



ELLIE MONTEMAYOR—THE TECH

**Pro-Palestine protestors in front of Lobby 7, Saturday.** The group, which convened in front of Cambridge City Hall to protest the developing situation in Rafah, a city in the Gaza Strip, marched to MIT.

# President Sally Kornbluth announces \$75 million funded climate project

*Kornbluth: “A compelling new strategy for accelerated, university-led innovation”*

By Tina Zhang & Alex Tang  
NEWS EDITORS

In an email to the MIT community, President Sally Kornbluth announced the Climate Project at MIT, a \$75 million effort to power initiatives in decarbonization, climate renewal, and community and policy advancement.

She said that the Climate Project is a “compelling new strategy for accelerated, university-led innovation.”

The Climate Project’s foundations lie in Fast Forward: MIT’s Climate Action Plan for the Decade, which was announced in 2021 by the former MIT President L.

Rafael Reif’s administration. Kornbluth stated that Vice Provost Richard Lester proposed the new approach to meet the public’s demand for a “different order of speed, ambition, focus, and scale” after consulting with more than 150 experts.

Kornbluth stated that the Climate Project will be composed of three components: The Climate Missions, The Climate Frontier Projects, and The Climate HQ. It

will be focused on achieving six Climate Missions, including decarbonizing energy and industry and proposing new environmental policy strategies. Kornbluth stated that MIT is currently seeking a faculty leader for each mission on “an accelerated timeline.” More information on the roles of leaders for each mission can be found here.

Additionally, Kornbluth announced the creation of a Vice President for Climate (VPC) that will direct the Climate Project and help realize its missions. According to Kornbluth, the VPC will “take the lead on fundraising and implementation, and shape [the Climate Project’s] strategic vision.”

Kornbluth also said that she appointed several faculty members, including the Vice Provost Lester, to serve on the Climate Search Advisory Committee which will advise Kornbluth on how to select leaders for the six Climate Missions.

Furthermore, Kornbluth said that the Climate Project will be launched with \$50 million from the Institute, the “largest direct

investment the Institute has ever made in funding climate work.” She added that the Sloan School of Management will give \$25 million to “endow a new climate policy center” that will supplement the Institute’s investment to jumpstart the new climate plan. Kornbluth stated that the funds will “allow for early advances and express the seriousness of our intentions to potential partners around the world.”

Given the Climate Project’s nascency, Kornbluth said that it will benefit from and “continue to be shaped by the insight and expertise” of individuals who demonstrate expertise and leadership in different fields including academia, government, and industry.

Kornbluth called the Climate Project “ambitious, multifaceted, and complex” and encouraged the MIT community to get involved, stating that “with your creativity, support and drive, we have every reason to hope that the Climate Project at MIT can make that aspiration real.”

A detailed summary of the Climate Project at MIT can be found online.

**SEE BACK COVER** *Protestors march from Cambridge City Hall to MIT*

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## McCormick Hall due for renovation, summer '25

In an email to McCormick Hall residents, Suzy Nelson, Vice Chancellor & Dean for Student Life, along with current McCormick heads of housing Raul Radovitsky and Flavia Cardarelli, detailed plans for the closure of the hall in Summer 2025 for renovations that would last for two years. McCormick is the only all-female dormitory on campus.

McCormick’s closure aligns with the re-opening of East Campus (EC) in fall 2025: EC closed in the summer of 2023, and will be reopened in 2025 with elevators, air conditioning, and other modern features.

To ensure community involvement and support during the transition, a McCormick Hall Transition Team (MHTT) will be

formed. This team, comprising of resident student leaders and staff from various divisions of the MIT administration will solicit input and address concerns from residents.

“We want to develop an effective, supportive transition plan for the McCormick community,” stated Suzy Nelson. “Communication and community involvement will be central to the process.”

As part of the initiative, an frequently-asked-questions list has been created to address immediate questions, with future community meetings planned to provide further information and gather feedback.

— Jayashabari Shankar

**March 9. Add Date.** Last day to add full-term subjects to registration.

**March 9.** Undergraduate Association Election Candidacy Deadline.

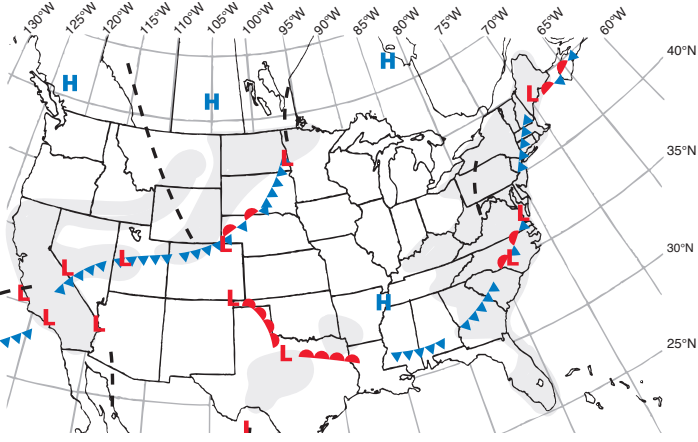
**March 18. Dalia Mogahed,** the former director of research at the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding and Muslim studies scholar will hold a panel titled: “Islamophobia: A Threat to All.”

**Interested in joining The Tech?** Email [tt-join@mit.edu](mailto:tt-join@mit.edu).

**Send news and tips to** [tt-news@mit.edu](mailto:tt-news@mit.edu).



WEATHER FORECAST



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

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

March showers... bring April flowers?

