

Dorms share room assignment designs

Proposals address design exercise constraints prohibiting mutual selection and requiring squatting

By Zoe Anderson, Whitney Zhang, and Rujul Gandhi
STAFF REPORTERS

Student leaders from all undergraduate dorms met with Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88 and Vice President and Dean for Student Life Suzy Nelson in a design workshop March 2 to present proposals for rooming assignment processes.

The proposals had to meet two requirements: they must not involve mutual selection and first years must be permitted to squat their initial room assignments. Several dorm presidents shared information about their dorm's proposals with *The Tech* via email or interview.

Some dorms presented at least one version that met the requirements and at least one that did not, but improved upon the current system.

East Campus proposed a single-sided selection process in which first years would visit and rank all the halls. The dorm would then run an algorithm to assign first years to rooms based on those rankings 10 times to generate 10 sets of dorm-wide placements. Each hall's upper-level students would rank the results, and EC would run another algorithm to optimize the halls' preferences for the first years' placements.

Adriana Jacobsen '20, EC president, told *The Tech* in an interview that EC's proposal was regarded by residents as the "best possible scenario if we had to do single-sided selection."

EC also presented its current system with improvements such as calling the current Floor Rush something more related to exploration.

Dorms, Page 2



KATYA BEZUGLA—THE TECH

MIT-educated astronauts return to speak at the Apollo 50+50 event held in Kresge Auditorium Wednesday, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo moon landings.



KEVIN LY—THE TECH

Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart and Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz bring baked goods to the Banana Lounge Wednesday in honor of Random Acts of Kindness Week.

IN SHORT

Graduate student registration is open for fourth quarter Physical Education classes.

Submit nominations for the **MIT Awards** by tomorrow.

The comment period for the CUP's **Class of 2023 first-year proposal** is open until March 18.

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OneWorld@MIT will not host tent parties

Event to instead consist of early evening cultural festival, committee chair says

By Soomin Chun
NEWS EDITOR

This year's OneWorld@MIT event will be an early evening cultural festival. For the past three years, MIT held late evening dance parties colloquially known as "tent parties."

The change hopes to bring more inclusivity into the event, said Professor Raul Radovitzky, chair of the OneWorld@MIT Planning Committee, in an interview with *The Tech*.

This year's event will be a celebration of culture, performing arts, and food, according to a statement from Radovitzky emailed to *The Tech*. The theme has not yet been released.

"The feeling is that in the past couple of years, families were left sort of a little bit in the margins, because you cannot bring families with younger kids [to tent parties]. So we'd like to be a little bit more inclusive and give more people an opportunity to participate," Radovitzky said.

The cancellation of the tent parties also came up during the UA Council meeting Feb. 13. According to the minutes, the tent parties were considered "very expensive." The minutes also said a "different but fun event" is set to occur instead.

"One major reason [for the changes] is the cost of the tent parties was too expensive and unsustainable," UA President Alexa

Martin '19 wrote in an email to *The Tech*. "While we were not involved in this original decision to change the style of event, the UA has since been involved by nominating students to serve on the OneWorld planning committee."

According to Radovitzky, however, the organizing committee has thus far not dealt with the budgetary side of the event and are unsure what the restrictions are. President L. Rafael Reif funds the event from his discretionary account.

Since students are the focus of the event, and it has been popular with both students and Reif, there is a reasonable chance they will return in the future, Radovitzky said. The committee hopes to plan tent parties at least once every four years so that students can experience them at least once in their undergraduate career.

The decision to change the event this year was made by the OneWorld@MIT Planning Committee as a whole, Radovitzky said. This committee is co-chaired by Radovitzky and Gayle M. Gallagher, executive director of institute events, and also includes graduate and undergraduate students.

The committee is converging on the theme for this year's event but is still working out the details, according to Radovitzky. In 2018, the theme was sustainability.

