thetech.com

Volume 139, Number 28



WEATHER, p. 2

THU: 50° F | 39° F
Sunny

FRI: 54° F | 31° F
Cloudy

SAT: 45° F | 35° F
Mostly Sunny

Thursday, November 21, 2019

# MIT receives \$261 million in funding from Lord Foundation

Unrestricted gift may be used to support graduate students, climate change research, and inclusivity

By Cami Mejia

The Lord Foundation of Massachusetts donated \$261 million to MIT, MIT News announced in an article Nov. 13. MIT will keep its options open regarding fund allocation.

"We ... appreciate the intellectual freedom unrestricted funding offers students to pursue ideas that excite them and excite their faculty advisor," Provost Martin Schmidt PhD '88 wrote in an email to *The Tech*.

This past June, MIT's Academic Council discussed and considered long-term challenges faced by the Institute and identified areas where new funds could be beneficial.

One of these areas was support for graduate students and graduate research, Schmidt wrote. Climate change and advancement of a more welcoming and inclusive climate on campus are two other possible areas for the funding, Schmidt continued.

Further discussion between Schmidt and the Academic Council will take place to determine how the money is to be spent.

The Lord Foundations were established by Thomas Lord to support institutions seeking to advance research, education, and innovation. Each foundation benefits a specific university or institution

selected by Lord and his successor, Donald Alstadt.

The Lord Foundation of Massachusetts specifically benefits only MIT, beginning its support of the Institute in 1986. The other Lord Foundations support Duke University, the University of Southern California, and the Cleveland Clinic. Since 1986, the Lord Foundation of Massachusetts has provided \$34.4 million in funds to MIT.

The funds are from proceeds from the sale of Lord Corporation stock held by the Jura Corporation, Melissa Buscher, chief communications officer for the Lord Corporation wrote in an email to The Tech



MAXIMO MACHADO—THE TECH

**Children of all ages get help building** Rube Goldberg Machines at the MIT Museum Saturday.

### **IN SHORT**

A blood drive will be held in La Sala de Puerto Rico on the second floor of the Student Center Monday and Tuesday from 8 a.m.–6 p.m. Visit the following website to make an appointment: http://web.mit.edu/blood-drive/www/.

There will be no classes next Thursday and Friday for the **Thanksgiving holiday**.

**The Student Center will be closed** for the Thanksgiving holiday from 10 p.m. on Wednesday night to 7 a.m. on Saturday morning.

A shuttle to Logan Airport will run on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Make a reservation here: http://dof-web.mit.edu/ shuttles/airshuttle.asp

Nominations for the annual **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Award** are open until next Friday.

Interested in **joining** *The Tech*? Stop by for dinner Sunday at 6 p.m. or email *join@tech.mit.edu*.

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

# College of Computing discussed during Nov. 20 faculty meeting

SHASS faculty express concerns over ethical responsibilites

By Margaret Rodriguez

Faculty members discussed organizational plans for the Stephen A. Schwarzman College of Computing, its role within the Institute, and its social and ethical responsibilities during a faculty meeting Nov. 20. Dean of the College of Computing Daniel Huttenlocher PhD '88 gave

updates on the proposed structure of the college and a timeline for implementation.

"When we look at the world outside, computing, ... hardware, software, algorithms, the advent of AI, are transforming just about everything," Huttenlocher said. But computing "practice" is often ahead of both "technical understanding" and "understanding of societal impact," Huttenlocher continued.

Huttenlocher's presentation outlined three key areas that the college intends to address: computing fields and their rapid evolution, computing in other disciplines, and the so-

 ${f CoC}$  , Page 2

# CUP conducts reviews of Phase Two of first-year academic experiment

A record number of first years have registered for discovery subjects

# By Shreya Karpoor and Wenbo Wu

The Committee on Undergraduate Preparation (CUP), under the Office of the Vice Chancellor (OVC), is conducting reviews of Phase Two of the CUP experiment. The CUP will use these reviews to propose changes that, if approved by faculty vote, will be up for permanent adoption in the spring.

Phase Two, which affects the Class of 2023, lowers the credit limit in the fall from 54 to 48 units, increases the credit limit in the spring from 57 to 60 units, adds an additional nine units restricted to discovery classes, and eliminates Early Sophomore Standing.

The experiment was designed to give first-year students more exploration opportunities "by providing a broader range of classes to students and inspiring more learning opportunities," Vice Chancellor Ian Waitz said in an interview with *The Tach* 

The OVC is currently conducting and analyzing interviews with

students from the Class of 2022, which was subject to Phase One of the experiment. According to the investigation, 89.3 percent of students are in favor of designating up to three science General Institute Requirements to be graded on a Pass/No Record basis after the first term

CUP Chair Arthur Bahr said in an interview with *The Tech* that the CUP will try to look at the consequences of the changes "to put together a set of proposals of changes that we think would be beneficial for the faculty to vote on for permanent adoption in the spring."

According to Waitz, there is currently a record high of about 650 students in the Class of 2023 that registered for first-year advising seminars and 524 students registered for discovery classes.

Discovery classes were primarily put in place to help students who have not yet decided on a field of study and are open to exploration, Waitz said. The classes are designed to allow these students to fulfill GIRs while taking low-workload classes

that allow for exposure to a wide variety of subjects.

Some concerns that have been raised, Waitz said, are that students are not completing necessary science core GIRs required for sophomore subjects and are receiving information, explicitly or implicitly, that GIRs are not valuable because they are on P/NR.

While GPA in science core GIRs increased by 0.06 in Fall 2018, GPA in science core GIRs dropped by 0.36 in Spring 2019, according to last year's results from Phase One of the experiment.

Bahr emphasized that the CUP's charge, as defined in the Rules and Regulations of the Faculty, includes encouraging "experimental innovation in undergraduate education, including the approval and supervision of limited educational experiments and granting of exceptions to allow any experiment to depart from specific faculty regulations and MIT administrative procedures."

More information regarding the proposed changes by the CUP will be available in the spring.



ASSEL ISMOLDAYEVA—THE TECH

**Anne Hunter has retired after more than 46 years** at MIT. The EECS department celebrated her retirement on Friday with students and faculty thanking Hunter for her contributions.

