| LOSESIT   | REEL    | OUT    |
|           | ASIA    | EURO   |
| ITSYBITY  | SPIDER  |        |
| REPEL     | ATEUP   | IKE    |
| ADFE      | NOTED   | GAD    |

## Yossi Sheffi

# LOGISTICS CLUSTERS

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5:30 pm, E14-633

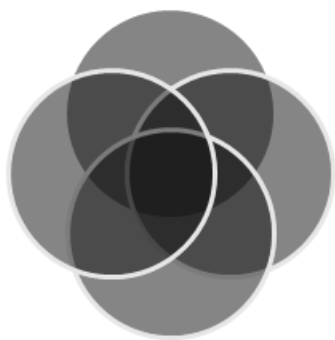
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“Logistics Clusters” is published by the MIT Press, 2012.

[logisticsclusters.mit.edu](http://logisticsclusters.mit.edu)



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

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

J. J. Abrams, from Page 1

In some ways, Abrams’ own production company, Bad Robot, is a crazy lab of its own, except its end products are not inspiring technologies but stories. His most recent work includes the film reboot of *Star Trek*, sci-fi thriller *Super 8*, and the post-apocalyptic television drama *Revolution*. Abrams, whose productions often dabble in the realm of science fiction, prefaced the conversation with a light-hearted apology: “To everyone who is a scientist, I am sorry... but I’m here now, and it’s all going to be fixed.”

Much like the research of an R&D scientist, Abrams’ productions are often shrouded in mystery. He sees modern media culture as being characterized by a sense of entitlement to immediate information. “People can get basically all the information they want about almost any movie before it’s even come out,” he explained. This access to information does more harm than good: audiences have already made a decision about the content before they even see it. Abrams sees secrecy as an important tool in improving the audience’s experience.

As a child, Abrams fostered a love of magic, and it shows in his creative philosophy today. He lives for the moments where people are left dumbstruck, wondering, “How did they do that?” Like the Media Lab, Bad Robot is driven by a spirit of wonder and serendipity — it’s not just about meetings. Abrams is constantly filming new things on the spot in what he describes as “the rapid prototyping of content.”

Not even Abrams knows what’s right when he’s trying to tell a story. According to him, the closest thing any of us knows to what we should pursue is what gives us the chills. “When I’m in the writer’s room, I don’t care who an idea comes from. If it’s the right idea, you can just feel it.” It’s not something you can always quantify, he said. Abrams admitted that he never goes into anything knowing all the answers — he only knows what makes him excited, even if he doesn’t really know why.

That’s not to say he goes in without a plan.

In his mind, the intents 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. There’s a general outline of a destination, but you never know whether something will work out or not. Certain characters or relationships that you thought were going to be successful may turn out to be disasters. “If you’re not open to the better ideas, you’re closed to the possibilities,” he said.

### 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 a stage performance changes from night to night. His best moments as a writer, he explained, manifest 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 perfectly.

Sometimes evoking these reactions requires drastic measures, like killing off characters. “It’s why I will never name a show after a main character,” Abrams admitted. In the editing room, however, he becomes ruthless. “What you need to do is stop thinking about ‘what was the intent?... you’ve got to start thinking about ‘what do we have?’”

Of course, the parallels between Bad Robot and the Media Lab don’t end at iterating quickly. Both organizations are interdisciplinary to the core. From movies to TV to even something like cancer research, Abrams told us, everything that involves multiple perspectives can be bettered when these perspectives

are synthesized. “People are just becoming more and more comfortable speaking other languages.”

There are, however, still limits to this phenomenon. Abrams recalled how he felt after his tour of the Media Lab, “I’ve never felt dumber any moment in my life. All this stuff I wish I knew!” What he did understand, however, was the passion driving the work going on. At one point Abrams even mentioned, “I am excited about finding ways of working with MIT.”

Abrams expressed optimism about the future of entertainment. “I’ve had a dream a couple times in my life, where there’s another part of your house that you didn’t know existed.” He explained that we are seeing a movement away from TV and towards media convergence. “There is no TV versus something else. There is just one thing.”

Even though television has been Abrams’ bread and butter, he’s not discouraged by this shift. He explained some of the limitations of the medium — in particular, advertising. As a viewer, you’re not alone in your feeling annoyed by commercial breaks. This structure harms the storytelling itself, forcing storytellers to write “insanely unnatural peaks.”

He’s envious of the freedom that the Media Lab enjoys thanks to undirected research. The way Ito put it, “You can’t tell the Media Lab what to do... we don’t do work for hire. You have to treat us like an artist.”

