



KEVIN PHO—THE TECH

A candlelight vigil is held in support of Ukraine amidst current events, March 3.

NLRB-operated Graduate Student Union election to be held on dates April 4–5

On both days, the voting will take place from 9 a.m.–1 p.m., 2:30–3:30 p.m. in Walker Memorial's Morss Hall and from 5:30–8:30 in room 56-154

By Wenbo Wu and Kristina Chen
EDITORS

The vote to decide whether or not a graduate student union will be formed will be held April 4–5, The National Labor Review Board (NLRB) announced Feb. 28. According to the NLRB Notice of Election, the vote will take place on both days from 9 a.m.–1 p.m. and 2:30–3:30 p.m. in Walker Memorial's Morss Hall and from 5:30–8:30 p.m. in room 56-154.

In order to form a union, a simple majority of voters must vote in favor of the union.

The notice states that MIT graduate students enrolled in degree programs “who are employed to provide instructional or research services, including research assistants (RAs), teaching assistants, and instructor G's who were employed” by MIT during the payroll period ending Feb. 15 are eligible to vote in the election.

Additionally, RAs in the Linguistics and Political Science departments, non-grader hourly employees who “may provide instructional or research services,” and graduate students conducting research at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute “who are either supervised or paid by MIT (but not both)” are also able to vote in the election, although “their ballots will be challenged since their eligibility has not been resolved.” If necessary, the “eligibility or inclusion of these individuals” in the bargaining unit “will be resolved” after the election.

Finally, the notice writes that undergraduates, graduate student resident advisors, graduate students not employed as RAs or TAs, hourly graders who are not also RAs or TAs, graduate students not seeking MIT degrees, “office clericals, managers, guards, and supervisors” are not eligible to vote.

GSU Election, Page 2

MIT to relax COVID-19 face covering and testing guidelines next Monday

Visitors must continue to be escorted by COVID Pass holders or invited using the Tim Tickets system on the MIT Atlas app

By Srinidhi Narayanan
NEWS EDITOR

MIT will relax several of its COVID-19 policies effective March 14, Vice President for Human Resources Ramona Allen, Provost Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88, Vice Chancellor and Dean for Student Life Suzy Nelson, Chancellor Melissa Nobles, Executive Vice President and Treasurer Glen Shor, MIT Medical Director Cecilia Stuopis '90, Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate and Graduate Education Ian Waitz, and Vice President for Research Maria Zuber announced in an email to the community Monday.

Notably, masks will become optional for vaccinated individuals in most indoor areas on campus; COVID-19 testing — currently required once a week for students, campus residents, and unvaccinated community members — will become optional; and daily health attestations will no longer be required.

Masks will still be required on MIT shuttle buses and in MIT Medical facilities.

Campus access, which is currently dependent on testing and completion of daily attestations, will be granted to all vaccinated MIT ID holders; visitors must continue to be escorted by COVID Pass holders or invited using the Tim Tickets system.

MIT previously relaxed the policy on face coverings in residence halls Feb. 21, no longer requiring masks for groups of four or fewer in student living-space lounges.

The changes followed the City of Cambridge's relaxation of indoor-masking policies. Both MIT and the City of Cambridge have reported “sustained improvement” in COVID-19 metrics over the past months, with MIT's positivity rates declining from 2.63% in January, to 0.56% and 0.77% in February and March, respectively. The daily number of students in isolation, both on and off campus,

COVID-19, Page 2



MAXWELL YUN—THE TECH

Students and community members gather for the Arab Student Organization dinner banquet at Lobdell Hall on Saturday.

Cynthia Barnhart reflects on her time as former chancellor, looks ahead to new role as provost

Barnhart: 'I really do want to help members of our community thrive here at MIT, because if they thrive, MIT thrives'; 'That very much motivates how I think things must be'

By Jennifer Ai

Cynthia Barnhart PhD '88 assumed the role of MIT Provost March 7, 2022, as announced by President L. Rafael Reif in an email to the MIT community Feb. 10.

Barnhart, a Ford Foundation

Professor of Engineering, first joined MIT's faculty 30 years ago in 1992 and has since served as both associate and acting dean of the School of Engineering, as director of the Operations Research Center and the Center for Transportation and Logistics, and as MIT Chan-

cellor 2014–21. During her term as chancellor, Barnhart worked to transform MIT's approach to student support and mental health, most notably through launching the MindHandHeart initiative and the Institute Discrimination and Harassment Response office.

The Tech: Many students feel confusion around what exactly the roles and duties of the provost are. Is there anything you'd like students to know about what your position entails and how you

Cynthia Barnhart, Page 3

IN SHORT

Regular action decisions will be released March 14. **Happy Pi Day!**

Half-term final exams (H3) are from March 14–18.

The deadline to submit events for CPW is March 19.

Spring break is March 21–25.

Interested in joining **The Tech**? Email join@tech.mit.edu.

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

FACULTY BEHAVIOR

Faculty should not persuade students regarding how they should vote. **OPINION, p. 4**

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

MIT has a proven track record of fighting for international students. **OPINION, p. 5**

OTHER PEOPLE'S CLOTHES

Berlin's party scene. **ARTS, p. 7**



SPOTS AND SPACES

All eyes on me. **CAMPUS LIFE, p. 8**

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Our living conditions are our working conditions. **OPINION, p. 5**

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WEATHER

Overcast days cloud over Cambridge

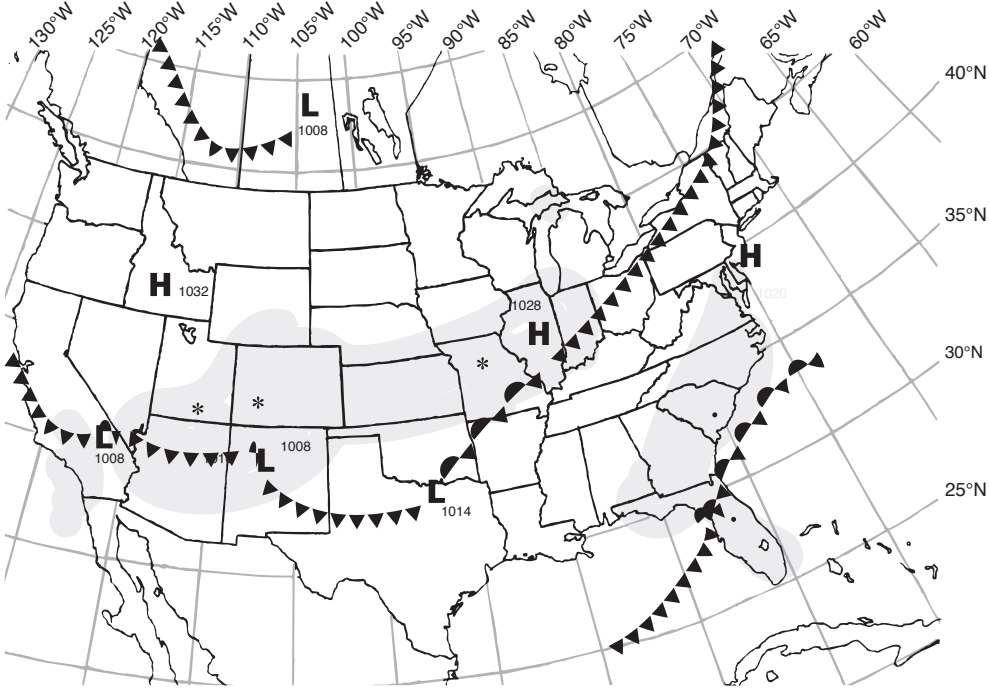
By Phoebe Lin
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