# THE CASE OF SETH LLOYD

MIT Students Against War speaks out. **OPINION, p. 3** 

### WAVES

A bold, beautiful sensory experiment.

ARTS, p. 6

### MTG'S *A CHORUS LINE*

Oh God, I need this show! ARTS, p. 5



### **LOVE LONG GONE**

Marriage Story is a tragic story of divorce.

ARTS, p. 5

### WOMEN'S SOCCER

A win and a loss to end a successful season. **SPORTS**, **p**. 8

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**WEATHER** 

# A lot to be thankful for... but not Boston weather

By Kyle Morgenstein STAFF METEOROLOGIST

There's a lot to be thankful for as we head into the last half week before thanksgiving break: professors cancelling classes on Wednesday, the fact that there's only two weeks of classes left after break, or Alabama's loss to LSU (there's correlation that either 'Bama or the Pats win it all every year — but never both...). Even more so for extended pset and paper deadlines. But above all else, I'm excited to be getting out of this weather! We've settled into a good routine here in the Northeast one or two crisp fall days in ex-

change for a week of rain, and oh baby is it going to rain. Advice for the frosh: if you haven't invested in a rain coat yet, it's a sound investment for your time in Boston.

There shouldn't be any significant weather-related travel delays heading into break: the Midwest is currently getting hit with a fair amount of Northeast-bound rain and snow associated with a lowpressure system (which will hit the Boston area Sunday) but the skies should be generally clear across the country for turkey week. All in all, it should make for a great start to the skiing season, if that's your thing. Have a great break and good luck on finals.

### **Extended Forecast**

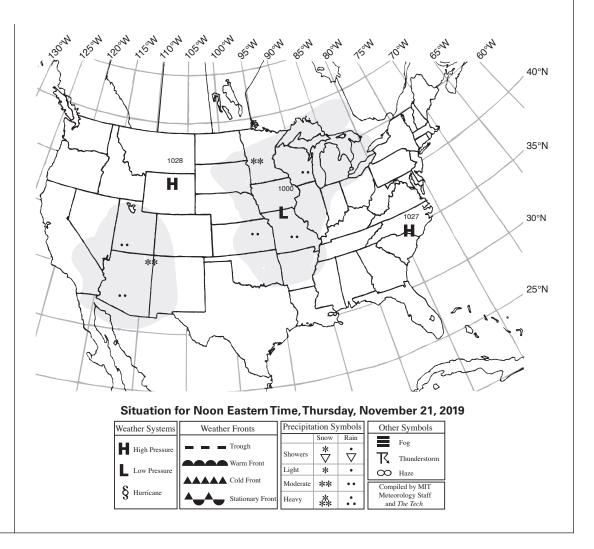
Today: Sunny. High of 50°F (10°C) with moderate southeast winds of 12 mph.

Tonight: Partly cloudy, with a low of 39°F (4°C). Winds will subdue to 7 mph.

Tomorrow: High of 54°F (12°C) and a low of 31°F (0°C) with east-

Saturday: Mostly Sunny with a high of 45°F (7°C) and a low of

Sunday: Scattered Showers. High around 47°F (8°C) and a low around 35°F (2°C).



# Silbey: 'You keep putting the social aspects on a shorter leg'

CoC, from Page 1

cial and ethical responsibilities of computing.

Then, Huttenlocher described how the college will seek to address these needs by restructuring and implementing new structures. The college will seek to bring together different departments, labs, and centers which have "particularly important roles in computing at MIT," Huttenlocher said.

The Provost Task Force Working Group Report was developed Spring 2019, the EECS Plan was developed Summer 2019, and the College Plan Development began Fall 2019 and will hopefully be done in December, according to Huttenlocher.

Huttenlocher discussed the tensions that exist in defining faculty membership for the college. On

one hand, many faculty members would benefit from mutual engagement with the college. However, Huttenlocher expressed concern about having too many faculty members in the college, saying that MIT is an "institute of technology" and not an "institute of computing."

The report also defined the four academic units which would be central to the college: Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, Artificial Intelligence and Decision-Making (which would be comanaged with the School of Engineering), and the Institute for Data, Systems, and Society.

Huttenlocher said the college would create and seek to fill 25 new faculty positions through "shared hiring." The college would select five or six other topics with important applications for computing. Faculty

would then be hired in "clusters" pertaining to these distinct topics. Thus, instead of distributing the 25 faculty members across all different departments, the college would use these five or six clusters to hire the new members of the college.

Many SHASS faculty members had concerns pertaining to the social and ethical responsibilities of computing.

Caroline Jones, professor of architecture, presented a joint statement by Jones and Sherry Turkle, professor of science, technology, and society. Jones said that there is a pressing need for an independent center within the college which would seek to address important issues pertaining to the societal implications of technology, as "technology will not solve the problems that technology has caused."

In response, Huttenlocher said it is necessary to separate "broad, Institute-wide" initiatives from the specific needs of the College of Computing.

Jones then said that MIT has historically handled "inflection points" where it became urgent to address the social and ethical responsibilities of technology by "reinvesting in the humanities and in the social scientific critique of what technology had wronged."

Susan Silbey, professor of anthropology, was concerned that the humanities and the social sciences would have a lessened role in the college. "This college was advertised from day one as having three legs. You keep putting the social aspects on a shorter leg."

"It is a constant demeaning of the things that are human," she continued, describing SHASS faculty members' concern over the representation of their fields in the college.

Elizabeth Wood, professor of history, addressed tensions many SHASS faculty members have been experiencing in relation to their potential role in the college. "We were presented with the idea of the College of Computing as something that would reach across the five schools," Wood said. "It is not that the SHASS faculty is looking for ourpart in yourthing. It is that we were told that your thing was part of us."

Wood continued, "For thirty years, I have not felt that this Institute really recognizes the phenomenal, multi-published, multiaward-winning faculty that it has on the SHASS side."



Members of the MIT community play shogi, a Japanese board game, at the Tsukimi Festival held by the Japanese Association of MIT Tuesday.