By Rine Pan

METEOROLOGIST

Don't be tricked by recent warm weather— despite temperatures nearly reaching the sixties earlier this week, make sure to keep dressing warm and dry as the next few days cool down again. Expect a variety of precipitation this weekend all the way from intermittent snow flurries to night to warm(ish) showers on Sunday.

High winds accompany the onslaught of midterms coming up this and next week, so try your best to keep both feet

on the ground and not blown away in the current. Hopefully, after enduring a variety of ups and downs in our weather recently, we'll be able to enjoy an early spring to save us from more gloomy weather. Fingers crossed!

Cheers,  
Rine

Extended Forecast

Today:

Morning showers. High around 45°F (7°C). North winds around 25 mph.

Tonight:

Intermittent snow and rain. Low around 35°F (2°C). Strong north winds around 30 mph.

Friday:

Sunny. High around 45°F (7°C) and low around 36°F (2°C). Northeast winds around 12 mph.

Saturday:

Cloudy with nighttime rain. High around 42°F (6°C) and low around 38°F (3° C). Southeast winds around 12 mph.

Sunday:

Rain. High around 50°F (10°C), low around 35°F (2°C). Gusty southwest winds around 20 mph.

# Ukraine@MIT holds memorial

The vigil showcased dozens of student profiles

By Russel Ismael  
NEWS EDITOR

On Feb. 26, Ukraine@MIT held a memorial at Lobby 13 for Ukraine students who lost their lives during the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began over two years ago. The exhibition was called “Unissued Diplomas” and paid respects to students who lost their lives in the Russo-Ukrainian War.

Student profiles were displayed, each with a paragraph detailing facts about their life such as their names and age, their activities in university, and their hobbies.

40 such diplomas of these students were put up around the lobby, and the vigil began with a minute of silence.

Ukrainian students also shared their own experiences with the war. Sasha Horokh '25, a Course 14 and 18 student, said in their speech that many of their classmates from high school enlisted in the army soon after the Russian invasion. They detailed how their classmates did this to protect their own homes and families from the war, and how Ukrainian students had to learn skills like first-aid as part of their curriculum in school.

Horokh said that they all thought that animosity between Russia and Ukraine was “leftover from World War II.” However, they said that this war had already been going on for ten years when Russia annexed Crimea.

In an email to the MIT community, Tarash Yushchenko '26, Vice President of Ukraine@MIT and son of former Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko, wrote that “it would mean a lot if the [MIT community] could join [their] fellow Ukrainian students in honoring two years of pain, hardship, courage, and freedom.”

## An introduction from MIT’s new Vice President for Equity and Inclusion

Reid: “Together, we will continue to make MIT the envy of the world.”

By Alex Tang  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

In an Institute Community & Equity Office newsletter, Karl W. Reid '84, SM '85, MIT's first Vice President for Equity and Inclusion, introduced himself to the MIT community with a note titled, “Coming Full Circle.” Reid highlighted his long ties to the Institute, from his past leadership positions to his upbringing. Reid began by stating, “As an engineer, I appreciate patterns.” In 1998, Reid was tapped to direct the MIT Introduction to Technology, Engineering, and Science Program (MITES), and was welcomed by his master's thesis advisor and now Professor Emeritus in the Course 3, John VanderSande.

After leaving the Institute for the United Negro College Fund in Washington, D.C., Dan Hastings, then the Dean of undergraduate education, “graciously hosted a celebration in my honor,” Reid said. Hastings recently served as the Interim Institute Community and Equity Officer prior to Reid's hiring. “Truly a full circle moment,” Reid wrote.

Reid thanked Hastings for “stepping in and shepherding the Institute Community and Equity Office this past year.” He also acknowledged the “foundational work” of former Institute Community and Equity Officers John Dozier and Ed

Bertschinger. Finally, he thanked President Sally Kornbluth for her work in creating a presidential cabinet position “in keeping with her unwavering commitment to equity and belonging at the Institute.”

“MIT has always had a special place in my heart,” Reid wrote. Reid emphasized the Institute's role in his life, stating that “in my high school years, I visited my older brother in Chocolate City”; later on, upon his graduation from MIT, “I watched my usually undemonstrative father tear up with pride as I thanked him for getting me there.” He called his father's life journey, in which two of his children who were graduates of a revered institution, “a dream deferred, but not denied.”

Reid stated that his father's story “fuels my work” to create access and opportunities for those who have been marginalized and underserved.” He highlighted that “it drives me to engineer spaces where everyone feels seen, valued, and heard.”

“The road ahead to a more inclusive future is fraught with uncertainty,” Reid wrote. He expressed concerns about “increasing fragmentation and siloed echo chambers.” Regardless, Reid remained optimistic about the prospects of the Institute striving towards a stronger community.

He concluded, “Together, we will continue to make MIT the envy of the world.”

## Graduate Junction Licensing Center opens

The Graduate Junction Licensing Center opened at the Stratton Student Center through the Institute's partnership with the American Campus Communities (ACC). This center, located on the first floor, offers a preview of accommodations for the upcoming Fall 2024 semester at the new Graduate Junction residence. David Friedrich, Housing and Residential Services Director, emphasized the importance of meeting the growing need for graduate student housing, citing rising prices in Cambridge.

The Graduate Junction complex, part of MIT's commitment to add 950 on-campus beds for graduate students, will offer 676 beds in two buildings adjacent to Simmons Hall. The partnership with ACC aims to manage the demand for housing while providing off-campus-style living with on-campus convenience.

ACC representatives will be available at the licensing center from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday to offer tours, answer questions, and guide graduate students through the licensing process. Interested students are encouraged to visit the center in W20 or explore ACC's Graduate Junction website for more information.