CSAIL responds to Trump tweet claiming 'pilots are no longer needed, but rather computer scientists from MIT'

President Donald J. Trump claimed in a tweet Tuesday that "pilots are no longer needed, but rather computer scientists from MIT."

"Airplanes are becoming far too complex to fly," Trump tweeted. "Always seeking to go one unnecessary step further, when often old and simpler is far better."

Trump continued in a follow-up tweet, "I don't know about you, but I don't want Albert Einstein to be my pilot. I want great flying professionals that are allowed to easily and quickly take control of a plane!"

A few hours later, the official Twitter account of MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory replied, "We're very happy to help. But maybe we can keep the pilots, too?"

The MIT Technology Review's account also replied with a series of clapping emoji.

Trump's tweet appears to be in response to the Boeing 737 Max 8 plane crash in Ethiopia Sunday, which killed all 157 people on board. Another Boeing 737 Max 8 plane operated by an Indonesian airline crashed into the sea in October 2018.

—Jessica Shi

A NIGHT OF JAZZ

Honoring jazz legend Herb Pomeroy.
ARTS, p. 8

WHEN STUDENTS BECOME DATA POINTS

The DSL's data-centric approach to reform overlooks the nuances in student experiences. **OPN, p. 4**



ONE HEROINE AGAINST ALIENS

She shoots light beams from her arms.
ARTS, p. 8

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Arts8

Several dorms propose that first years indicate desire to squat over summer

Dorms, from Page 1

Burton Conner proposed maintaining upper-level students' preferences, but weighing them more lightly in the room assignment process.

New House differentiated its proposals for its cultural houses and numbered houses. The proposal for the cultural houses' process maintained the current system, with a focus on providing more information to first years, according to the plan the New House government submitted to the Housing Design Workshop. The cultural houses would continue giving spots to students they believe would help grow and enhance their community. These students would not be expected to move from the rooms to which they are assigned over the summer.

In the submitted plan, numbered houses would require all their first years to visit each numbered house during in-house exploration

and then rank the houses in which they want to live. Any student who ranked their initial assigned house first would not be made to move. The housing chairs would assign rooms based on giving students their highest ranked choices.

Simmons Hall, BC, the numbered houses of New House, and EC all proposed that first years indicate their desire to squat on the summer housing form.

Simmons proposed one plan in which a student marking that they wished to squat would be binding and two plans in which wishing to squat would be non-binding.

Random Hall and EC each proposed two plans: one that allowed squatting and one that did not. Random President Amanda Putnam '20 wrote in an email to *The Tech* that Random preferred the latter. "We believe we can better optimize for first-year happiness if the system has more flexibility, particularly with our very small num-

ber of open rooms to begin with," Putnam wrote.

In MacGregor House's proposal, the algorithm would be guaranteed to place first years into their current entry or an entry they ranked higher, and if they are reassigned into their current entry, they may choose to squat their room.

Anthony Cheng '20, MacGregor president, told *The Tech* in an interview that the proposal, which meets both requirements, is "extremely unpopular" among residents.

Next House proposed a plan in which first years would discuss their motives for squatting with the house team, and approvals of squatting would be "fairly generous," according to Next's proposal.

The BC proposal required that first years participate in "FLEX," or floor exploration, before confirming their decision to squat.

Maseeh Hall, whose current rooming process already fulfills

both design requirements, proposed asking additional questions to incoming first years who ranked Maseeh highly in the summer. The Room Assignment Committee (RAC) would then use their answers to place them into rooms.

Barnhart and Nelson told *The Tech* in an interview that student dorm representatives brought up possible causes of undue stress on first years that they had not considered previously, including rushed decision-making during the room assignment process and in-house lotteries. Dorm representatives also brought up a need for clearer communications to incoming students over the summer.

Nelson said that more welcoming language and messaging could also reduce stress.

Barnhart said that at the workshop, students from some dorms said that they wanted more time in between when they got the final list of incoming residents (which is

after FYRE) and when rooms were assigned, while others did not want more time.