# Ali Daher receives Rhodes **Scholarship**

### Daher plans to study mechanobiology at Oxford

By Jocasta Manasseh-Lewis

Ali Daher '20, a mechanical engineering major concentrating in biological engineering, was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship for the Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine region. The award announced in an MIT News article Nov. 15. Daher plans to pursue a degree in research engineering science with the Oxford Mechanobiology Group.

Daher said in an interview with *The Tech* that he originally planned to attend medical school in Jordan. "I always had this passion for math and engineering, which I put aside for a while until I came to MIT," Daher said. Daher took classes through Health Sciences and Technology (HST) that combined mechanical and biological engineering. "I liked the engineering and the analytical approach, but I also had a passion for biology," he said.

Through his classes at HST, Daher became interested in mathematically-modeling biological phenomena. "I just found it absolutely amazing, and I thought, that's something I want to learn more about, and hopefully contribute to." Daher said.

Daher's current research project began as a SuperUROP in the Multidisciplinary Simulation, Estimation, and Assimilation Systems (MSEAS) lab. His project focuses on developing mathematical models for a particular type of brain tumor known to be highly aggressive: glioblastoma multiforme.

Daher explained that the mor is challenging for clinicians to treat because of its "unpredictable dynamics" and poor quality of MRI data due to different brain geometries. For 1.5 years, he has been working on modeling the tumor with an algorithm developed in the MSEAS lab that models fluid systems in the ocean. He hopes that one day, this type of modeling can be used in healthcare.

Daher also led a research project with the Brigham and Women's Hospital Division of Genetics investigating algorithms that score the pathogenicity of genetic mutations by studying their effect on the structure of proteins.

While searching for graduate programs that offered research opportunities at the intersection of mechanical and biological engineering, Daher became interested in the research of the Oxford Mechanobiology Group, which prompted him to apply for a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford.

The Rhodes Scholarship "offers you leadership training, connections so that you can learn from your various peers who are highachieving and who have different opinions," Daher said. "I thought that joining such a cohort of people would give me the connections and the opportunity to learn from them"

Daher advises students to take their time when deciding on a research interest. "You only get to really know your passions once you get out of your comfort zone [and] start taking a couple of classes and [doing] projects that ... you might not necessarily stick to. If you're not going to explore at MIT, where and when are you going to explore?"

The Rhodes Scholarship is an international postgraduate award established in 1902. About 100 students are accepted to study fullyfunded at the University of Oxford each year. The scholarship for the Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine region, which was created in 2016, is awarded to two students each year.

According to the Rhodes Trust, "Rhodes Scholarships are for young leaders of outstanding intellect and character who are motivated to engage with global challenges, committed to the service of others and show promise of becoming value-driven, principled leaders for the world's future."

# PINION OPINION OPINION OPINION OPINION OPINION O

# The case of Seth Lloyd is a microcosm of the systemic problems at MIT

Months after the Epstein scandal blew up, admins are still protecting themselves and senior professors from facing any kind of accountability

### By MIT Students Against War

Seth Lloyd, a tenured professor of mechanical engineering at MIT, should never have been teaching this semester. This summer, it was revealed that Lloyd took funding from child sex-trafficker Jeffrey Epstein, and that he visited Epstein during his prison sentence in the Palm Beach county jail. Despite this, MIT did not suspend Lloyd from teaching, nor did the administration prevent him from advising first-year undergraduates. Once the semester started, Lloyd used his classroom as a soapbox to monologue about his relations with Epstein. As a result, at least one student dropped his class. Since learning of this full situation, MIT Students Against War has been demanding that Seth Lloyd be fired or resign.

On Thursday, Oct. 31, MIT Students Against War (MITSAW) staged a silent protest outside of Seth Lloyd's quantum computation class. In response, the students were sent to a different classroom while Lloyd lectured over video link from their usual classroom. MIT assigned three police officers to guard the classroom where the students were and four to guard the classroom in which Seth Lloyd delivered the lecture. It is telling that the administration is more worried about a few students with signs than the situation they are protesting.

### Students should not have to be taught by a professor who needs to use class time to defend his rehabilitation of a child sex trafficker.

During our protest, a student currently enrolled in Lloyd's class told MITSAW that they did not want their classmates to find out they were there because they were concerned these classmates would not agree with their views. We also found out that Professor Lloyd had even encouraged the use of class time for a debate between his student supporters and the protesters. It is clear that the irresponsible actions of the MIT administration have allowed Professor Lloyd to turn his class — which is supposed to focus on quantum computation — into a forum to garner support for his actions and tacitly intimidate those who disagree into silence. As Eleanor Graham's recent opinion piece made clear, students should not have to be taught by a professor who needs to use class time to defend his rehabilitation of a child sex trafficker. Allowing Seth Lloyd to continue to teach at MIT is deeply harmful to students from a psychological, emotional, and pedagogical point of view.

After the class ended, we spoke to Seth Lloyd outside his classroom for more than 30 minutes. He confirmed having visited Epstein's notorious island in the Virgin Islands, the same island where Epstein allegedly kept girls hostage and raped them. He repeatedly justified his choice to accept funding from Epstein as a normal thing one does to rehabilitate a friend who has served time

in prison. In the course of our conversation, Lloyd admitted that he never looked into the public allegations against Jeffrey Epstein and sought to frame himself as the victim of Epstein's guile.

"Yeah well, I went, the times when I visited his house and his island were at a conference. It was with scientists and their spouses. ... There was a conference in the Virgin Islands on astrobiology, and he had a lunch for the people in the conference and their spouses who were with them. It was a very kind of like family time kind of thing. There wasn't anything suspicious."

Lloyd openly admitted that he trusted the words of Epstein and did not even bother to investigate the allegations of Epstein's many victims. We assert that this displays such a severe degree of negligence that he should no longer be employed at MIT. It seems to us that Epstein's offer of hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding — some of which Lloyd used to take a sabbatical — was all it took for Lloyd to turn a blind eye to Epstein's many crimes.

"It wasn't money that I needed. I took it because I thought that it was my obligation to do so, because I had said I was going to help with him coming back into society."