— Jayashabari Shankar

## In Memoriam: Edward B. Roberts '58 SM '58 SM '60 PhD '62

Professor Edward Roberts '58, SM '58, SM '60, PhD '62, of the Sloan School of Management, passed away on Feb. 27. Roberts had an illustrious career as an academic, serving on the faculty for 60 years. He became one of the youngest people ever tenured at Sloan, attaining full professorship at the age of 33. Roberts was best known for bolstering the Institute's reputation through entrepreneurship. Known widely as MIT's father of entrepreneurship, Roberts majored in Martin Trust Center for MIT Entrepreneurship. The Center offers courses, co-curricular programs, and provides accelerators for startups in a program known as 'delta v'.

In a paper co-authored by Roberts in 2014, MIT alumni had launched over 30,000 active companies employing roughly millions people and generating nearly \$2 trillion in annual revenues. “I have helped MIT to become a much more entrepreneurial place,” Roberts said during a 2011 interview for an MIT Infinite History Project. In an email sent to the MIT community on Feb. 28, President Sally Kornbluth wrote that Roberts was the first person to earn a Ph.D. from the Institute in system dynamics. Roberts boasted a long track record as an “angel investor,” serving on the boards of more than 40 firms and co-founding 14 companies.

“Ed will always be remembered at MIT Sloan as a campus pillar,” Georgia Perakis, interim Dean of the MIT Sloan School wrote along with Deputy Dean Michael Cusumano, in a letter to the MIT Sloan community Feb. 27. Bill Aulet, Sloan professor and managing director for the Martin Trust Center, said that “virtually everything today in the MIT entrepreneurial ecosystem, from classes to extracurricular activities, has some level of Ed's DNA at its core.” President Kornbluth wrote that “there are countless people, on our campus and around the world, who are feeling his loss keenly – from the students he taught this year, to the friends and colleagues who find it difficult to imagine MIT Sloan without his mighty presence, to the thousands of former students whose lives he touched and careers he inspired.”

Roberts is survived by his wife Nancy, three children, and nine grandchildren. The funeral was held Feb. 29 at Temple Emanuel.

— Alex Tang & Russel Ismael

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SPORTS BLITZ	
Friday, February 23rd:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Women’s Swimming and Diving placed 1st with 587 points at the NEWMAC Championship</li><li>Men’s Swimming and Diving placed 1st with 539 points at the NEWMAC Championship</li><li>Men’s Volleyball defeated Elmira College 3–0</li><li>Women’s Basketball lost to Smith College 66–85</li></ul>
Saturday, February 24th:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Women’s Fencing placed 1st at the New England Championship</li><li>Men’s Fencing placed 1st at the New England Championship</li><li>Women’s Swimming and Diving placed 1st with 1028.5 points at the NEWMAC Championship</li><li>Men’s Swimming and Diving placed 1st with 1035.5 points at the NEWMAC Championship</li><li>Sailing placed 2nd at USF Women’s Team Race</li><li>Rifle placed 1st at the MAC Championship</li><li>Men’s Volleyball defeated Misericordia University 3–1</li><li>Men’s Tennis defeated Eastern Nazarene College 8–1</li><li>Women’s Lacrosse defeated Endicott College 16–8</li><li>Men’s Volleyball defeated Emerson College 3–0</li></ul>
Sunday, February 25th:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Women’s Track and Field placed 1st at New England DIII Championships</li><li>Men’s Track and Field placed 1st at New England DIII Championships</li><li>Rifle placed 1st at the MAC Championship</li><li>Women’s Swimming and Diving placed 1st with 1565.5 points at the NEWMAC Championship</li><li>Men’s Swimming and Diving placed 1st with 1483.5 points at the NEWMAC Championship</li></ul>
Wednesday, February 28th:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Men’s Lacrosse defeated Roger Williams University 20–10</li></ul>
Friday, March 1st:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Women’s Tennis lost to Pomona-Pizter at the ITA Indoor Nationals 1–6</li><li>Men’s Volleyball defeated New Paltz 3–0</li><li>Women’s Swimming and Diving participated in NCAA Diving Regional</li></ul>
Saturday, March 2nd:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Women’s Tennis defeated Sewanee at the ITA Indoor Nationals 6–1</li><li>Sailing placed 8th at Sharp Trophy at Brown University</li><li>Sailing placed 9th at Women’s Team Race at Harvard University</li><li>Women’s Track and Field participated in Tufts National Qualifying Meet</li><li>Men’s Track and Field participated in Tufts National Qualifying Meet</li><li>Men’s Lacrosse lost to Western New England University 8–16</li><li>Women’s Lacrosse defeated Union College 19–11</li><li>Men’s Tennis lost to Tufts University 3–6</li><li>Men’s Volleyball defeated Russell Sage College 3–1</li><li>Baseball defeated Rutgers-Newark 2–1</li></ul>
Sunday, March 3rd:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Women’s Tennis lost to Emory University at ITA Indoor Nationals 1–5</li><li>Baseball lost to Stevens 11-12 in 10 innings</li><li>Men’s Tennis defeated Bates College 8–1</li></ul>
Wednesday, March 6th:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Women’s Lacrosse lost to Endicott college 9–21</li><li>Men’s Lacrosse lost to Endicott college 17–18</li><li>Men’s Volleyball defeated Dean College 3–0</li></ul>

# Isaac Dobie ’27 captures NEWMAC Men’s Basketball Rookie of the Year

*Dobie: "I stuck with it because I enjoyed the game."*

**By Hannah Friedman & Alex Tang**

On Feb. 27, Isaac Dobie ’27, from Kitty Hawk, N.C., was named the New England Women’s and Men’s Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) Men’s Basketball Rookie of the Year for the 2023-34 season, making him the seventh Engineer to claim the honor. Rome Delgado-Gonzalez ’26 won the award in the previous season.