Bad Robot doesn’t have the same luxury, but Abrams still tries to maintain a creative blue sky, preferring to tackle questions that he doesn’t know the answer to. “It’s a leap of faith,” he said. “The thing it comes down to, despite all the pyrotechnics, is the chills you get... there’s this thing you think 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.

“Everything’s been demystified,” Abrams griped. He sees it as the job of storytellers to re-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 questions that will never be answered. One audience 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 unanswered questions a storytelling tool, or oversight?”

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 instead, who was conveniently not present at the talk.

Nevertheless, Abrams seemed to be satisfied with how the series turned out. “[Lindelof] answered the emotion of the show.” He drew parallels to Quentin Tarantino’s *Pulp Fiction*, where the entire story is driven by an enigmatic briefcase 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 mechanics but about dealing with the 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 probably 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 provocative stories. Each and every time, Abrams manages to produce a unique kind of fictional magic from the fog. And yes, the occasional smoke monster.

### New VP of research in 2013 among administrative changes

On Jan. 16, 2013, Maria Zuber, former Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences (EAPS) department head, will assume the role of MIT’s vice president for research. President L. Rafael Reif announced the news in an email to the MIT community on Tuesday. Zuber has been an MIT faculty member since 1995 and is currently the E.A. Griswold Professor of Geophysics. In the email, Reif refers to Zuber as a “compelling advocate for far-

sighted national investment in university research” and mentions that she is “extraordinarily well prepared to lead MIT in federal research policy and administration” given her experience in Washington.

The current VP of research, Claude Canizares, will move on to lead MIT’s global partnerships and oversee the work of Lincoln Laboratory, MIT’s offsite research facility in Lexington. Canizares will begin the new role

in January, when Zuber takes over the VP of research position, and serve until June 30, 2014.

On the industry side, Associate Provost and Professor of Electrical Engineering Martin Schmidt PhD ’88 will expand his duties to include “oversight of all things industry.” According to the email, he will also take on responsibility for the Industrial Liaison Program and the Technology Licensing Office.

—Stan Gill

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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**  
*DAPER STAFF*

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, scoring back-to-back baskets just twice during the first 15 minutes of the half. Matthew M. Redfield ’15

helped MIT maintain its advantage, scoring 10 of his 12 points after half-time, including a stretch midway through the half where he scored 8 of 10 points for the Engineers.

Tufts finally made a move in 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.

### UPCOMING HOME EVENTS

- Friday, November 30**  
Swimming and Diving — MIT Winter Invitational 6:30 p.m., Zesiger Center Pool
- Saturday, December 1**  
Swimming and Diving — MIT Winter Invitational 10 a.m./5:30 p.m., Zesiger Center Pool  
Squash vs. Bates College 1:30 p.m., Zesiger Center Courts  
Men’s Basketball vs. Newbury College 2 p.m., Rockwell Cage  
Squash vs. Navy 4:30 p.m., Zesiger Center Courts
- Sunday, December 2**  
Squash vs. UC Berkeley 9 a.m., Zesiger Center Courts  
Squash vs. Bard College 2 p.m., Zesiger Center Courts