When we questioned Lloyd about these matters, he continually deflected by trying to shift the conversation to the abstract question of rehabilitating people with criminal pasts. In doing so he attempted to frame his relationship with Jeffrey Epstein as a noble endeavor to help a friend who had made a mistake. Lloyd made no mention of the fact that allegations had emerged that Epstein abused trafficked women while on "work leave" during his sentence. Absent from his justification was any serious grappling with the fact the friend in question was a multimillionaire pedophile sex trafficker. The absurdity of Lloyd's reasoning was most evident when he repeatedly implied that taking hundreds of thousands of dollars from Epstein helped rehabilitate him.

The absurdity of Lloyd's reasoning was most evident when he repeatedly implied that taking hundreds of thousands of dollars from Epstein helped rehabilitate him.

Funding for research and a sabbatical has not been the only material benefit Seth Lloyd received from his close friendship with Jeffrey Epstein. On Oct. 28, 2019, three days before MITSAW's silent protest, a "talk" by Lloyd was uploaded to the website of Edge, the organization that until 2015 received the majority of its funding from Epstein and which hosted the notorious "billionaire dinners" that have been recently scrutinized in the news media. Buzzfeed recently published an exposé detailing the relationship between Epstein and Edge, which was run by John Brockman, the literary agent who

sat at the center of the network of patronage that helped connect Epstein with elite scientists and shield his reputation. To this day, Lloyd continues his relationship with Brockman and maintains a series of other relationships with people and organizations closely linked to Epstein. This shows that he has not reckoned with the impact of his actions or those of others who enabled Epstein to commit his monstrous crimes.

The administration is working to do damage control for its long-standing relationship with Jeffrey Epstein in an attempt to preserve its own power, reputation, and influence.

MIT has a documented record of failing to deal with inappropriate and harmful behavior by faculty. In one out of multiple such cases in the last year, Richard Stallman was pressured to resign from CSAIL when a series of people came forward to describe having been harassed in some manner by him over the last several decades. In a recent survey on sexual misconduct at MIT, it was found that that MIT faculty and instructors made up 18.1 percent of the instigators of harassment, which was almost double the national average of 9.6 percent. This is further evidence of this administration's inability to hold prominent faculty members accountable for their behavior.

When asked about Seth Lloyd at the Nov. 5 community forum, Provost Marty Schmidt read a statement effectively stating that they had placed the decision-making power on the students currently in Lloyd's class and alleging that they had opened up channels, direct and anonymous, for student feedback. Two days later, on Nov. 7, an email was sent to students in Seth Lloyd's class from the department heads of physics, mathematics, and mechanical engineering, announcing that they had decided to keep Lloyd assigned to the class through the rest of the semester. The logic behind this decision-making process is quite concerning. It shows that the MIT administration believes that if the majority of the students in the class do not raise their voices in opposition to Seth Lloyd, then he should be allowed to teach. However, as the #MeToo movement has shown, powerful men often use their positions of authority to silence criticism. Since the start of the semester, Seth Lloyd has repeatedly used class time to talk about and justify his relationship with Jeffrey Epstein. During the confrontation with MITSAW recounted above, Lloyd defended this use of class time by declaring that academia "is a tough business" and that students deserve the truth about his actions so they can "make their own decisions about whether to stay in the class. Whether or not Professor Lloyd has insidious intent,

Seth Lloyd, Page 4



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4 THE TECH
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2019

# Institute protects perpetrators over victims amid issues of sexual misconduct

Seth Lloyd, from Page 3

his place at the front of the classroom gives him all the power in dictating the terms of discussion — discussion that shouldn't be happening in the first place, given what he has admitted to.

We will not wait as the MIT administration continues to protect their own reputations and careers while trampling the most vulnerable members of our population.

The group from which the administration is soliciting feedback excludes the students, like Eleanor, who dropped the class because of Lloyd. Soliciting feedback in this manner allows the administration to wash its hands of the inevitable outrage over the decision to retain Seth Lloyd as a professor. They can simply claim to be following the lead of the students in the class. This ignores the fact that many still in the class are unlikely to come forward for fear of reprisal and for lack of faith in administrative processes.

The callous approach by the MIT administration has placed many students in

a difficult position. While meeting with an administrator, an anonymous student still in the class received unprompted and resolute insistence that Lloyd would keep teaching, including an argument that any immediate discipline would lead to a slippery slope under which many other professors could face similar consequences. As for the dynamic of students in the class, they told us, "Yeah it's kind of a conflict of interest because we might be uncomfortable with Lloyd, and some of us definitely are, but this is the only class on the subject at MIT, and for many it fills a requirement or otherwise affects your schedule going on."

The reality is that MIT and its administration function to protect the powerful at all costs. The administration is working to do damage control for its long-standing relationship with Jeffrey Epstein in an attempt to preserve its own power, reputation, and influence. They are doing this instead of adopting a survivor and trauma-centered process. In what has become one of the largest sexual assault scandals in the U.S., MIT has taken anything but responsible action. There is a rot at MIT. This "process" has only shined a spotlight on it. As a community, we must speak out in solidarity with survivors everywhere now, or we will be responsible for perpetuating the violence and oppression that so many face here at MIT and around the world.

It should have been an easy choice to suspend Professor Lloyd from teaching and

advising before the semester ever began when Lloyd released his apology and stated what he had done. The quantum computation course has been taught by other professors in the past and could have been taught by any of them this fall. By deferring any action until a vaguely-defined "fact-finding" process has been completed, MIT continues to punish survivors and other students, who are rightly disturbed, by forcing them, if they wish to pursue their course of study, to take a class taught by a professor who had a close and long-standing relationship with an international sex trafficker who ruined the lives of hundreds of teenaged girls. We want to be very clear: the non-action by MIT administrators has dealt direct harm to students like Eleanor, who are now being swept under the rug as if the only voices that matter are those who have decided to stay in Seth Lloyd's class and feel comfortable enough to speak their minds on the issue. The impact of allowing Lloyd to continue teaching extends far beyond the classroom, but it seems that as far as MIT is concerned, these people are irrelevant to Institute decision-making.