Barnhart said that student dorm representatives noted that RACs currently have substantial responsibility and could use help with algorithms for the rooming assignment process and moving first years' belongings to their assigned rooms. Nelson also added that stress could be reduced by facilitating parking and helping to hand out keys and IDs.

Nelson said, "Mutual selection, where if someone gets in, that means someone doesn't get in, so that feels personal and it feels hurtful. That is something that concerned us. If that was something that was happening, it was unintentional."

Next, Barnhart and Nelson are going to meet individually with leaders from all the dorms.

Kaitlyn Hennacy contributed reporting.

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10PM FRIDAY, MARCH 15 6-120

Solution to Spring

from page 6

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

Solution to Think

from page 6

R	I	S	K	S	S	E	T	S	J	A	B	S
A	C	E	I	T	T	R	I	O	E	R	I	E
C	A	C	T	I	O	I	L	Y	W	E	R	E
E	N	T	E	R	S	O	N	E	S	H	E	A
			R	I	D			A	O	L		
M	A	R	L	I	N	B	L	U	E	E	L	M
O	C	E	A	N	A	L	E	C	A	L	A	I
C	H	A	N	G	E	S	O	N	E	S	M	I
H	E	R	D		L	O	W	S		C	I	T
A	D	S		O	A	F	S		E	R	N	E
			S	A	P			C	S	I		
R	A	C	K	S	O	N	E	S	B	R	A	I
C	O	L	A		I	R	O	N		B	E	T
A	M	E	N		N	E	S		L	A	M	B
L	E	S			G	O	E	S		E	L	S

Solution to Showers

from page 6

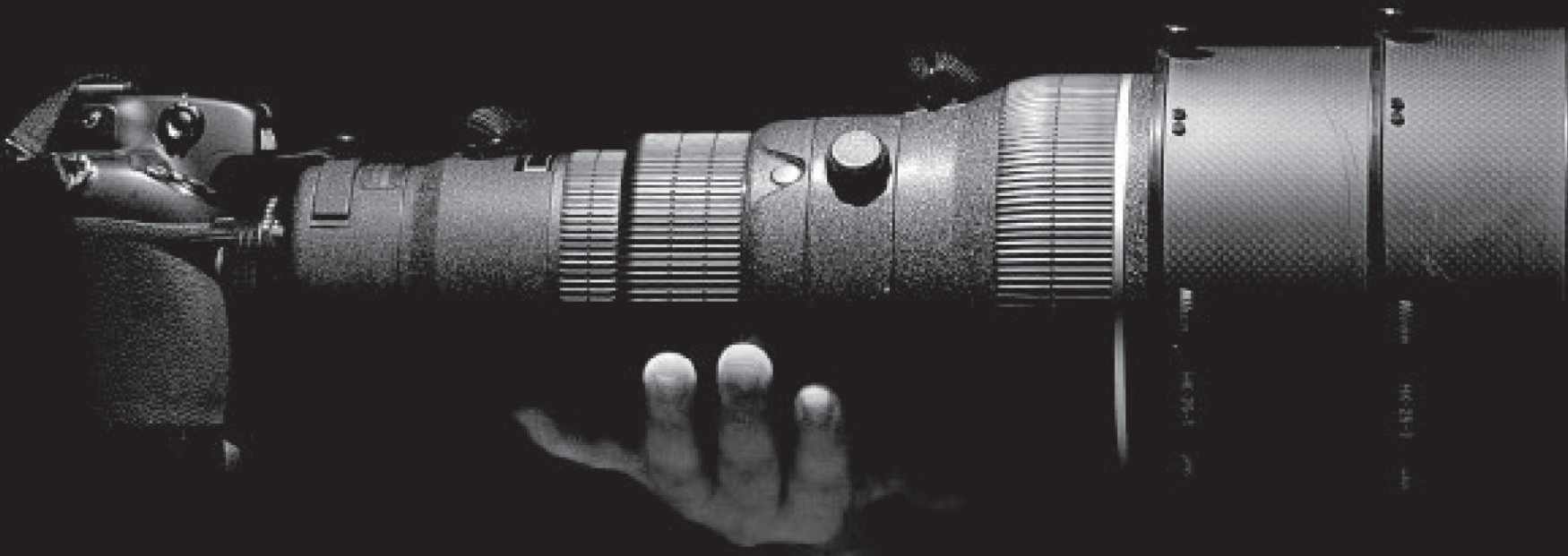
2	3	1	4	6	5
1	2	6	3	5	4
5	6	4	1	3	2
4	5	3	6	2	1
3	4	2	5	1	6
6	1	5	2	4	3