Persistent clouds have been casting a gloom over campus this week, culminating in a rainstorm for Cambridge and a possible bomb cyclone for the South and Northeast this weekend. Expect flat, uniform gray stratus clouds to stick around for awhile, and make sure to close your windows and to stay safe inside!

This winter storm already has a name! That's because winter storm Quinlan is expected to bring intense wintery precipitation and strong gusts across the eastern U.S. and into Canada, mostly between Friday and Saturday. Temperatures aren't expected to dip low enough for large amounts of snow, though Cambridge will receive plenty of rain and some healthy gusts of wind ahead of the return of spring.

Extended Forecast

Today: Mostly sunny. High around 49°F (9°C). West winds 5-8 mph
Tonight: Mostly cloudy. Low around 35°F (2°C). South winds 5-8 mph.
Friday: Increasingly cloudy. High around 46°F (8°C) and low around 38°F (3°C). Southeast winds 4-7 mph.
Saturday: Rainy. High around 55°F (13°C) and low around 22°F (-6°C). Southeast winds 13-18 mph, with gusts as high as 30 mph.
Sunday: Mostly sunny. High around 34°F (1°C) and low around 29°F (-2°C). West winds 16-20 mph.



Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Thursday, March 10, 2022

Weather Systems	Weather Fronts	Precipitation Symbols	Other Symbols
H High Pressure	Trough	Snow	Fog
L Low Pressure	Warm Front	Rain	Thunderstorm
Hurricane	Cold Front	Light	Haze
	Stationary Front	Moderate	
		Heavy	

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

Community members can ‘control spread without masking’ through testing

COVID-19, from Page 1

has also shown downward trends since their peak in the first two weeks of January.

The March 7 email also urged students to utilize COVID-19 testing when they feel symptoms; are in an “elevated risk situation” such as travel or known exposure

to someone who has tested positive; or when they plan to be in situations that may expose others, such as large gatherings or interactions with immunocompromised people.

In a campus updates meeting March 7, administrators stated that the plan to relax COVID-19 policies was finally being revisited after be-

ing derailed due to the onset of the omicron variant.

The meeting notes include an analysis of targeted testing and the request to students to test when symptomatic. According to the notes, MIT community members can “control spread without masking” if they test “when symptoms and known exposure occur” given

that more than 75% of people who test positive become symptomatic, with emerging evidence that asymptomatic people are much less infectious. The notes assume that 15% of the MIT population has had omicron and have immunity, that 99% are vaccinated and boosted, and that vaccines are 35% effective against transmission.

This week marks the two-year anniversary of the last day that many MIT employees and students were on campus before de-densifying campus at the onset of the pandemic. Since then, more than 32,000 students, employees, and affiliates have been regularly testing, attesting, and otherwise adhering to Institute COVID-19 regulations.

GSU members, professors, administrators authored many Opinion pieces

GSU Election, from Page 1

In a Feb. 28 press release, the MIT Graduate Student Union (GSU) wrote that following the vote by RAs and TAs, the NLRB will “rule on MIT’s argument that Fellows should be denied their right to vote” for the union and set a date for a “Fellows election” if they are

deemed eligible to vote.

The GSU wrote that the “MIT administration hoped to delay” the vote by initiating a “lengthy legal process aimed at denying Fellows the right to vote.” This led to the GSU deciding upon a two-step election process that would grant “the majority of graduate workers their right to vote.”

Chancellor Melissa Nobles and Vice Chancellor for Undergraduate and Graduate Education Ian Waitz wrote in a Feb. 28 email to graduate students that the election will determine whether “about 3,750 of MIT’s 7,000 graduate students” — those eligible to vote in the election — will form a union.

If the graduate student union is

formed, it will be represented by the United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (UE).

As required by federal law and subpoena, MIT will share the 3,750 eligible graduate students’ phone numbers, email addresses, and mailing addresses with the UE and NLRB. The NLRB will use this information to provide information

about voting, and the UE will “be able to use this personal information to assist in their campaign efforts.”

In the past weeks, graduate student members of the GSU, professors, and MIT administrators including Nobles and Waitz have authored guest columns and letters regarding the election for *The Tech’s* Opinion section.

ch's MLB C

By The Tech Sports staff

MLB Postseason. In the American League, the Texas Rangers, recovered from t against the Tampa Bay. e, the Philadelphia Phillies swept Cincinnati a ho-hitter by Roy Halladay. They face the against Atlanta in which every game was decid claim their league pennant and advance to high in, with department bragging rights on

Do you like looking for funny typos?
Do you have a knack for finding mistakes?
The Tech is looking for copy editors!

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Leave marks,
not sharks!

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Solution to Horologe
from page 11

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

Solution to Pendulum
from page 10

6	1	4	3	5	9	8	7	2
7	2	8	4	1	6	3	9	5
5	9	3	2	8	7	4	6	1
4	8	1	6	2	5	9	3	7
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8	4	5	9	6	2	7	1	3
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Solution to February
from last week's issue

GRADS	STIR	CADS
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MISSIONARY	MICE	
VPS	OMELET	
SHIVER	LINEN	
TORO	ACID	ITEMS
EPIC	HOMES	AREA
MESAS	VISA	RIGS
BERET	UMYEAH	
ASTUTE	ADO	
GIRL	DICTIONARY	
IDEA	ETAL	LEV
LEAR	ETNA	ARENA
EDDY	MOSS	HOSTS

Know something important we should write about?
(We probably don't know about it.)

Let us know.
news@tech.mit.edu

2022 KARMEL WRITING PRIZES

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OPEN TO MIT UNDERGRADS AND GRADUATE STUDENTS

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Science and technical writing
Writing on the visual arts
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First year writing
Science fiction, and more...