As the administrator whose comments appeared earlier implied, there is a clear explanation for why no action has been taken: it follows that if obvious moral standards are placed on professors like Seth Lloyd, then they would also need to be placed on administrators, like President Rafael Reif, who were complicit in their behavior. It would require holding other professors accountable

for their associations with child sex traffickers (a high bar, apparently). There would need to be a real reckoning with the clear pattern, mentioned above, of faculty engaging in harassment and assault of students and others in the community. The MIT administration has no interest in holding itself accountable at the highest levels. By drawing out and obfuscating this "fact-finding" process as long as possible, they are hoping that the outrage on campus and in the media will subside so that they can continue to preserve the status quo.

# The "right time" for action has already passed.

At a September faculty meeting, faced with calls for his resignation, President Reif responded, "I want to beg you, honest to goodness, wait a little longer." We will not wait a day longer. We will not wait for these conversations to happen weeks from now, in a back room, on terms dictated by the very people who committed the relevant offenses. We will not wait as the MIT administration continues to protect their own reputations and careers while trampling the most vulnerable members of our population. The "right time" for action has already passed.

The full transcripts described in this article can be read in MITSAW's piece on Medium.



Thursday, November 21, 2019

The Tech 5

### **MUSICAL REVIEW**

# I really need this job!

### MTG brings to life 17 quirky Broadway auditionees in A Chorus Line



JULIE HENION PHOTOGRAPHY

Members of MIT's Musical Theater Guild perform A Chorus Line.

By Erica Weng

Who am I anyway? Am I my resume? I need this job, oh God, I need this show! This weekend, MTG opened their rendition of the 1975 Broadway hit musical A Chorus Line. Set in New York City during an audition for a Broadway chorus line, the musical brings to life the stories of 17 auditionees and the director of the show. As the director calls forth each auditionee to talk about their life beyond the resume — their childhood, relationships, and struggles growing up — the audition evolves from a mere test of dancing ability to an introspective reflection on the complexities of the human experience.

True to its 70s Broadway setting, A Chorus Line features a soundtrack boasting an upbeat collection of ragtime and jazz melodies with syncopated rhythms. Auditionee Mike sings about how he learned to dance after taking his sister's spot in a dance class one afternoon to a catchy double bass beat in the song "I Can Do That." On the other hand, the song "Sing" is a bubbly, spoken discourse

set to trumpets and brass, with an occasional sung word thrown in. But catchy melodies and upbeat grooves aren't the only strong points of the soundtrack; the lyrics of each song bring out the depth and complexity of each singer. Pervading the entire soundtrack is a continuous "montage" of recountings and reminiscences that "add a lot of depth to what might initially seem like a straightforward show," as cast member Sonja Lindberg '20 described. Some songs are particularly poignant: one of Lindberg's favorites is a ballad called "What I Did for Love." She recounted that it "really makes you remember that you do things to feel, to live, to experience. You do it for your love of life, and even though the moment always has to end, you won't forget it, and it was worthwhile all along."

A Chorus Line is just as much about the dance sequences as it is about the music. The show's many dance numbers boast a variety of ballet twirls, top hat tipping, and lined-up high-kicks — moves not trivial to keep in sync in a large group of 17 performers. "A Chorus Line was a pretty big risk for MTG to take," explained Lauren Schexnayder '20, the show's producer. "Our cast had

to pick up the fundamentals of ballet and tap... and then they had to learn how to sing and act their asses off at the same time." Michael Mandanas '22, the show's choreographer, agreed: "it was really difficult adapting the classic combos to something that we could pull off, not as professional dancers, but as college students... I [had] to simplify down a few things." Sure enough, though there are a few cast members who have obviously been dancing their whole lives, a lot of the cast are newbies. "All of the dances were challenging, but they never failed to put a smile on my face," explained Eva Demsky '22, who plays the youngest auditionee Mark. "I grew up listening to these songs and getting to be a part of them now is just so exciting!'

What is particularly spectacular to me about MTG's rendition of the show is how each actor and actress so fully embodies the hopes, emotions, and longings of their characters. "This production is really close to the hearts of many performers," explained Mandanas. "It really reflects the struggle of artists to stay relevant, and how strong the desire to continue performing can be. That's something I really relate to as someone who performed before MIT and wasn't sure if I would continue coming here." Lindberg masterfully embodies the drive and ambition of her character Val, a dancer who went as far as to receive plastic surgery because her physical appearance was preventing her from receiving Broadway roles. "Playing Val was a ton of fun," Lindberg said. "She's brash and in your face and comical, but she is also quite vulnerable and a real fighter." Audrey Leibig '22 says about her character Diana, a young dreamer who was constantly put down by her classmates and even her high school acting teacher and yet stays afloat through it all: "I really got to figure out who she was and why she sings the songs that she does." In A Chorus Line, MTG also breaks the boundaries of gender, race, and other divides with their casting decisions, such as by having female actresses play male characters and vice versa. For example, Demsky

### A Chorus Line

MIT Musical Theater Guild

Directed by David Favela '18

La Sala de Puerto Rico

Nov. 15–16, 21–23 at 8 p.m., Nov. 17 at 2 p.m.

overcame many challenges in preparing for her character of the other gender. "It was really freeing to be able to play this role," she said. "I love that I get to sing the part an octave higher than it is normally written for a man, allowing me to sing in my usual soprano range."

Though at the beginning of the show I found it difficult to differentiate between the 17 auditionees, the characters gradually reveal more and more about themselves such that by the end of the show, I felt that I knew each one as a friend. Director David Favela '18 quoted the definition of the invented word sonder in his Director's Note. The word refers to "the realization that each random passerby is living a life as vivid and complex as your own — populated with their own ambitions, friends, routine, worries, and inherited craziness." When a final round of selections is made by the director eliminating 9 of the 17 auditionees, sonder describes exactly what I felt. It was time to say goodbye to some of the characters I'd really gotten to know deeply. Though they weren't the stars of the show being auditioned for, they were the stars of *A Chorus Line* — complex and intricately human.

All in all, a wonderfully entertaining performance by MTG. Showings continue this weekend, Friday through Sunday at 8 p.m. in La Sala de Puerto Rico.