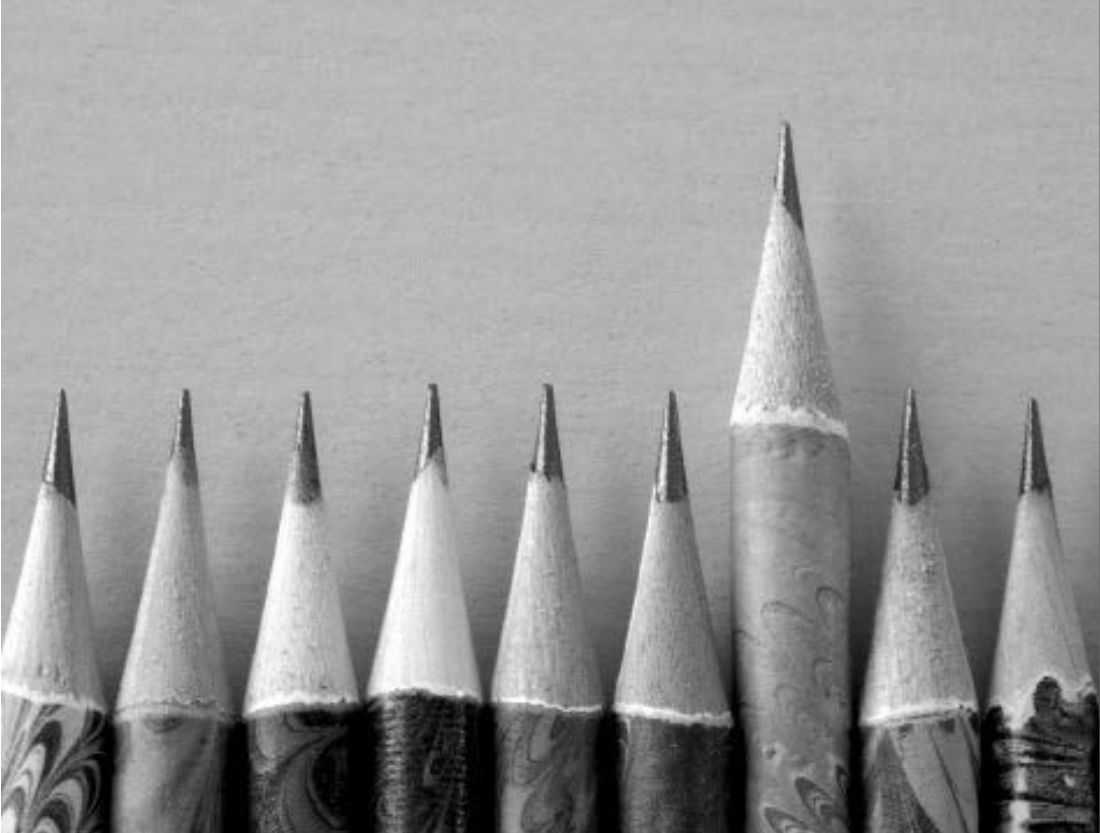
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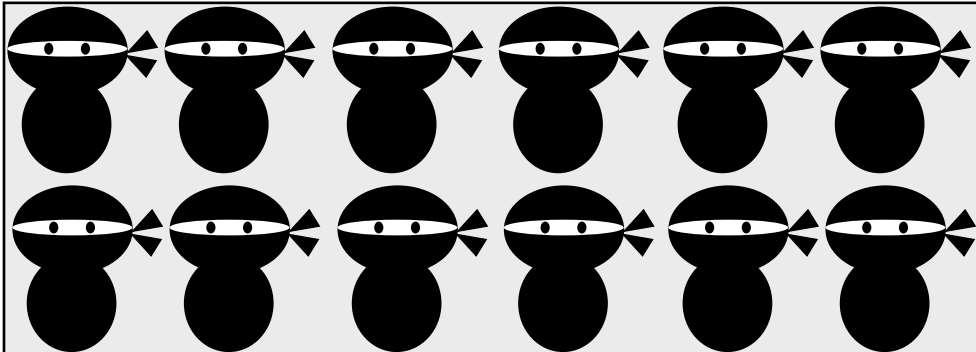


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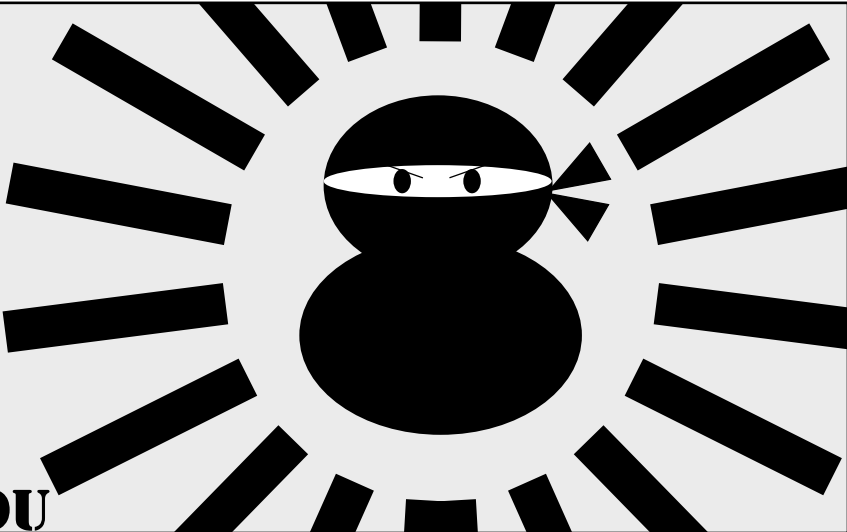
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*Packers to defeat Vikings; Patriots will dominate Dolphins; 49ers to beat Rams*

*Prediction: 23-20 Redskins*

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