Dobie started all 25 games that he appeared in, averaging 14.6 points per game while totaling 110 rebounds and 31 steals. He had a league-best 18.3 points per game in NEWMAC play, with eight games of 20 or more points including an explosion for a career-high 37 points against Clark University.

Dobie spoke with The Tech to answer some rapid-fire questions.

**Congratulations on winning the NEWMAC Rookie of the year award! What does winning this award mean to you?**

Dobie: I am very grateful to have won this award and I am appreciative to whoever voted for me. That said, my teammates helped me win it by getting me the ball and always playing hard, so I thank them as well.

**What made you decide to play basketball at MIT?**

Dobie: I chose to play basketball at MIT because it is a great school, and because I had an opportunity to play here. I really liked my future teammates from my visit.

**When did you start playing basketball?**

Dobie: I started playing basketball when I was 7 because I was tall for my grade and that gave me an advantage. I stuck with it because I enjoyed the game.

**What’s the hardest part about being a student-athlete at MIT?**

Dobie: The hardest part about being a student-athlete at MIT is the time commitment. Nearly all of my time in season is spent either on school or basketball, which can be difficult.

**What has been the most rewarding part of being a student-athlete here?**

Dobie: For me, the most rewarding part of being a student-athlete at MIT is being able to play the sport that I love with my teammates and getting to hang out with them while we do schoolwork as well.

**What would you change if you could replay the season?**

Dobie: If I could replay the season, I would hope to enter with less nervousness. I started off slow because I was afraid to make a mistake. I also would focus on crashing the glass more often because I could have been a better rebounder than I was.

**How did you stay motivated after losing a game?**

Dobie: I stay motivated after losses by always focusing on the next game regardless of how the previous one went. There is no way to change how the last game went so my team-

mates and I try to focus on doing everything we can to win the next game.

**Do you have any rituals that you must perform before a game?**

Dobie: I do not have any specific pregame rituals. I just make sure that I am physically ready by stretching, and I also listen to music.

**Is there a particular significance to your jersey number?**

Dobie: I am a Celtics fan and Bill Russell was my all-time favorite player growing up, so I used to wear number 6. Once I got to middle school, the rules only allowed for jersey numbers to contain digits 1-5, so I switched my number to 5 because Kevin Garnett was my favorite player at that time.

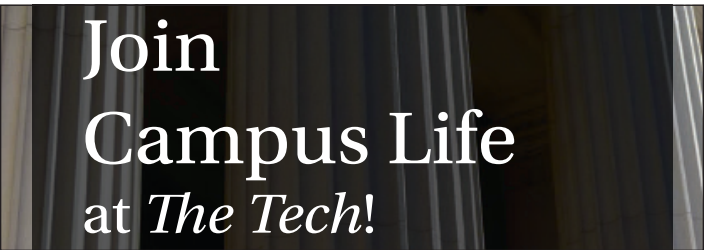
**If you could play with any basketball player one on one, who would it be?**

Dobie: If I could 1v1 any basketball player I would want to play Matthew Dellavedova. It drove me crazy to watch him beat the Celtics in the playoffs because of his playstyle. I would lose of course, but maybe I could get a cheap shot in while we played. Just kidding.

**What advice has Coach Anderson given you that you’ll always remember?**

Dobie: Coach Anderson tells us to make every aspect of the game a small personal competition. For example, making every rebound a competition between you and the other guy. This makes me play a little harder so I will always remember it.

Upcoming Sports Events	
FRIDAY 8	at Caltech 2 p.m.
Women’s Track and Field NCAA Division III National Championships	
Men’s Track and Field NCAA Division III National Championships	
Men’s Squash at CSA Individual Championships	
Baseball at Chapman University 6 p.m.	
SATURDAY 9	
Women’s Track and Field NCAA Division III National Championships	
Men’s Track and Field NCAA Division III National Championships	
Men’s Squash at CSA Individual Championships	
Women’s Tennis vs Hamilton College 10 a.m.	
Sailing at Wood Trophy at Harvard University 11 a.m.	
Sailing vs Franny Charles Trophy at MIT 11 a.m.	
Men’s Volleyball vs Buffalo State at MIT Tri-Match 12 p.m.	
Women’s Lacrosse vs Roger Williams University 1 p.m.	
Men’s Lacrosse at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute 1 p.m.	
Men’s Tennis vs Nichols College 2:30 p.m.	
Baseball at Chapman University 2:30 p.m.	
Men’s Volleyball vs Regis College at MIT Tri-Match 12 p.m.	
Baseball at Chapman University 5 p.m.	
SUNDAY 10	
Men’s Squash at CSA Individual Championships	
Sailing at Wood Trophy at Harvard University 11 a.m.	
Women’s Fencing NCAA Northeast Regional Championships 9 a.m.	
Men’s Fencing NCAA Northeast Regional Championships 9 a.m.	
Baseball	
	at Tufts University 3 p.m.
	at Brandeis University 3 p.m.
	Women’s Lacrosse at Bridgewater State University 6 p.m.
	SATURDAY 16
	Sailing at Southern New England Team Race 11 a.m.
	Sailing vs Geiger Trophy at MIT 11 a.m.
	Baseball vs New England College 12 p.m.
	Men’s Tennis vs Clark University 1 p.m.
	Men’s Volleyball vs New York University 1 p.m.
	Men’s Lacrosse vs Clark University 1 p.m.
	SUNDAY 17
	Sailing at Southern New England Team Race 11 a.m.
	Sailing vs Geiger Trophy at MIT 11 a.m.
	Men’s Tennis at Colby College 2 p.m.
	TUESDAY 19
	Softball vs Brandeis University 2:30 p.m.
	Baseball at Mitchell College 3 p.m.
	Softball vs Brandeis University 4:30 p.m.
	Men’s Lacrosse vs Bowdoin College 7 p.m.
	WEDNESDAY 20
	Women’s Swimming and Diving NCAA Championships
	Men’s Swimming and Diving NCAA Championships
	Baseball vs University of Southern Maine 3 p.m.
	Women’s Lacrosse vs Amherst College 6 p.m.
	Men’s Volleyball vs Hobart College 7 p.m.