### **MOVIE REVIEW**

# Marriage Story is beautifully heartbreaking

A film that will slowly rip your heart apart in all the best ways

\*\*\*\*

Marriage Story

Directed by Noah Baumbach

Screenplay by Noah Baumbach

Starring Scarlett
Johansson, Adam Driver,
Azhy Robertson, Laura
Dern, Alan Alda

Streaming on Netflix Dec. 6

By Erika Yang
ASSOCIATE ARTS EDITOR

What I love about *Marriage Story*: it's a film that will slowly rip your heart apart in all the best ways. It will make you laugh and cry and everything in between. It is simultaneously a love story and a bitter separation. Director Noah Baumbach is completely unapologetic as he tears down what was once a picturesque marriage.

It's always been Charlie (Adam Driver) and Nicole (Scarlett Johansson). Charlie and Nicole Barber are a New York-based family. They have an adorable son, Henry (Azhy Robertson). Charlie is a big-name theater director, and Nicole is a rising Hollywood actress who stars in his plays. Charlie's play is transferring to Broadway, and Nicole is transferring to Los Angeles to star in a pilot. Nicole files for divorce. And suddenly, it's no longer just Charlie and Nicole despite their best efforts to keep it between

themselves. It's Charlie and Nicole — and also Nicole's lawyer Nora (Laura Dern) and Charlie's first and second lawyers Bert (Alan Alda) and Jay (Ray Liotta), respectively, and everyone who has been involved in some part of their lives as a couple.

Divorce is ugly. Like Nicole says in the film: "It's not as simple as not being in love anymore." There are costs — both monetary and emotional, and the film gives an excellent albeit painful portrayal of those costs. Charlie and Nicole initially agreed to resolve the divorce between themselves, but once Nicole heeds the advice of a Hollywood friend, she lawyers up with cutthroat divorce attorney Nora Fanshaw. Now, the Barbers are an LA-based family, and Charlie is the inconsiderate husband and workaholic father. And it's heartbreaking. It's heartbreaking to watch Charlie flounder in a foreign city, doing everything he can to not lose everything he has. It's excruciating to watch the former couple exploit every little past phrase or action and mutate it into an unfavorable characteristic. To see Charlie and Nicole at the beginning of their relationship and then to see them at the end is to see two people lose themselves to the ravenous jaws of divorce. It is "death without a body.'

It would be easier to accept if there were a "bad guy" in the situation, but there isn't. Everyone is just doing what they believe to be the best course of action given the circumstances. For Charlie and Nicole, they're doing what they believe is best for Henry. For their lawyers, they're doing what they believe is best for their clients. But somewhere along the away, doing what is considered best for all parties involved transforms into a game that everyone is fighting to win whether they know it or not. And in the middle of that game is Henry, still a child, whose biggest concern in life is not that his parents are separating but that he's gone trick-or-treating for too long and

needs to go to bed. Both Charlie and Nicole are fighting to be seen as the better parent and by doing so, they are unintentionally fighting to make the other seem like the unfit parent. From the emotional strain to the draining bank accounts, there is no winning this game.

However, Charlie and Nicole's divorce paints a very privileged view of the whole process. And that is made clear during the court scene where the judge points out the multitudes of other ex-couples who do not have the resources to have their lawyers battle it out for another hour or so. And indeed, not every parent going through divorce has the money to fly back and forth across the country every other week to see

their kid. Not every parent has the money to rent an apartment in Los Angeles to be closer to their kid. Not every parent has the money to afford lawyers that are going to fight for them. By removing these factors, the film becomes less relatable to the general public but focuses much more on the visceral emotional intensity, making it easier to tell the story.

At its core however, *Marriage Story* is more than a story about a sordid divorce. It is about two people who complemented each other throughout a certain duration of their lives until they grew out of each other. Charlie needed Nicole to bring his plays

Marriage Story, Page 6



WILSON WEBB

**Laura Dern and Scarlett Johansson star** as Nora Fanshaw and Nicole Barber, respectively, in *Marriage Story*.

6 THE TECH Thursday, November 21, 2019

# A tearful divorce that will make you cry

Marriage Story, from Page 5

alive and Nicole needed Charlie to feel alive again even if she was just "feeding his aliveness." Making Charlie and Nicole a directoractor couple infuses a stronger meaning into the narrative. Charlie Barber, recipient of the MacArthur Genius grant and critically acclaimed theater director, has been in control all of his life because he is the director. He's always known what he wants and how he wants it. Nicole Barber, on the other hand, is his leading lady. She could have stayed in Hollywood after a breakthrough film role, but instead chose to stay with Charlie in New York. He directed, she listened, and they worked. But then the roles become reversed once Nicole files for divorce, and she becomes the one calling all the shots.

As somber as the story is by itself, the absolutely stellar performances from the two leads is what really cements the film as one

of the greats. Driver and Johansson deliver incredibly raw and powerful performances, truly capturing the sheer grief and pain that results from a separation. They are exemplary in every single scene and captivating with every line of dialogue. There are no theatrics, no CGI, no special effects, or anything of the sort. It is simply two actors and a camera, and it's magical. The supporting cast is nothing short of phenomenal either. Everyone absorbed their role, and it was like watching

an actual divorce unfold. All the characters were so real, you can't help but sympathize

From beginning to end, Marriage Story is an exquisite film. Baumbach splendidly crafts a captivating narrative that is sure to pull at your heartstrings. This film is an absolute must-see and tissues are an absolute must-have. And if that doesn't convince you to see it, I leave you with this: Kylo Ren and Black Widow get a divorce.

### **MOVIE REVIEW**

# Submerged into the depths of heartache

Waves explores love and pain through a spectacularly artistic and emotional lens

By Lulu Tian

The film Waves stays true to its name: it washes over its audiences and characters with currents of emotion and sensation, challenging and overcoming the constraints of the medium. What is captured in this film is beyond storytelling. Aural and visual senses are saturated in artistic ways, abstractly synthesizing and evoking emotions related to love, pain, and forgiveness. The story centers on the life-altering events of an African-American family in suburban Florida. Tyler Williams, or Ty (Kelvin Harrison Jr.), is a high-schooler whose life consists mainly of wrestling and spending time with his girlfriend, Alexis (Alexa Demie). He lives in a large, beautiful home with his father (Sterling Brown), stepmother (Renée Elise Goldsberry), and fellow high-school sister Emily (Taylor Russell). The film explores the downward spiral of Ty's life as he deals with the pressures of wrestling, family, and his relationship with Alexis.