Solution to Flowers

from page 7

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

It's Dangerous to Go Alone!



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DSL's appeals to data are a disservice to the diversity of our community

While the DSL has denied adopting a one-size-fits-all approach to the student experience, such normalization is evident

These “data-driven” decisions are equally unaccountable to the facts in the effort to end mutual selection. While the DSL claims the data suggests the practice of mutual selection might cause certain students to feel rejected, to imply that the students of East Campus and other mutual selection dorms are lacking in understanding of inclusivity is misleading to say the least. As a resident of EC, I can speak to its radical inclusiveness: it opens up new spaces for all varieties of individuals and has little tolerance for those who express hateful beliefs. The average resident of EC has, in my estimation, a deeply nurtured sense of what inclusion or exclusion means, resulting in a community where those who might otherwise feel excluded can find a home. All of this is not to say it’s inconceivable that EC’s room assignment process could be improved; only that the

Burton Conner, East Campus, New House, MacGregor, and what used to be Senior House — the dorms most recently affected by this data-driven approach — all, in their own way, provide spaces for LGBTQ+ individuals, students of color, or low-income students. Decisions that affect these dorms disproportionately affect these groups; changes that affect their support structures — which often do not exist elsewhere and have been built over decades — are a delicate matter. Yet, in the case of the Senior House and New Vassar decisions, residents' unique demographics went unacknowledged, in spite of students' repeated appeals.

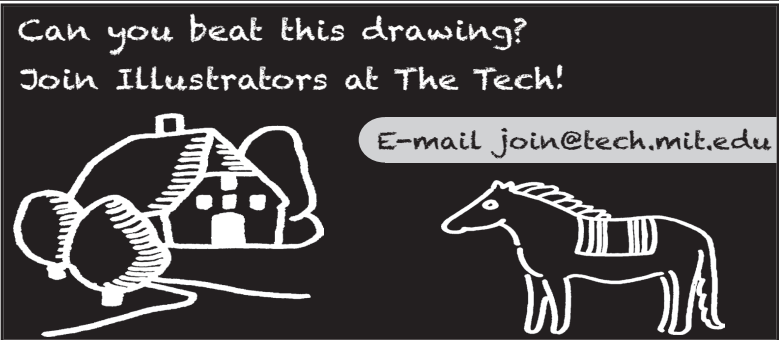
Jessica Adams is a member of the Class of 2019 studying literature, a previous resident of Senior House, and a current resident of East Campus.

Letters, columns, and cartoons must bear the authors' signatures, addresses, and phone numbers. Unsigned letters will not be accepted. *The Tech* reserves the right to edit or condense letters; shorter letters will be given higher priority.

An article in last week's issue on the teach-in and rally surrounding the College of Computing launch misstated that MIT Students Against War was the sole organizer of the teach-in. In fact, Prison Education Initiative, Queer West, MIT Prison Divestment Campaign, the Black Student Union, Palestine @ MIT, and Radius were also involved.

Guest columns are opinion articles submitted by members of the MIT or local community.