WORLD & NATION is a two-page column featuring news articles syndicated from a selection of major newspaper outlets, covering topics of public interest and critical information which extend beyond the bounds of THE TECH's coverage as centered around the MIT and local community. Ownership of syndicated content is retained under their original respective publications, and is republished in this format to serve as an easily-accessible, printed digest for THE TECH's readership.

The column consists of two pages, with Side A focused on US news and politics and Side B on topics of international concern. The articles featured here are abridged as to contain only their most essential points; readers are directed to read more about an article from its original publication.

## U.S. Air Force member who set himself on fire outside Israeli Embassy in D.C. has died

The U.S. Air Force member who set himself on fire outside the Israeli Embassy in Washington, D.C., in an apparent protest against the Israel-Hamas war has died, according to a U.S. official. The airman was identified by police as 25-year-old Aaron Bushnell. Bushnell filmed himself yelling "Free Palestine" before collapsing to the ground. In a livestream, Bushnell called the Israeli attack on Gaza "genocide" and said what he was doing was not as extreme as the suffering of the Palestinian people. He then doused himself over the head with a liquid from a water bottle, and then set himself ablaze.

— Courtney Kube, Marlene Lenthang & Corky Siemaszko, FROM NBC NEWS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 26, 2024

## Glitches with new FAFSA form leave prospective college students in limbo

The delays in financial aid offers are due to the U.S. Department of Education's overhaul of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, known as FAFSA. The form is now shorter and simpler, but computer glitches have led to a botched rollout. Typically, FAFSA forms are released on Oct. 1. Once submitted, the data is sent to colleges within one to three days, and it is then used to calculate financial aid. But the updated application forms came out three months late, on Dec. 30, 2023. And schools will not receive the data until the first half of March.

— Meg Oliver, FROM CBS NEWS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 29, 2024

## Senate passes short-term funding bill to avert government shutdown

The Senate on Thursday passed a short-term funding bill that averts a partial government shutdown that was expected late Friday night. The final vote tally was 77-13. The measure now heads to the president's desk. The new funding deadlines for the government spending bills are now March 8 and March 22. Congress will now return next week to finish working on the first tranche of six funding bills that are due by March 8. President Joe Biden said the passage of a short-term funding bill – while good for Americans – "is a short-term fix—not a long-term solution."

— Lauren Peller, Mariam Khan, & John Parkinson, FROM ABC NEWS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED FEBRUARY 29, 2024

## Supreme Court sets argument date in Trump immunity case for April 25

The Supreme Court will hear arguments on April 25 in the blockbuster case over whether former President Donald Trump may claim immunity from prosecution in the federal election subversion case. The court previously said it would hear arguments in the case during the week of April 22. On Wednesday, it announced that it would hear the case during a rare Thursday session. The timing of the case has drawn considerable scrutiny as it could help determine whether Trump faces trial over his efforts to overturn the 2020 election before the November 2024 election. Special counsel Jack Smith, who brought the criminal charges, has sought to speed up the proceedings over Trump's immunity claim so that he can bring the matter to trial as quickly as possible.

— John Fritze, FROM CNN  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

## Minnesota rep. Dean Phillips halts long-shot presidential campaign

Representative Dean Phillips of Minnesota suspended his long-shot campaign for the Democratic nomination on Wednesday and endorsed President Biden. "To all who supported my effort, thank you. We will continue the important work to ensure a more responsive, democratic, and generationally diverse political system," he wrote in a post on X. "But today, in light of the stark reality we face, I ask you join me in mobilizing, energizing, and doing everything you can to help keep a man of decency and integrity in the White House. That's Joe Biden." While voters have indeed repeatedly indicated that they do not want a rematch between Mr. Biden and Donald J. Trump, they have also indicated a lack of interest in Mr. Phillips as a Democratic alternative.

— Chris Cameron, FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

# Nikki Haley drops out of GOP presidential primary race

Brian Dakss, Caroline Linton, & Nidia Cavazos

FROM CBS NEWS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

Former United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley suspended her 2024 presidential campaign on Wednesday, clearing the path for former President Donald Trump to win the Republican nomination.

In short remarks at her campaign headquarters in Charleston, South Carolina, Haley did not endorse Trump, the front-runner for the nomination and the last remaining major candidate. She acknowledged that he will likely be the nominee and said she wished him well, but stopped short of supporting him.

"It is now up to Donald Trump to earn the votes of those in our party and beyond it who did not support him," Haley said. "And I hope he does that."

Two sources close to Haley say she is eager to remain part of the

GOP conversation, is proud of being the last contender standing against Trump and is not ruling out anything moving forward.

Her top allies believe her run cements her as the standard bearer for traditional Republican values, especially with the looming exit of Sen. Mitch McConnell, who is stepping down as Senate minority leader and not running for reelection.

Trump posted on social media that Haley got "TOUNCED" and pointed to Vermont's open primary for her victory there.

"At this point, I hope she stays in the 'race' and fights it out until the end!" Trump wrote.