The film touches upon so many aspects of Ty and his family's lives that the sense of actual time passing is lost, absorbing the audience into Ty's world. Part of this effect is achieved with the use of quick shots to give a sense of constant movement. This combination of editing and videography helps the film establish the rhythms of Ty's life, especially towards the beginning of the movie, fluidly transitioning between him doing homework at his desk, working out, spending time with Alexis, and partying. The panning of the camera creates smooth connections between these disjointed scenes. In this way, the viewer is relentlessly swung in and out of different scenes, producing a surprisingly effective whirlwind tour that establishes a feeling of investment in the main characters. The visual style throughout the movie continues to be playful and creative, framing faces and scenes with a distinct artistic touch.

Cinematographer Drew Daniels's craftsmanship is apparent in his experimentation with color and visual effects. Grainy blurs of color and ombre gradients serve as transitions and emblems of lingering emotions. Moods are evoked by specific harmonies of color: moments like when Alexis and Ty spend time by the ocean are portrayed in pale purple and blue, creating a dreamy feeling of love. Edgier scenes, often during the night and concerning Ty's drinking and consumption of painkillers, are characterized by low red glows in the surrounding darkness. Creating engulfing visual sensations, Daniels clearly draws from the surrealist, saturated style of his work on TV show Euphoria, released earlier this year.

Adding to the borderline overwhelming onset of stimuli is the film's use of music. Scenes are almost always drenched in a dreamy, urban, youthful soundtrack that shapes much of the emotional force and pacing of the film. The lyrics and melodies of the songs tell part of the story, providing the same narrative feeling you might experience when listening to a playlist curated for a specific mood. During intense moments like Ty's tirades of anger, the blaring soundtrack amplifies the pressure to the point of feeling almost suffocating. Ty's life is followed by hype themes from Kanye that contrast with calmer, moody Frank Ocean, which both differ from the funky pop sounds of Animal Collective that mark out the distinct personality of his sister, Emily. It is incredible to think about the effort it took to structure and produce the soundtrack for this movie, which is undeniably prominent and likely one of the most impactful soundtracks of

The careful crafting of the film's audiovisual sensations works to expand on the feelings associated with family and love. Rather than presenting a concrete idea or resolution of the issues that Ty and his family face, the exploration of these concepts is shaped by the scenes' effects on the audience: a moment of breathlessness or a tightening of the chest. The film especially hits on the complex heartache inherent to family dynamics. Ty's personal struggles with excellence in wrestling and moral character come from his hardworking father, who insists that they "are not afforded the luxury of being average." As Ty is pushed to succeed, we see him falling off in other directions that his parents are unaware of and thus helpless to control. In fact, the film is completely untraditional and unafraid of a chaotic, unpredictable narrative progression that continuously shocks and sometimes confuses the viewer.

However, this boldness is precisely what allows the story and film to take a life of their own, one that is stunningly insightful to the essence of real life. Even though the plot is not completely relatable (hopefully) to most people's experiences, the characters are brought to life by the intricacy of the film's writing, hitting on small details of just day-to-day existence that will especially hit home for the current young generation. The actors melt perfectly into these molds, with Harrison's performance perfectly showing the mad descent of Ty closing off and living in his own world. The other characters are not given a larger presence until later in the film, but even before then, Brown's acting humanizes Ty's otherwise strict and seemingly unforgiving father, particularly his quietly pained expressions that give a face to the emotional distress of parenting.

Stripping away its focus on Ty, the film uses its turning point to weave in the narratives of the people who were quietly in the background of Ty's life. In the second half of



Waves

**Directed by Trey Edward** 

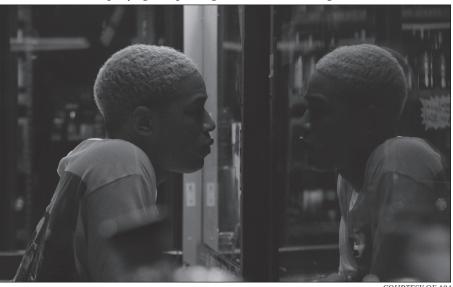
Screenplay by Trey **Edward Shults** 

**Starring Kelvin Harrison** Jr., Taylor Russell, Alexa Demie, Sterling Brown, Renée Elise Goldsberry

Rated R, Now Playing

the film, when the other characters, especially Emily, are spotlighted, the repressed anguish of the now fragile family rushes to the surface and gives a painfully intimate look at the state of love being challenged. Most of this struggle occurs under the surface — Emily and her parents deal with their emotions quietly. The film itself moves away from its earlier bombardment of stimuli to create a more reserved and deceptively calm mood. The actors skillfully capture the difficulty of finding forgiveness by mastering a quiet but strained energy that feels so personal and heartbreaking. The theme of reconciliation emerges in unexpected and tear-jerking ways, especially with a vulnerable dialogue between Emily and her father. Their raw and honest conversation is clearly difficult for them to carry on, with pauses filled with too much pain to speak, but ultimately so necessary and healing.

Through this interaction as well as other subplots, the idea of being caught up in one's own world and ultimately forgetting to be family is impactful, especially in the aftermath of the first half of the film's intense visual and sensory reinforcement of this concept. Providing the space for the characters and audience to really sit with feelings of regret, confusion, and grief, the second half of the film does not seek to tie up loose ends but rather to simply acknowledge them. Every aspect of the film is truly stunning in the way that it captures humanity in both its abstract and real forms. Waves, boldly overflowing with emotion and artistic flare, is unforgettable and impossible to look away from.



Kelvin Harrison Jr. stars in A24's latest release, Waves.