Info: cmsw.mit.edu/writing-prizes
Submission deadline: April 11
Winners announced: May 10

Barnhart hopes ‘to meet with, listen to, and learn from’ communny members

Cynthia Barnhart , from Page 1
plan to represent their interests as provost?

Barnhart: Students, I think, know the role of the chancellor. The chancellor’s role is focused on all things students. The provost role has some overlap. But the provost’s role is the chief academic officer, and the chief budget officer. So what that means is that the provost plays a role in a lot of things that affect a lot of people: faculty, students, of course, staff, because part of the role is academic program oversight. It has budget oversight, making decisions about many things that affect students and many others. I think you ask the question, how students will come into my every-day job as provost. I’ll begin by saying that having served as an advisor and faculty member, this is my 30th year as a faculty member at MIT. Before that, I was a graduate student at MIT. So I’ve been here a long time. And I think about my experiences, particularly as an advisor and chancellor. I saw MIT through the student lens. And so I think in everything that I do, that perspective comes with me. I worked closely as chancellor with the provost on matters that involve student mental health, financial aid — essentially, the wide gamut of topics that affects students. So that will continue. I will continue to have that partnership with the chancellor in this role as provost.

TT: Relatedly, you often emphasize communicating and establishing trust with students. How successful do you think your efforts have been? And how do you plan on continuing or building deeper relationships with students in the future?

Barnhart: My strategy with students is the same as with all members of the community. I think it’s really important that there’s broad engagement. One of the first steps that I’m taking — and it won’t just be a step followed by other actions, it will be a step that continues through my whole tenure — is to engage broadly, bringing students, faculty, and staff into conversations. MIT is an organization where we share governance. This is something that was very evident in my role as chancellor. It is necessary to keep that top of mind, I think, in every leadership role at MIT, so my approach will be to meet with, listen to, and learn from our community members, and to use those insights to make the community a better place.

TT: Something that is currently being widely discussed at MIT is the possible formation of a Graduate Student Union. How will your previous experiences as a graduate student and as a professor impact the way you respond to this issue? Do you think that the possible formation of a union will have a lasting impact on the relationship between professors and graduate students at MIT?

Barnhart: I’m hesitating a bit because this is a topic that is harder for me to know what is appropriate for me to say or not say. What I can say is that the approach that we have used and we will continue to use is one, again, of partnership with our students. We’re trying to work together with our students to achieve what we all agree are important things for them to have. And there’s a lot of commonality, I think, and a lot of agreement on that topic. So I guess I don’t want to say too much right now about that, other than that we always have at

the top of our minds working together with our students, with our faculty, with everyone at MIT.

TT: You have focused largely on the commonalities in interests among people at MIT. But a lot of conflicts have emerged as a result of differences in interests among, for example, students at MIT versus administration. In those instances, what is your plan for dealing with these differences? What should students expect?

Barnhart: I think students should expect exactly what they have been seeing. And let me define what I think they have been seeing: I think there is an openness to dialogue, to sharing viewpoints, to brainstorming about possible solutions, and a commitment to transparency. So while the outcome of any discussion around differences will likely leave some people unhappy, the commitment is that there is the opportunity to voice concerns, to be heard, to have thoughtful consideration of what the different viewpoints are. And then for the administration, the leaders, the goal is to make decisions and explain them.

TT: Many of the controversies MIT has faced have also involved issues of diversity and inclusion, and students have often called upon MIT’s administration to act as a leader in demonstrating social and environmental responsibility. As provost, how do you plan to contribute to the shaping of MIT’s institutional values?

Barnhart: Well, as provost, my plan is to build on the tremendous efforts that members of our community have contributed over the last few years. So many faculty, staff, and students have invested their time and shared their expertise on these topics in the interest of making MIT a better place. I’m committed to taking the next steps where action is needed, and ensuring that MIT benefits from all of this hard work. That includes efforts related to the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategic Action Plan, DEI Arts and Culture committee, Values Statement Committee, Free Expression Group, Climate Action Plan, MindHandHeart, and many more.

TT: You stepped down from your role as chancellor less than a year ago in July of 2021, reasoning that it would allow you “to think about the next thing [you] want to do” and “what impact [you] can have.” How did you arrive at the decision to return to an adminis-

trative position, and in what areas do you envision yourself making the most impact?

Barnhart: I’ll begin by saying that it wasn’t exactly what I expected to be doing. But with MIT being in this time of transition, with both the provost and the president stepping down over the course of one year, President Reif talked with me and reminded me that my experiences as chancellor could help me hit the ground running and provide some continuity, and help the Institute continue to move forward during this time of transition. And that was compelling for me. Because, like so many people at MIT, I care deeply about the Institute, and I want to help where I can.

Some of my goals are to advance efforts that help our faculty or students or staff do their best work. Another goal is to foster innovation in education and research to advance recommendations, priorities, and actions that have been identified by so many different groups who have worked hard for MIT over the last few years. They include Task Force 2021, the DEI Strategic Action Plan Committee, the various working groups that were formed in response to the National Academy’s report on sexual harassment, the strategic budget priorities that were identified through a community engagement process, and the work of committees on mentoring and advising and mental health and wellbeing. A lot of people have worked hard to generate ideas that can make MIT an even better place. And I will work hard to help us realize the potential of all these efforts.

TT: As Chancellor, you focused on, and achieved significant improvements in, transforming MIT’s approach to student mental health and sexual harassment. I’m curious to know more about what the administration’s perspective is on how successful those past efforts have been, and what still needs to be improved upon.

Barnhart: My advice on that is to have a sit down with Suzy Nelson, David Randall, and Chancellor Nobles, but I’ll just say that I’m proud of that work. And I know that it continues to be a top priority for the team now. And again, they have some really exciting things they’re working on. So it would be great, I think, to talk to them about that. And I’ll just say that I share their excitement and prioritize this work as well.

There are other things that I will focus on as provost. I’ll begin again

by pointing out some of the ongoing work that has been started, that I think is very important to continue pushing forward — identifying these strategic budget priorities related to our academic and research enterprise, including increased financial support for faculty, students and staff, and building a path forward for ensuring that these funding priorities are sustained. Another really important effort, I think, is to develop the Strategic Action and implementation plans. I’m very much focused on ensuring that ideas move to actions to address challenges related to diversity, community, sexual harassment, advising and mentoring, mental health and wellbeing, and many more. And another thing I think is important is to push for the recommendations for change in this MIT, post-pandemic world, and implement those plans, advance those recommendations. So my goal, I guess, broadly stated, is to ensure that the hard work of our community is advanced. And we do good things for our community as a result.