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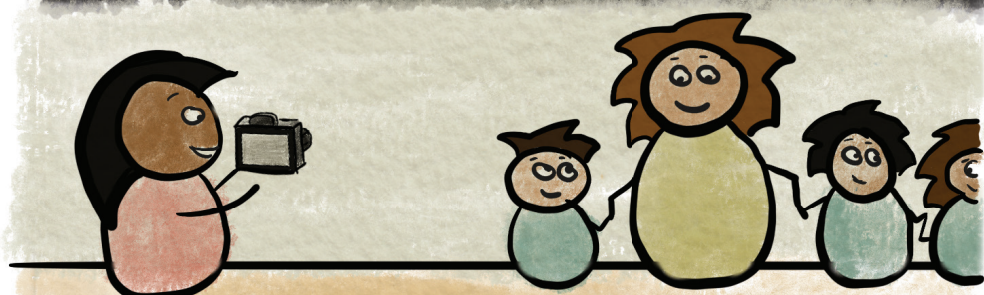


What is a number?

by Anshula Gandhi

If someone math-splained what a number was to me, I'd be pretty annoyed. So I'll spare you. Just kidding. So what is a number?

Is it something that counts items?



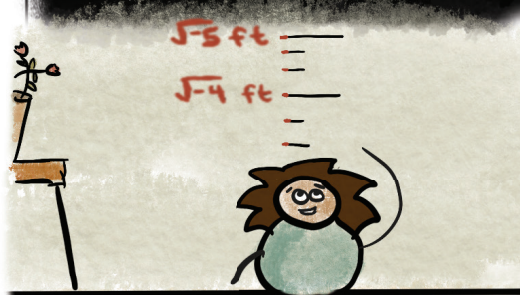
Then what of π ?



Is it something that measures lengths?



Then what of $J-1$?



Let's take a
step back.
What do we do
to numbers?



We add and multiply them.



So let's say
numbers are the
things we can
add and
multiply...

...and certain properties of addition and multiplication hold.

Addition should be commutative.

$a+b=b+a$

$$a+b=b+a$$

Addition should be associative.

$$(a+b)+c = a+(b+c)$$

Multiplication
should be
commutative.

$$ab = ba$$

Multiplication
should be
associative.

$$(ab)c = a(bc)$$

Addition and multiplication should work together via the distributive property.

$$a(b+c) = ab+ac$$

See more at anshula.com/realanalysis

[illegible]

Spring

Solution, page 2

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

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.

Showers

Solution, page 2

30x		24x	72x		1-
	60x			2-	
			1		2
4		72x			1
72x			20x		6
	8+				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.

Think About It by Sandy Fein

Solution, page 2

ACROSS

- 1 Puts in jeopardy
- 6 Complete collections
- 10 Quick punches
- 14 Get 100 on a test
- 15 Quartet minus one
- 16 A Great Lake
- 17 Spiny desert plants
- 18 Greasy
- 19 "What __ you thinking?"
- 20 Occurs to a person, as a thought
- 23 Free (of)
- 24 "You've got mail" co.
- 25 See 29 Across
- 29 With 25 Across, large game fish
- 31 Shade tree
- 34 Whale's habitat
- 35 Actor Baldwin
- 36 Jai __ (indoor sport)
- 37 Decides on something else
- 40 Group of buffalo
- 41 Bottom numbers on a graph

- 42 Gives as an example
43 Commercials, for example
44 Clumsy ones
45 Author Hemingway
46 Drain of energy
47 Long-running CBS police
series
48 Tries hard to think of
something
56 Pepsi or Coke
57 Clothes-pressing appliance
58 Entertainer Midler
59 Prayer ender
60 Home for a robin
61 Ewes' little ones
62 Not as much
63 Exits the premises
64 Somebody __ (not mine)

DOWN

- 1 Marathon or sprint
- 2 "___ hardly wait!"
- 3 Religious offshoot
- 4 Flying toy with a tail
- 5 Mixing with a spoon
- 6 Got up from a chair