COURTESY OF A24

# The Tech Holiday Special Advertising Opportunity

20% off your next ad in the following issues: November 26th, December 5th, and January 9th

Contact thetechads@mit.edu if you're interested in this opportunity

## Chorus

Solution, page 8

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

# Verse

Solution, page 8

80×		216×			
	60×			1	
5+		360×			
		24×			15×
30×			8×		
360×	i i	i i			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.

# Gotta Have Em' by Billie Truitt

Solution, page 8

### **ACROSS**

- 1 Pet adoption org.
- 5 Aerosol, for instance
- 10 Middle of the Three Bears 14 CEO's domain
- 15 Leave well enough \_\_\_
- 16 Out of the office
- 17 Each, informally
- 18 Shows the way 19 All used up
- 20 Unavoidable annoyances
- 23 Doctors' org.
- 24 "Not my error" notation
- 25 Computer cord
- 28 EMT's expertise
- 31 Prefix meaning "large" 35 "Don't mind \_\_ do"
- 36 Fashion designer Ralph
- 39 Action film star Jackie
- 40 Census data
- 43 Metal that can rust
- 44 Candy-filled hanging at a party
- 45 Harper who wrote . . . Mockingbird
- 46 Southpaw

- 48 Heart test letters
- 49 Place for a belt 51 "Hey, am \_\_ a roll!"
- 53 Mo. arch city
- 54 Class you must take
- 62 List of choices
- 63 Unusual trinket
- 64 Not worth debating
- 65 A single time
- 66 Valentine symbol 67 Cape Canaveral org.
- 68 Officeholders, for short
- 69 Snaky letters
- 70 One getting much fan email

### **DOWN**

- 1 Read electronically
- 2 Vatican head
- 3 Gator's cousin
- 4 Contest a verdict
- 5 Tex-Mex chip dip 6 "Guilty" or "not guilty"
- 7 Laugh heartily 8 Raggedy Ann's brother
- 9 Votes in favor

- 10 Performance of illusions
- 11 Truant soldier, for short 12 No \_\_ land (area under
- dispute)
- 13 "OK, Captain!"
- 21 Detect an aroma
- 22 Pep
- 25 Well-mannered
- 26 In flames
- 27 A little \_\_ everything (miscellany)
- 28 Adorable kid
- 29 Practical joke
- 30 Put a new price on 32 Spicy beans/beef stew
- 33 Track events
- 34 Earliest stage
- 37 Nile snake
- 38 Petty complaint
- 41 Old items of value
- 42 Took care of
- 47 Golden Rule pronoun
- 50 Homecoming returnees
- 52 Specialized retail market 53 Typical bagpipers
- 54 Nevada gambling city
- 15 16 17 18 19 20 25 | 26 | 27 35 36 37 40 41 42 43 46 49 50 54 | 55 59 60 61 56 |57 |58 63 64 62 65 66 67 69 68 70
- 55 Anything in an env.
- 56 Is sorry about
- 57 Periods of history 58 \_\_ straits (difficult position)
- 59 Highway or byway
- 60 Mediocre
- 61 And others: Abbr. 62 Floor-washing implement

# MIT Doodles by Raphi Kang



Can Barty move with us when BC is getting renovarted?

FUNFUNFUNFUNFUN**FU**NFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUNFUN FUNFUNFUNFUNFUN

### SOCCER

# MIT Women's Soccer beats Johnson & Wales University

Engineers Women's Soccer won by 3-0 in the first round but lost on penalties to get knocked out second round

By Suleman Thaniana

MIT Women's Soccer played in the first and second round of the NCAA Division III Soccer Championship over the weekend at the Steinbrenner Stadium. In the first-round game played on Saturday, Nov. 16, MIT beat Johnson & Wales University 3-0. Montana Reilly '20 dominated this game by scoring two goals and assisting one. In the second-round game, MIT played defending champions Williams College on Sunday, Nov. 16. Unfortunately, the Engineers lost this game 5-4 in penalty kicks after a hard fought 1-1 draw.

The first game against JWU started off with a goalless first half. The first goal of the game came three minutes into the second half. Reilly scored this goal as

she fired the ball into the goal as it rebounded off the opponent goalkeeper's initial save. For the next 35 minutes, MIT kept its 1-0 lead, credit to the excellent defense by the MIT back line. In the last six minutes of the game, MIT scored two more goals to finish the game 3-0. Reilly also scored the second goal of the game, while Sophia Struckman '20 scored the final goal off a cross from Reilly.

The second game against Williams College also started off with a goalless first half as both teams displayed excellent defense. MIT scored the first goal of the game early in the second half as Karenna Groff '22 scored off an assist from Reilly. As time came close to an end, it felt like MIT was going to gain this victory, but out of nowhere Alison Lu scored for Williams with three minutes left on

the board. With regulation ending at 1-1, the match moved into overtime. In the 20 minutes of overtime, MIT pressed hard on attack as they outshot Williams College 7-1, but they were still unable to find the back of the net due to excellent goalkeeping by Williams goalkeeper Chelsea Taylor. With nothing to separate the two teams, the match went onto penalty kicks. Unfortunately, Williams won the penalty shootout 5-4, as Taylor successfully saved one MIT shot.

This was the last game of the season for MIT. Even though they could not win the NCAA championship, the season was still a success, as the team broke the single season records for longest winning streak (14), longest unbeaten streak (21), and most goals (80), as well as winning the NEWMAC championship for the



MIT Women's Soccer ties with Williams in the NCAA second round games.

third consecutive year. A stellar individual record was also set as Groff registered 17 goals and 41

points in the season, becoming the first since Amy Ludlum in 2006 to accomplish this.

# 101 THINGS TO DO BEFORE YOU GRADUATE

32. Take a stroll through Little Italy in the North End

Join the Arts department at The Tech and write restaurant reviews.

# Like Alexander Hamilton?

See him in your wallet every week!

Join the Business Department of Email join@tech.mit.edu

**Solution to Chorus** 

5 2 4 8 3 9 7 6 1

8 7 3 6 1 4 2 9 5

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

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

4 3 6 1 8 2 5

6 9 8 2 7 1

2 5 3 8 4



### Solution to Verse

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

### Friday 22<sup>nd</sup>

**Water Polo** 

vs. St. Francis NWPC Championship 2:00 p.m.