TT: Given that the main difference is that your new role will involve interaction with a larger number of stakeholders and you will have to represent more groups with varying interests, do you think this will be a challenge for you? How do you plan to reconcile that with your approach to your previous role, where you were more focused on student needs?

Barnhart: Let me talk about students first. In working with students, the role that I played was to think about MIT and what MIT needs in terms of fulfilling its mission, adhering to its values and principles, and then translating that to the particular issue at hand, and thinking about the various solutions that different students might want align with the Institute, schools, and values. So I think that as provost, it will be the same framework. It might not be a student that is involved in the issue, but it will be the same challenge. How do we ensure that we work together to find solutions that work for our constituents, our community, and adhere to MIT’s values and advance MIT’s mission? In my mind, it’s a really fun challenge to work on.

TT: Is there anything else you would like to say to students?

Barnhart: I really do want to help members of our community thrive here at MIT, because if they thrive, MIT thrives. That very much motivates how I think things must be.



AMINA ABDALLA—THE TECH

Students donate and browse through clothes at the OMP and UA Sustain Clothing Swap event, Friday.

It’s Dangerous to Go Alone!



Take This.

photo@tech.mit.edu

The Tech's telephone number is (617) 253-1541. Email is the easiest way to reach any member of our staff. If you are unsure whom to contact, send mail to general@tech.mit.edu, and it will be directed to the appropriate person. You can reach the editor in chief by emailing eic@tech.mit.edu. Please send press releases, requests for coverage, and information about errors that call for correction to news@tech.mit.edu. Letters to the editor should be sent to letters@tech.mit.edu. *The Tech* can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://thetech.com>.

OPINION

International Students, from Page 5

would expand access to valuable internship, personal, and interpersonal skills development, and experiential learning opportunities for all students. In doing so, it would also provide expanded CPT opportunities for all F-1 international students, addressing this issue across the board.

MIT has a proven track record of fighting for international students, without any union involvement. During a time when the nation’s leadership was particularly hostile to international students, President Reif wrote the following in a *New York Times* opinion piece: “As a nation, when we turn our backs on talented foreign students, we not only lose all that they bring to our classrooms and laboratories, we also give up a strategic asset.”

- In 2020, together with Harvard, MIT successfully filed suit against the U.S.

Department of Homeland Security (US-DHS) and its Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency to prevent enforcement of a policy that would have barred international students on F-1 visas from taking a full online course load while studying in the U.S.

- Every year, MIT’s International Students Office (ISO) assists more than 4,000 students and their families with their visas. Getting things wrong can have serious implications. That’s why MIT has a dedicated, growing group of professionals who provide important guidance to students. Neither the MIT GSU nor the UE has this level of expertise and resources.
- MIT’s ISO supports international students who need help to cover legal fees costs for student consultations with immigration attorneys, pays USDHS application fees, and helps with emergency flights home and short-term family housing needs. International students are also

eligible to seek and receive emergency funds from a number of other MIT student support offices. If the UE becomes the sole representative of graduate students in the bargaining unit, we do not know how these matters will be handled in contract negotiations and what an article on international students might look like.

MIT approved *virtually every request* (either as is, or with some modifications) for remote international appointments during the pandemic.

- During the pandemic, MIT dedicated \$5.8 million and significant administrative resources to enable 1,300 requests for remote international appointments. This ensured that students did not face any interruptions to their academic and research progress and were able to continue their studies and research from abroad.
- MIT’s remote international appointments process is equally (if not more) accom-

modating than the processes that were agreed to after several years of negotiations in the Harvard and Columbia graduate student union contracts. Under those contracts, remote international work is limited to situations where students are “unable” to return to the U.S. due to immigration issues or other reasons outside of students’ control. When that occurs, Harvard and Columbia have agreed to make “reasonable efforts” to enable remote work. MIT went above and beyond these measures to enable remote work during the pandemic for a wider range of reasons, even when students did not face absolute barriers to returning, in order to prevent negative impacts on students’ studies, research, and personal lives.

Sincerely,

David C. Elwell
Associate Dean and Director of the International Students Office

GUEST COLUMN

The case for labor unions

It is on all of us to ensure that the MIT graduate student labor union comes to life, and we all might finally come to life right along with it

By Kelvin Green II

I stepped away from writing opinion editorials to focus on fiction and my responsibilities outside of writing. However, I have been pondering a few questions and like babies they now yearn to break their long silence with a forceful cry. Before I remark on my purpose in writing, I must first acknowledge the friend whose own writing moved me to pick up this pen — Ufuoma Ovienmhada. In her speech at the MIT 2022 Celebration of Martin Luther King Jr.’s life, Ovienmhada carefully articulated that she “Love[s] MIT;” she cites the beloved bell hooks (1952–2021) who said, “There can be no love without justice,” and, “The heart of justice is truth telling.” She also offers the definition bell hooks used for love, from M. Scott Peck who defined love as “The will to extend oneself for the purpose of nurturing one’s own or another’s spiritual growth.” Ovienmhada acknowledges that the three truths she offers about MIT may be difficult to hear or embrace, however we are reminded again at the end of her speech of bell hooks’ love ethic, to which Ovienmhada’s speech gracefully pays tribute. We would all do well to listen to bell hooks. We would all do well to listen to Ovienmhada.

In a similar spirit, I have been thinking about the growing movement for a graduate student labor union at MIT. A movement, as I understand it, to form a legal entity with the ability to ensure equity, equality, fairness, and justice on the part of MIT toward graduate students. This movement is steadily garnering support with digital and print media, forums and mixers, canvassing and phone banking, and other investments of time by graduate students, for graduate students. I am encouraged by their steadfast work, knowing full well that they are not only fighting for a labor union, but *against* misinformation from authority and aver-sions to the imagination by members of the MIT community. Still, these students find the strength and muster the courage to organize for a labor union despite their reality of being overworked and underappreciated. This context serves as the foundation to my two questions:

1. **Why are graduate students seeking to form a labor union at MIT?** Which is to say, why are graduate students choosing to fight in what is a long battle for a labor union, knowing not only the contentious history of forming labor unions in this country but also that they’d be fighting against a 160-year-old institution of higher education backed by plentiful financial and legal resources controlled by the senior leadership and the Corporation?
2. And nascently, **is there not an easier way to fulfill the demands of these graduate students?** Demands such as: (1) fair work expectations and all the resources required to do their jobs ef-

fectively; (2) a safe and equitable work environment with dependable accountability; (3) financial security and guaranteed support; (4) affordable housing and comprehensive benefits; (5) equal academic and professional opportunities for international students. *Fair. Safe. Equitable. Dependable. Security. Support. Affordable. Equal.* All of their demands sound reasonable, so why do they need a labor union to convince MIT to fulfill them?