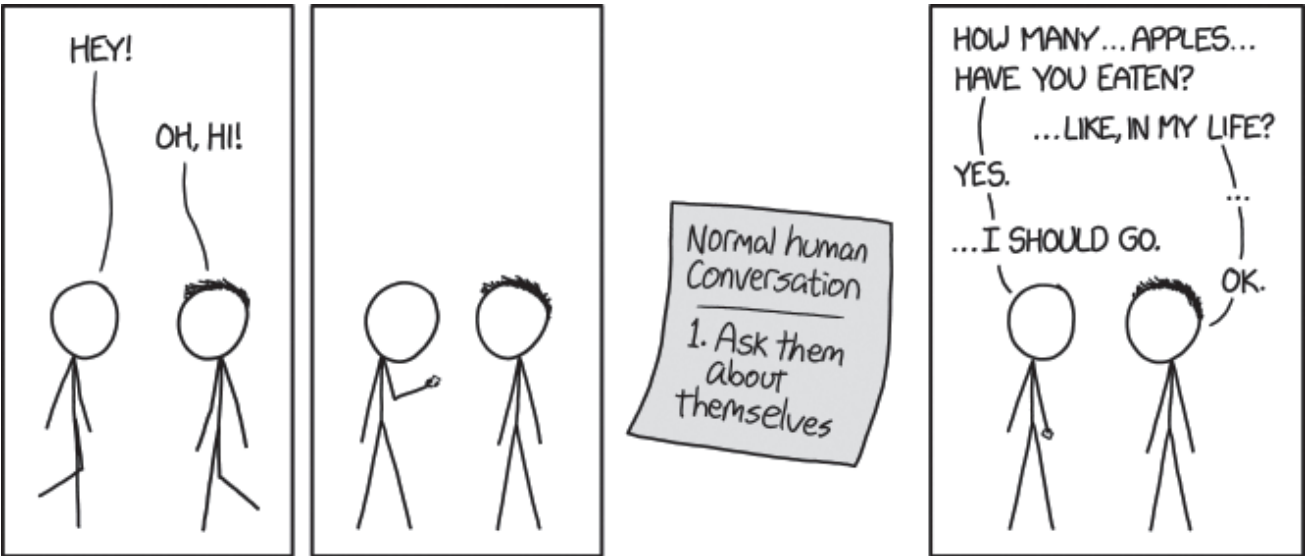
- 7 Ireland nickname
- 8 Wall's ceramic square
- 9 Sushi bar condiment
- 10 Any precious stone
- 11 Vicinity
- 12 Eagle or oriole
- 13 Catch a glimpse of
- 21 Bad deed
- 22 Ground-chopping tool
- 25 Coffee/chocolate mixture
- 26 Was sore from exertion
- 27 Raises, as children
- 28 Touch down at an airport
- 29 Gusts of wind
- 30 Monocle part
- 31 Privileged group
- 32 Highway paths
- 33 Central part
- 35 __ yet (so far)
- 36 "I __ no mood to argue"
- 38 Slipping by, as time
- 39 Write sloppily
- 44 Acorn producer
- 45 Double-curve letter
- 46 Reads, as a bar code
- 47 Dollar fractions

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				

- 48 Italy's capital
49 Pub drinks
50 Black-and-white cookie
51 Aroma-detecting organ
52 True-to-life

- 53 S&Ls' cash dispensers
54 "What'll __?" (bartender's question)
55 Loch __ monster
56 Baseball great Ripken

[1976] Friendly Questions



Just tell me everything you're thinking about in order from most important to last, and then we'll be friends and we can eat apples together.