The news comes just hours after Trump won commanding victories across nearly all the states holding Republican nominating contests on Super Tuesday, according to CBS News projections. Exit polls showed Trump leading Haley among broad segments of the GOP electorate, with voters saying immigration and the economy were

their most important issues.

Haley denied Trump a clean sweep of the Super Tuesday contests with a victory in Vermont's Republican primary, just her second win of the primary season.

Trump is on track to reach the necessary 1,215 delegates to clinch the Republican nomination next week. Super Tuesday was the latest in a series of setbacks for Haley, who vowed to stay in the race at least until then.

In February, Trump won nearly 60% of the vote in her home state while she got just 39.5%.

And in Nevada, Haley suffered an embarrassing loss in the symbolic primary, where she was the only candidate still running who was on the ballot. "None of these" received more votes than Haley by a margin of 23 points. Days later, Trump ran in and won the Nevada caucuses, the only contest in the state to allocate delegates. Haley's campaign argued that the Nevada Republican Party had "rigged" the system for Trump.

# UMD halts fraternity, sorority events amid hazing concerns

Antonio Olivo

FROM THE WASHINGTON POST  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 2, 2024

The University of Maryland has ordered fraternities and sororities to stop holding social activities where alcohol is served after allegations of harmful misconduct, a move taken amid renewed concerns about hazing during pledge events and other parties.

In a letter to Greek organization presidents Friday, officials with the university's Division of Student Affairs said multiple chapters have been accused of misconduct that has "threatened the safety and well-being of members of the University community."

The university indefinitely suspended "new member" activities and placed a moratorium on all events held on or off campus where alcohol is served pending an investigation into the allegations.

"This directive means that every current member of the or-

ganization must not contact any new member or prospective new member via in-person, telephone, postal mail, any electronic means (including social media), or third-party communication," according to the letter, whose contents were first reported Friday evening by the Diamondback student newspaper.

A university spokesperson said Saturday that the order affects 21 fraternities and 16 sororities on the school's College Park campus, all of which are members of the Inter-fraternity Council (IFC) or the Panhellenic Association (PHA). The university's 13 multicultural Greek organizations and its five historically Black fraternities and sororities were not included in the order.

Hazing during Greek pledge events has been a perpetual worry after some students died of alcohol poisoning and other injuries.

This week, the University of Virginia's Inter-Fraternity Council voted to temporarily suspend

recruitment activities at all 30 of the school's fraternities amid allegations that a student there was injured by hazing.

In that Feb. 21 incident, the student fell backward down a long flight of stairs in the fraternity chapter house where he was pledging and was knocked unconscious, according to a parent of another student who witnessed the scene and spoke on the condition of anonymity out of fear of retribution.

A University of Virginia spokesperson declined to comment on the incident beyond a statement that anyone involved in a confirmed hazing incident would be subject to prosecution and university disciplinary action, with the chapter subject to further suspension or termination.

At the University of Maryland, the affected organizations were warned Thursday about the possibility of disciplinary action during an emergency meeting about earlier allegations of misconduct.

# Dartmouth College students end 12-day-long hunger strike

Frances Mize

FROM VALLEY NEWS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 1, 2024

The two remaining students on hunger strike at Dartmouth College have ended their fast, according to a statement on Friday from the college.

But criticism of the administration's handling of the arrest of two student protesters this past fall remains. An open letter released on Thursday, signed by over 180 faculty, staff and alumni, urges President Sian Leah Beilock to request that the Hanover police prosecutor drop the charges.

The message characterizes its signatories "as deeply troubled by the criminalization of student protest at Dartmouth," which has had "a chilling effect on campus."

It also demands that the administration "recognize students' right to engage in nonviolent protest without retaliation, and commit to fostering an environment in which students, faculty, and staff can freely express political opin-

ions including support for Palestine without fear of retribution."

In October, Hanover police arrested Roan Wade, a junior, and Kevin Engel, a freshman, on charges of misdemeanor criminal trespass as they occupied a tent in front of the college's administration building. They were protesting the college's stance toward the Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza.

Dartmouth won't ask prosecutors to drop the charges, college spokeswoman Jana Barnello wrote in an email on Friday.

"Dartmouth prizes and defends the right of free speech and the freedom of individuals to express themselves, while at the same time recognizing that such freedom exists in the context of the law and in responsibility for one's own actions," Barnello wrote. "Our position on this issue is that we must let the legal process run its course, without interference."

On Feb. 19, eight students launched a hunger strike. Among other concerns about Dartmouth's stance on the Israel-

Hamas War, they demanded the college "divest from apartheid" and ask the district attorney's office to drop the charges against Wade and Engel.

The faculty letter calls on the administration to "recogniz[e] the existence of Palestinian (and Arab and Muslim) students as a valuable part of the Dartmouth community, and openly commit to protecting them from all forms of racism and violence," quoting from an initial list of demands penned by the hunger strikers. an initial list of demands penned by the hunger strikers.

"This is imperative given that there have been a number of disturbing on-campus incidents targeting Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim members of the Dartmouth community in recent months," the faculty letter reads.

In February, at the end of the college's annual winter carnival, an ice sculpture carved to resemble a Palestinian state by Al-Nur, the college's Muslim student association, was destroyed.