Forming a labor union has historically been done to transfer power from the employer to the employee. I am thinking of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) which was founded in Harlem in 1925 by African American railroad porters and maids at the Pullman Company. Yet, the battle for the BSCP truly started 60 years before, when in the name of inclusion Pullman allowed newly liberated and formerly enslaved folks to work at his company, while taking advantage of their needs by demanding long hours of hard work with poor compensation. Pullman used his power to say that the workers could accept the conditions or quit. Instead, they unionized to fight back and chose a fitting motto — “Fight or Be Slaves.” I am also thinking of the graduate students at New York University who were the first of their kind at a private university to unionize and negotiate a contract with their administration for a living wage, better health care, and greater protections against harassment and discrimination (2001). Although this initial unionization was short-lived due to legal retaliation by NYU (the union’s contract expired in 2005 and wasn’t recognized again until 2013), the pioneering success and a semester-long strike by the NYU graduate students is both commendable in its felicity and inspiring in its landmark success.

Labor unions have been created either proactively using knowledge of the contentious history of workers in this country; or, more often, reactively to an extensive series of unjust violations by an employer that warrants the employed to unionize. The movement for a graduate student labor union at MIT seems to be an example of the latter. Yet, it may not be clear how, because the senior leadership purports that “students are what make MIT” and even recently have spoken with language of support for a graduate student labor union, when in actuality MIT has no desire to give up decision-making power, and understandably so — giving up power means giving up control. MIT may proffer to inform the community about labor unions, yet it continually fails to center the stories of the very students who seek this labor union. And though MIT acts on what it says, its actions continually fall short of its word. Yes, entities echoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in their halls are likely preferential toward establishing a labor union. But, an entity which only purports

to live these values will work behind closed doors to dismantle efforts which challenge their power and strategically stall the progress a labor union promises to their employees — a group which unequivocally includes graduate students .

Those who organize to form labor unions are neither irrational nor impulsive. Those who organize to form labor unions are critical thinkers driven by necessity. It would not surprise me if this necessity stems from the fatigue of graduate students who have endured decades upon decades of neglect by MIT. Thus, forming a union should not be contextualized as graduate students’ first straw, but the next one (maybe the last straw) after decades of trying to work with MIT to solve graduate student problems. Graduate students are taking their livelihoods into their own hands to protect themselves and their wellbeing. In this way, the growing movement for a graduate student labor union at MIT is not separate from the legacy of labor union movements in the United States — it is a part of this legacy. We should be applauding their efforts and supporting their movement with self-invested action.

I remember joining my first labor union. At first, I was skeptical due to what I had heard about unions, but all my coworkers were enthusiastic about it, so I felt open to considering joining. I read the documentation and I remembered my grandfather, Richard, who fought against Phillip Morris for decades as part of a labor union. I joined. A couple months into the job, I realized I was underpaid and expected to work ridiculous hours. I was slower to realize I was paying for this with my emotional, physical, and psychological well-being. I remember learning that most of my coworkers felt the same way, so it became an item of business in the union meeting. It is not easy to share legitimate concerns with an employer (especially around work conditions and pay), but the union offered me community and allowed my voice to join a chorus of other workers’ voices. Shortly after the legal negotiations with our employer (which a union enables), our pay increased to better reflect our value and our hours were reduced to better match our needs. More than that, I remember learning how the union restored my agency as a worker, which I initially did not know was mine to have because of the way I was conditioned to believe the world works: a world where being a worker means sublimating one’s frustrations into pleasing so-called ‘superiors,’ where the fear of losing job security is the stimulus for one’s productivity and the reason for turning a blind eye, and yes, a world where going to graduate school means unavoidable suffering through the coursework and lab work and PIs and faculty and putting up with it all at the cost of one’s health. I refuse to accept this world. Especially, when we live in

a country where labor unions exist. In this spirit I am reminded of the late Toni Morrison (1931–2019), who said, “Don’t let anybody, anybody convince you this is the way the world is and therefore must be. It must be the way it ought to be.” Labor unions at their best ensure the working world is how it ought to be, and — most importantly — the members of the union hold the power to dictate that “how.”

During my five years at the Institute — after building relationships with people in the Office of the President, Office of the Chancellor, Office of the Provost; after building relationships with faculty, staff, students, and alumni; after serving this school and the greater MIT community out of love — I have learned that MIT’s number one priority is its capital, both tangible (i.e., physical property) and intangible (i.e., intellectual property and global reputation). The evidence for my claim is found in the stories of students across the Institute and over decades, students like myself who have labored incessantly for life and against death at MIT — to foster DEI as values and not commodities to be exploited for good press; to foster a thriving student community where people are valued as individuals and not merely laborers who produce intellectual property they will never own; and to foster a “truth telling” spirit that rejects the myth of neutrality on issues of justice. We should not need a labor union. We should not need to form a legally-binding entity to negotiate with MIT on issues concerning graduate student life. Graduate students should not have to go to these lengths to be heard and respected. That is, if the students and MIT are on the same page. But, we are not on the same page and have not been for decades. That is why the need for a graduate student union is a need, not a want.

I use communal language — “we” and “us” — in this writing, because it is important to remember this fight is a collective effort. As my fraternity brother Rev. Dr. King (1929–1968) stated, “Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.” The time is now for us to rise together. Let us refuse to succumb to apathy. Let us refuse to embrace the myth of neutrality. It is on all of us to help the graduate students restore their agency. It is on all of us to ensure that the graduate student labor union comes to life. And who knows? We all might finally come to life right along with it.

Kelvin Green II is an undergraduate senior in Course 8 with minors in Courses 21W and 21L. He has served on the executive teams of the Black Students’ Union, Undergraduate Association, and a plethora of local and Institute-wide committees. He is a brother of Chocolate City and of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Rho Nu Chapter.

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BOOK REVIEW

***Other People's Clothes:* A peek at Berlin's party scene**

Calla Henkel's debut is a gaudy, glamorous journey

★★★★★

Other People's Clothes

By Calla Henkel

Doubleday

Feb. 1

By Anahita Srinivasan

STAFF WRITER

"Every night you miss in Berlin is a night you miss in Berlin," begins Calla Henkel's debut novel *Other People's Clothes*. And indeed, this concept is a driving force for the two main characters of this superficially sparkling story. *Other People's Clothes* is a psychological thriller about two art students, Zoe Beech and Hailey Mader, who are studying abroad in Berlin, Germany for a semester. They rent an apartment from writer Beatrice Becks and her mother Janet, but as they settle in, they start to suspect that Beatrice is spying on them, trying to gain material for her new novel. Determined to give Beatrice

a story worth writing about, Hailey decides to turn the apartment into a nightclub. She crafts elaborate personas for herself and Zoe and begins throwing outlandishly wild parties every week. And Zoe goes along with it — at least until tragedy strikes.