Solution, page 2

48x	22+		162x			24x		24x
	45x		22+				5x	
1					12x	1-		56x
189x	6-	6		1			56x	
		25+				8		1
	432x			48x		3÷		8+
40x			7		8		9	
		192x		15x	210x			9
12x					26+			

[illegible]

MIT Festival Jazz Ensemble, MIT Alumni Jazz Band, and trumpeter Sean Jones express the legacy of jazz with incredible technique and musicality

The program opened with “Yesterdays,” a jazz standard about nostalgia originally written in 1933. Particularly impressive in this piece were the watery, smooth introduction from the piano and the incredible volume control and articulations of all the players. This set the scene for the world premiere of “Wizard.” Written by FJE trumpeter Alan Osmundson ’19, “Wizard” featured a solo trumpet solo performed by special

The most memorable piece of the concert was "BJ's Tune," composed by Sean Jones himself. Before playing this, Jones explained to the audience his inspiration to write this piece, "There's a lot that unites us. If you can't think of something I'll give you one thing" he said. "Fried chicken," he continued and began the piece. The tune was beautiful and uplifting, and became more powerful over time. Right after the climax, the trumpet played a slow solo section that took everyone's breaths away. It was like a movie scene, where the unaccompanied trumpeter was alone,

This concert brought out the theme of unity in the world of jazz, and toward the end, it showed us the unity of generations and backgrounds. The MIT Alumni Jazz Band represented six decades of musicians and even had members who were father and son. "In Search of the Master," a flugelhorn feature written by trombonist Richard "The Chief" Orr '62, was dedicated to Herb Pomeroy, the "Master" who led jazz at MIT for so long.

The finale brought all the musicians together in a standard B-flat blues. Composed and conducted by Mark Harvey, "3Bs & A Bop" had many different instruments playing solos, cued in by a pointed finger. It was a casual setting and a way to hear all of the amazing musicians in the entire concert.

March 9

The Festival Jazz Ensemble, the MIT Alumni Jazz Band, and trumpeter Sean Jones performed together to honor jazz legend Herb Pomeroy while showing off all of the recent compositions, impressive techniques, and talented musicians. The program was well-designed and balanced to deliver different emotions through jazz, from excitement to nostalgia. The Ensemble hosted an unforgettable night of jazz for all of the audience and continued a strong tradition of jazz here at MIT.

Marvel's newest and first female-led action flick delivers a compelling story but limited character development

In *Captain Marvel*, Vers (Brie Larson), a soldier on an elite task force from the Kree alien society, must confront her past while defending the Earth from an extraterrestrial invasion of shapeshifting Skrulls. The film takes place in the 90s, and reminds viewers of this with references to Blockbuster, dial-up internet, and period music. As avid fans of the Marvel franchise, we were excited to see how this prequel would fit into the larger universe. Would it be consistent? Would it feel unique? The trailers did little to inspire confidence. Despite the inclusion of a young Nick Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) and Phil Coulson

This interstellar war is mirrored as Captain Marvel's struggles between her dual identities: a cold, controlled Kree soldier and a caring, instinctual human pilot. This leads to a major theme of the film: emotions — how should we deal with them? Throughout the film, she's torn between the advice of two mentors — one who claims that "there's nothing more dangerous to a soldier than emotion," and another who argues that emotion is "what makes [us] human." While the payoff of this struggle was dampened by the audience not getting a strong sense of her

However, the film falls short when it comes to action. While Captain Marvel's story is compelling, her fight scenes are decidedly less so. It's fun to watch as she develops her personal fighting style, but at a certain point, it's not super interesting to watch a battle between a bad guy with no powers and someone who can fly and shoot light beams from her arms. Despite the symbolic significance of such a moment, we felt moments like this grew stale over the course of two hours. The audience never feels that

As a result of Captain Marvel's apparent invulnerability, the climax feels a little empty. While the first two acts do a great job of progressing the story and the characters' journeys, the threads they set up are not properly tied off. Clear opportunities for the movie to deal with interesting issues are flipped into the bad end of a joke. We left this movie enjoying the ride but felt that with a tighter conclusion, it could have been amazing.



Brie Larson stars as Captain Marvel in the latest Marvel Studios film, *Captain Marvel*.

Email your pieces to cl@tech.mit.edu!