# France becomes first country to enshrine abortion rights

Joshua Berlinger & Xiaofei Xu  
FROM CNN  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 4, 2024

France became the world’s first country to enshrine abortion rights in its constitution on Monday, the culmination of an effort that began in direct response to the US Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v. Wade. Lawmakers from both houses of the French Parliament voted 780 to 72 in favor of the measure, easily clearing the three-fifths majority needed to amend the French constitution. Monday’s vote, held during a special gathering of lawmakers at the Palace of Versailles, southwest of Paris, was the final step in the legislative process. The French Senate and National Assembly each overwhelmingly approved the amendment earlier this year. The amendment states that there is a “guaranteed freedom” to abortion in France. Some groups

and lawmakers had called for stronger language to explicitly call abortion a “right.” Lawmakers hailed the move as a history-making way for France to send a clear signal of support on reproductive rights, with abortion under threat in the United States, as well as in parts of Europe, like Hungary, where far-right parties have come to power. Following the vote, the Eiffel Tower was lit up with the words “my body my choice.” Prime Minister Gabriel Attal said before the vote that lawmakers had a “moral debt” to women who were, in the past, forced to endure illegal abortions. “Above all, we’re sending a message to all women: your body belongs to you,” Attal said. French President Emmanuel Macron said the government would hold a formal ceremony celebrating the amendment’s passage on Friday, International Women’s Rights Day. France first legalized abor-

tion in 1975, after a campaign led by then-Health Minister Simone Veil, an Auschwitz survivor who became one of the country’s most famous feminist icons. While abortion is a highly divisive issue in US politics that often falls along party lines, in France it is widely supported. Many of the lawmakers who voted against the amendment did so not because they opposed abortion, but because they felt the measure was unnecessary, given the wide support for reproductive rights. The measure’s passage is a clear victory for the French left, which has been pushing for years to guarantee abortion rights in the constitution. Before 2022, President Emmanuel Macron’s government argued — like the amendment’s current opponents — that the move was unnecessary. However, in 2022, when the US Supreme Court ruled against Roe v. Wade and let states individually decide on the issue, France was pushed to act.

# US military air drops more aid to Gaza, will not deploy troops

Phil Stewart & Idrees Ali  
FROM REUTERS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 5, 2024

The U.S. military carried out a new air drop of humanitarian aid to Palestinians in Gaza on Tuesday, parachuting in more than 36,800 meals, as the Biden administration pressed a top Israeli official for greater aid access during talks in Washington. The Israeli offensive in Gaza, which is supported by the United States, has displaced most of the enclave’s 2.3 million people and led to critical shortages of food, water and medicine. The situation is worst in the north of Gaza, which is beyond the reach of aid agencies or news cameras, and was the target of Tuesday’s drop. Gaza health authorities say 15 children have died of malnutrition or dehydration at one hospital alone. Aid dropped by air is an expensive and insufficient alternative to aid that is trucked in, given the scale of the humanitarian crisis,

U.S. officials say. President Joe Biden’s administration is pressing for greater access by land. U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin met at the Pentagon on Tuesday with Benny Gantz, a member of Israel’s war cabinet, and urged his support for Israel to do more to help civilians. “Secretary (Austin) expressed strong concerns over the humanitarian situation in Gaza and requested Minister Gantz’s support in enabling more humanitarian assistance and distribution into Gaza,” Air Force Major General Patrick Ryder said. Gantz made no comments at the Pentagon but told reporters outside the State Department that his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken was “very good.” The State Department’s spokesperson, Matt Miller, called the humanitarian situation in Gaza “horrific.” Aid supplies to the rest of Gaza, already sharply curtailed since the start of the war, have

dwindled to barely a trickle over the past month. Whole swathes of the territory are completely cut off from food. The U.S. made its first air drop on Saturday, over the coast of southwestern Gaza. In a post on X, formerly Twitter, U.S. President Joe Biden said: “The United States is committed to pulling out every stop to get more aid to those in Gaza who desperately need it. We won’t stand by. We won’t let up.” The United States has already urged Israel numerous times to do more to alleviate the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, where more than 30,000 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli assault launched in response to Hamas attacks that killed 1,200 people in October. U.S. officials have voiced interest in a possible maritime corridor to get aid into Gaza, but it is unclear how aid would enter without U.S. military presence to facilitate that, including setting up a temporary port.

# Protestors ram down doors of Mexico City’s National Palace

The Associated Press  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

Protesters commandeered a pickup truck Wednesday and used it to ram down the wooden doors of Mexico City’s National Palace. They battered down the doors and entered the colonial-era palace, where the president lives and hold his daily press briefings, before they were driven off by security agents. The palace is a historic structure dating back to the 1700s, and was built on the site of the Aztec emperors’ palace. The demonstration, like many others over the years, was called to protest the abduction and murder of 43 students a decade ago. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador called the protest a provocation, and claimed the demonstrators had sledgehammers and blowtorches.

“This is a movement against us,” López Obrador said. “The plan is to create a provocation.” But the president also attempted to downplay the seriousness of the protest, saying “The door will be fixed, it’s nothing.” For years, the victims’ families and students at government rural teachers’ colleges have protested the 2014 disappearances. The mass disappearance remains one of Mexico’s most infamous human rights cases. With López Obrador’s term ending next year, family members face the prospect of a tenth year of not knowing what happened to their sons but fears that the next administration will start the error-plagued investigation over from scratch yet again. In 2014, a group of students were attacked by municipal police in the southern city of Iguala, Guerrero, who handed

them over to a local drug gang that apparently killed them and burned their bodies. Since the Sept. 26 attack, only three of their remains have been identified. After an initial coverup, last year a government truth commission concluded that local, state and federal authorities colluded with the gang to murder the students in what it called a “state crime.” López Obrador has complained about the involvement of human rights groups, who he claimed have prevented him from speaking directly to the parents of the missing students. The under-funded radical rural teachers’ colleges in Mexico have a decades-long tradition of violent protests. In fact, when they were abducted, the students themselves had been hijacking passenger buses which they were going to use to travel to another protest.