Henkel does a brilliant job crafting the atmosphere of the novel. *Other People's Clothes* is peppered with references to the aughts — Lindsay Lohan's stint in rehab and Britney Spears's constant presence in the tabloids, to name a couple. The most pervasive reference, however, is to the infamous Amanda Knox case, with much of the action in the novel echoing it. We learn early on that Zoe is traumatized by the murder of her best friend Ivy, a ballerina who was unexpectedly stabbed by an unknown culprit — this is exactly what happened to Knox's roommate. Everything Zoe does is in an attempt to both honor Ivy's memory and try to move past her grisly murder.

Another major part of the novel is Zoe's internal struggle over her identity — a struggle familiar to many young people who are attempting to find their place in the world. She is still figuring out what it means to be wholly herself, how to detach her identity from that of Ivy's, and perhaps most importantly, how to define her own sexuality. Indeed, she abruptly comes out as gay to the patriarch of the family for which she nan-

nies when he attempts to make an advance on her. She also spends much of the novel dating a female musician named Holiday (although dating may be a premature word, as they are never completely exclusive). Ultimately Zoe spends much of the novel in a state of internal conflict.

Hailey is a different figure altogether. A wealthy, pop culture-obsessed grocery store heiress, Hailey lives for adventure and fame. Masterminding the apartment nightclub idea, she is the one who is excited at the prospect of becoming a character in one of Beatrice Beck's books, which are described as the kind of literature one could find at an airport bookstore. However, Hailey comes off a little too over-the-top in her drive to be more "quirky" and "fun." She's the kind of person who would show up to class in "bright lipstick, either wearing Victoria's Secret PINK sweatpants or tight lowrider jeans—nothing in between." The description doesn't do Hailey justice — she is a far more nuanced character with complicated motives. We see this emerge when the nightclub begins to spiral out of control. Zoe tries to stay calm while Hailey is the first to snap. And after a few weeks of tension, Zoe comes home high on ketamine to find Hailey dead in her bed.

This is where *Other People's Clothes* begins to veer off its path. What had previ-

ously been a psychological thriller about superficiality and overindulgence suddenly becomes a murder mystery. Zoe is hospitalized after having a breakdown on live television, while also thrust into playing detective after being accused of murdering Hailey. The ending of the novel is an Agatha Christie mystery gone wrong — there are notecards in secret languages, confessions made by murderers, and gratuitous use of wigs. The one redeeming aspect, however, is the parallel between Beatrice and Janet, and Zoe and Hailey. It comes out that Janet had been living vicariously through her daughter Beatrice the entire time — writing her books for her, coming up with plotlines, and even once dressing up as Beatrice for a book signing. Janet was the one who murdered Hailey to provide material for her daughter's new book. Zoe herself acknowledges that both she and Hailey have aspects of Janet in them — Zoe with her desire to mold herself into first Ivy and then Hailey with her all-consuming, ever-burning desire for fame.

Ultimately, the novel is a recreation of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* for the modern age — a champagne-bubble of a story with a fervent message about the dangers of depravity. Despite the issues in its latter half, *Other People's Clothes* is a thrilling debut with sparkling characters.

ARTSARTSARTSARTSARTS**ARTS**ARTSARTS

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/'spôrts, rīdərs/

noun

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THE HOME PAIGE

Giant

Bigger on the inside

By Paige Bright
CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR

On the last day of sixth grade, my teacher sat us all down and gave his end of the year speech. “I hope the best for all of you,” and “Seeing you grow over the span of a year has been amazing.” Then, he told us the perfectly cliché quote:

“Dance like nobody’s watching; love like you’ve never been hurt. Sing like nobody’s listening; live like it’s heaven on earth.”

This felt like my own Mr. Feeny moment, my own “Believe in yourself. Dream, try. Do good.” Except, for years I had an uncommon interpretation of this quote. In my mind, I heard: be confident, because *everybody’s* watching.

In high school, I started to feel comfortable taking up space for myself. I didn’t want to feel so small, and I was confident enough to make it happen. I became known at a local coffee shop; I got a job as a math tutor; I talked, and listened, and talked, and listened to anyone who would give me advice. “Why’d you decide to work here?” “Can I audit your class?” “What’s your name?” My world slowly expanded around me. If everyone is watching, you better believe I am going to be seen.

Then, I got into MIT.
And everyone was watching.

“When I was on the train from Liverpool to Cambridge to become a student, it occurred to me that no one at Cambridge

knew I was painfully shy, so I could become an extrovert instead of an introvert.” John Conway.

The first week of college, after struggling through a pset, I went to office hours. The problem I asked about was named after a well-known German mathematician I had never heard of. When I tried to say his name, the syllables fell out of my mouth to form a weird amalgamation of sound. And everyone laughed. Or at least, that’s what it felt like. I was a bit embarrassed, but almost instantaneously I embraced this. I became the pset partner who wasn’t afraid of asking the dumb questions.

I’ve been trying to take up space at MIT. On the fourth floor of Building 2, there’s this little common space of tables and chalkboards where I just sit and *work*. Sometimes for a few minutes, sometimes for a few hours. I move one of the tables to be closer to an outlet, and I neatly write a to-do list on the board. And I get to work. I wave to students and professors walking by, and sip away at a Hayden coffee. I have been feeling so much more comfortable *existing* in this past year.

So why have I been feeling so *large*? Specifically in classrooms. One moment I’m just taking notes, and the next I feel like a giant. It started last semester (albeit, the first semester I had on campus) in 18.101.

There were at *most* 10 students who would regularly attend lectures. And yet, I was constantly looking over my shoulder to make sure I wasn’t blocking someone’s view.

Part of me chalks this up to internalized transphobia.

I found it difficult to do anything last spring. Between classes being online and not knowing many people on campus, I hardly ever left my room. But, on the few occasions when I would venture outside of the halls of McCormick, I would explore. I learned the building numbers of main campus, and I wandered around the tunnels. Every hallway I walked down, and every classroom I could enter was filled with wonder and excitement.

On one such exploring day, I took two pieces of fresh white Hagaromo chalk, went to 4-159, and wrote “Dr. Paige Bright.”

And I thought to myself: one day, this will be true.

I like creating moments like this. Moments that, one day, will create a perfect little movie montage that overlooks all the pain and suffering I went through to get to where I am. They make me feel less small. Even if I don’t know exactly where I am headed in the expanse of the cosmos, I would like to think that moments like this get me there. The moments I stumble across, however, are even more impactful — like the first time I walked down the hallway between Building 4 and Building 2.

In this hallway, there is a Wall of people in the math department: Professors, Academic Staff, and Graduate students. And just like when I wrote my name on the board, I had another thought that is going to stick with me: one day, I will be on this Wall. This was followed by the not so pleas-

ant thought: “If I were on this Wall, I’d be taking away a spot for someone else.”

For this smallest fraction of a second, I saw the Wall and thought “there are so few people here who aren’t men. Why should I be among them?” As if being transgender makes me less of a woman.

Of course, this isn’t what I believe, and I want there to be more transgender representation in education. But for this smallest moment, some cosmic force made me feel like I shouldn’t *get* to take up this space. And I felt so small.

Promptly after telling us to dance like no one’s watching, my teacher played the scene from Napoleon Dynamite in which the titular character dances in front of a huge auditorium. I sat there, letting the irony sink in. Everyone was watching. *Everyone* could see him. At its core, the quote acknowledges the fact that people will watch: so how would you like to be perceived?

I want to be confident, I want to be more than a speck in the universe. In pursuing this, I have taken up more space. And I like this; I like walking around, seeing people I know, and feeling confident. But with this comes the duality of sometimes feeling unbearably large, and occasionally feeling dismissively small.

Nonetheless, if everyone’s watching, I am going to be seen.

Howdy! Have thoughts, questions, comments, concerns, feedback, opinions, feelings, hopes, dreams, aspirations, etc. you’d like to share? Email homeslice@the-tech.mit.edu.



GREY SARMIENTO—THE TECH

I constantly look over my shoulder to make sure I’m not blocking someone’s view.

BEAVER FEVER

THURSDAY 10

- SafeUp — Raffle Event**
11 a.m. @ front of Stud (free cookies, either *Insomnia* or *Levain*)
- Pleasure @ MIT — IFC SHARE Presents: I’ll Make a Man out of You**
12–1 p.m. @ 5-231 (free food)
- MIT TechX — xFair Cubist Systematic Strategies Tech Talk**
4 p.m. @ virtual
- MIT TechX — xFair Atlas Devices Tech Talk**
5 p.m. @ virtual
- MIT Biotech Group — MBG Fireside Chat: An Insider Look at Life Sciences VC**
6–7 p.m. @ virtual (RSVP required)
- Pleasure @ MIT — Love, Sex, Faith & Ethics: Jewish, Christian, Hindu, and Humanist chaplains discuss the messy questions of life**
6–8 p.m. @ W11 Main Dining room (free dinner)
- MIT Asian Dance Team — Spring Workshop: Bicycle by Chungha**
7–8 p.m. @ MacGregor Dance Studio
- HackMIT — Healthcare Tech Talk**
8–8:30 p.m. @ 3-133 (free boba, RSVP required)

FRIDAY 11

- Pleasure @ MIT — They/them Pronouns**
3–4 p.m. @ 1-135 (free Mochinut)

- MIT Poker Club — Jane Street General Body Meeting**
6–8 p.m. @ 2-131 (free food, signup required)
- Pleasure @ MIT — Pleasure in the Dark**
7–8:30 p.m. @ 66-110 (free food)
- MIT Vietnamese Student Association — Song Lang screening**
7–8:45 p.m. @ 2-105 (free popcorn and hot chocolate)
- Roadkill Buffet — 2.00BBL**
8 p.m. @ 6-120
- MIT Symphony Orchestra — Spring Concert 1**
8–9:30 p.m. @ Kresge Auditorium and virtual
- MIT Shakespeare Ensemble — Coriolanus**
8 p.m. @ La Sala de Puerto Rico (tickets required)
- MIT Lecture Series Committee — Gattaca screening**
8 p.m. @ 26-100
- SaveTFP — self care night!**
9–11 p.m. @ Coffeehouse Lounge

SATURDAY 12

- MIT Figure Skating Club — Limitless Spring Showing**
1:30 p.m.
- MIT IEEE/ACM — March Study Break**
2–4 p.m. @ Stud Mezzanine Lounge (free Flour sandwiches)

- MIT BrainTrust — Brain Injury Symposium**
4–7 p.m. @ virtual (registration required)
- MIT Hillel — Purim On Ice**
7:15 p.m. @ Johnson Ice Rink (free rentals)
- MIT China Development Initiative — The Wandering Earth (流浪星球) showing**
7:30 p.m. @ 4-163 (free snacks)
- MIT Shakespeare Ensemble — Coriolanus**
8 p.m. @ La Sala de Puerto Rico (tickets required)
- MIT Lecture Series Committee — Gattaca screening**
8 p.m. @ 26-100
- MIT Cello World — Cello++ First Showcase**
8–9 p.m. @ Kresge Little Theater (free)
- SAAS and Nitya — Poetry Night**
8–9 p.m. @ Lobdell (free sweets)

SUNDAY 13

- MIT Shakespeare Ensemble — Coriolanus**
2 p.m. @ La Sala de Puerto Rico (tickets required)
- MIT Imobulare and MIT Ukrainian Folk Dance Ensemble — Fusion Dance Workshop**
3–4 p.m. @ W20-407

MONDAY 14

- MIT Prison Education Initiative — “Correctional” by Dr. Ravi Shankar Reading**
12 p.m. @ virtual
- MIT Asian Dance Team — Spring Workshop: 0X1=LOVESONG (I Know I Love You) by TXT**
8–9 p.m. @ DuPont MPR
- MIT Poker Club — General Body Meeting**
9–10 p.m. @ 5-134
- TUESDAY 15**
- MIT Student Sustainability Coalition — Sustainability Midway**
11 a.m. – 2 p.m. @ Lobby 13 and 10-105 (free Clover and boba)
- AI@MIT — Fundamentals Reading Group**
4–5 p.m. @ 2-146 (RSVP required)



To have your student group’s event featured in *The Tech*, email cl@tech.mit.edu. Interested in joining *The Tech*? Email join@tech.mit.edu!

Tick

Solution, page 2

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

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.

Tock

Solution, page 2

120×		30×		2÷	
	8×			6×	
3+		30×	6×		4
	12×			20×	
15×			40×		4−
	18×			1	

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.

Counting the Seconds by Sally R. Stein

Solution, page 2

ACROSS

- 1 __ of measure (miles or pounds)
6 Vapor from a teakettle
11 “Let me think . . .”
14 Mount climbed by Moses
15 Pretentiously creative
16 Winning tic-tac-toe line
17 They buzz to wake people up
19 Internet address: Abbr.
20 Actor __ Damon
21 Brief in one’s words
23 Strong grasp of a subject
27 Comes out of hiding
29 People playing roles
30 Decorated with blossoms
31 Sandals and sneakers
32 Old __ (American flag)
33 Software download
36 Clumsy one’s cry
37 Gray stocking shade
38 Largest continent
39 At this time
40 Traditional Indian dwelling
41 Lazy __ (revolving tray)

- 42 Has the same opinion
44 Tranquil
45 Surprise greatly
47 Umbrella to block the sun
48 Treaties
49 Play friskily
50 “What did you say?”
51 What the other three long answers all are
58 What glaciers are made of
59 Wipe off a blackboard
60 Still sleeping
61 __ Moines, IA
62 Missiles thrown in pubs
63 In a grouchy mood

DOWN

- 1 Nation north of Mexico
2 Nothing at all
3 Once __ while (occasionally)
4 Goo for paving
5 Keeps just below a boil
6 Tasting like many pretzels
7 Jogger’s pace
8 And so on: Abbr.
9 Inquire

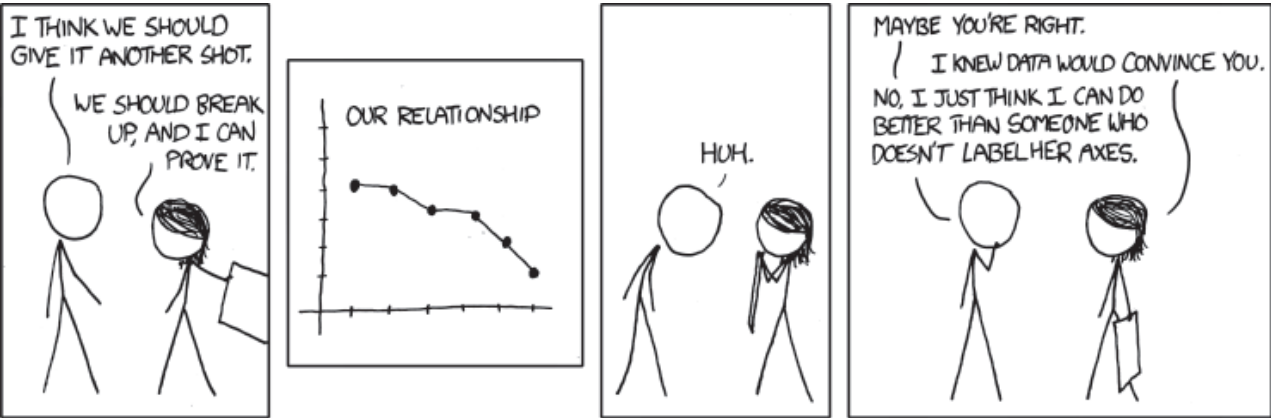
- 10 Suspense novel
11 Sand-filled counters of seconds
12 __ code (telegraphy system)
13 Burrowing lawn pests
18 Sedans and coupes
22 Historical period
23 Bricklaying expert
24 Sound of a sneeze
25 Counters of seconds for races
26 Tips of slippers
27 Run off to wed
28 “The __ the merrier”
30 Chimney ducts
32 Stared with dropped jaw
34 “Baby grand” instrument
35 Group of experts
37 Adolescent
38 Eerie glow
40 Had confidence in
41 Tempter of Eve
43 Obtained
44 By the __ token (similarly)
45 Rosebush pest
46 Marinara or pesto

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				

- 47 Finger jabs
49 Take a break
52 Keogh plan alternative
53 Scratch up

- 54 Edgar Allan __
55 Sci-fi beings, for short
56 Monotonous routine
57 Secret agent

[833] Convincing



And if you labeled your axes, I could tell you exactly how MUCH better.

Solution, page 2

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.



SPORTS BLITZ

Friday, March 4

- **Women's Tennis** lost against University of Chicago 3-6.
- **Softball** won against Transylvania University 5-4.
- **Softball** lost against Alma College 4-9.
- **Men's Volleyball** lost against Elmira College 2-3.

Saturday, March 5

- **Sailing** finished 3rd out of 6 at Harvard University.
- **Sailing** finished 7th out of 8 at the Sharpe Trophy.
- **Women's Tennis** won against Kenyon College 9-0.
- **Softball** lost against Emory University 2-4.
- **Softball** lost against Belhaven University 2-11 in 6 innings.
- **Men's Lacrosse** won against University of New England 17-7.
- **Women's Lacrosse** won against Johnson & Wales University 21-4.
- **Men's Tennis** lost against Bryant University 4-5.

Sunday, March 6

- **Women's Tennis** won against Carnegie Mellon University 5-2.
- **Softball** lost against Randolph-Macon College 0-3.
- **Softball** lost against Virginia Wesleyan University 0-1.

Tuesday, March 8

- **Baseball** lost against Suffolk University 6-13.
- **Women's Lacrosse** lost against Endicott College 3-16.

Wednesday, March 9

- **Men's Tennis** against Colby-Sawyer College was canceled.
- **Men's Lacrosse** won against Roger Williams University 17-12.

Track and Field detailed results and recap can be found on mitathletics.com.

Upcoming Sports Events

FRIDAY 11

Men's Track and Field
NCAA Division III National Championship

Women's Track and Field
NCAA Division III National Championship

Men's Volleyball
vs. Lasell University
7:00 p.m.

SATURDAY 12

Men's Track and Field
NCAA Division III National Championship

Women's Track and Field
NCAA Division III National Championship

Sailing
Navy Women's Race

Sailing
Wood Trophy

Sailing
MIT Team Race Invite

Men's Lacrosse
vs. Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
1:00 p.m.

Women's Lacrosse
vs. Roger Williams University
1:00 p.m.

Men's Tennis
vs. Colby College
1:00 p.m.

Men's Volleyball
vs. Springfield College
2:00 p.m.

SUNDAY 13

Sailing
Navy Women's Race

Sailing
Wood Trophy

Sailing
MIT Team Race Invite

Men's Fencing
NCAA Northeast Regional Championship
9:00 a.m.

Women's Fencing
NCAA Northeast Regional Championship
9:00 a.m.

MONDAY 14

Baseball
vs. UMass Boston
3:00 p.m.

TUESDAY 15

Baseball
vs. Rhode Island College
3:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 16

Men's Swimming and Diving
NCAA Championships

Women's Swimming and Diving
NCAA Championships

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