# Houthi missile attack kills 3 crew members in Yemen rebels’ first fatal assault on shipping

A missile attack by Yemen’s Houthi rebels on a commercial ship in the Gulf of Aden on Wednesday killed three of its crew members and forced survivors to abandon the vessel, the U.S. military said. It was the first fatal strike in a campaign of assaults by the Iranian-backed group over Israel’s war on Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The attack on the Barbados-flagged, Liberian-owned bulk carrier True Confidence further escalates the conflict on a crucial maritime route linking Asia and the Middle East to Europe that has disrupted global shipping. The Houthis have launched attacks since November, and the U.S. began an airstrike campaign in January that so far hasn’t halted their attacks. — Jon Gambrell & Tara Copp, FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

# Haiti Engulfed by Crisis as Gangs Press Prime Minister to Step Down

Haiti’s security crisis is reaching a breaking point. An alliance of armed gangs is pressing the country’s prime minister to resign, placing the United States in the middle of a power struggle gripping the country. Aiming to ease the standoff, the Biden administration is increasing pressure on Prime Minister Ariel Henry to enable a transfer of power. The United States was not actively “calling on him or pushing for him to resign,” Matthew Miller, a spokesman for the State Department, said. But, he added, “we are urging him to expedite the transition to an empowered and inclusive governance structure.” — Simon Romero & Maria Abi-Habib, FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

# The EU and Germany will give Albania \$88 million to turn the capital’s 3 main bus lines electric

The European Union and Germany said Wednesday they would give Albania a combined 81.09 million euros (about \$88 million) to turn the three main bus lines in the capital Tirana electric, part of helping the Balkan country meet requirements to join the 27-nation bloc. The bloc will give the Green Transport Tirana project 31.09 million euros (\$34 million) as a grant while Germany’s KfW Development Bank will loan it 50 million euros (\$54 million). The Tirana municipality will also invest 29.17 million euros (\$31.6 million). — FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

# Maldives signs China military pact in further shift away from India

Maldives on Tuesday said China will provide it with “military assistance,” in the latest sign that the Indian Ocean archipelago’s pro-China shift is well under way following the election of President Mohamed Muizzu last year. The Maldivian Defense Ministry said it signed an agreement with Beijing Monday “on China’s provision of military assistance” and that the deal would foster “stronger bilateral ties,” according to a post on social media site X. Details of what the assistance would entail were not released but the ministry said the deal was “gratis” — or given for free. — Helen Regan, FROM CNN  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 5, 2024

# Argentina’s Milei bans gender-inclusive language in official documents

Argentina’s President Javier Milei has banned the use of gender-inclusive language in the government, including in all official documents, the presidential spokesperson said Tuesday, as the far-right libertarian continues to implement his socially conservative agenda. The ban, effective immediately, will prohibit “inclusive language and everything related to the gender perspective throughout the national public administration,” Manuel Adornis, spokesperson for the Casa Rosada, said in his daily press conference.

— Tara John & Sahar Akbarzai, FROM CNN  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 6, 2024

# War insurers shrug off Rubymar sinking in Red Sea, rates stable

The cost of war risk insurance through the Red Sea remained stable on Monday despite the sinking of the Rubymar cargo ship as underwriters had already factored in the casualty after it was first hit by a missile last month, industry sources said. The cost of insuring a seven-day voyage through the Red Sea has risen by hundreds of thousands of dollars since Yemen’s Iran-aligned Houthis began attacking shipping in the area in November in a show of solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza. The UK-owned and Belize-flagged Rubymar was abandoned after the Houthis fired a missile at the ship in the southern Red Sea on Feb. 18, leading to a fuel leak and it taking on water. — Jonathan Saul, FROM REUTERS  
ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MARCH 4, 2024







MOVIE REVIEW

# Anyone But You would have been loved more by anyone but me

A typical rom-com that anyone, especially you, could have predicted

★★★★☆

Anyone But You

Starring Glen Powell,  
Sydney Sweeney

Released December 2023

Rated R. Now playing

By Russel Ismael  
NEWS EDITOR

There is a scene in Anyone but You where Bea (played by Sydney Sweeney), after spilling a drink on her pants and drying them with a bathroom’s hand dryer, walks out of a washroom only to be stopped by Ben (played by Glen Powell). Bea then casually asks if this is the moment when he asks for her number, and Ben reluctantly agrees. But we find out that what he really wanted to do was point out that she had toilet paper stuck to her foot. I think this is the only moment in the movie I found funny.

People who like rom-coms would have probably loved this movie, but I stand by my belief that when you watch one rom-com, you’ve watched all of them. It’s pretty telling that my favorite parts of watching this movie were the faces I would make to the person sitting next to me (I watched this in a group) whenever I found something cringeworthy in the film.

Nonetheless, Anyone But You did have its special moments. I thought the movie before the six-month time skip was referencing Romeo and Juliet, but once the characters were properly introduced, I realized that the movie was actually an adaptation of Much Ado About Nothing. Bea (originally Beatrice in Shakespeare’s work) is a Boston University law school dropout (the theater cheered when Boston was displayed on the silver

screen) who hits it off with Ben (originally Benedict), a business trader for Goldman Sachs. However, due to some miscommunication, they grow resentful of each other and cut it off there.

After the time skip, Ben and Bea meet again in a pub coincidentally. Of course, once Bea and Ben meet, they immediately antagonize each other for their actions half a year ago, and this kickstarts Bea and Ben’s enemies-to-lovers arc. The pub scene also introduced me to characters like Claudia (played by Alexandra Shipp) and Halle (played by Hadley Robinson), the film’s versions of Claudio and Hero in Much Ado About Nothing, respectively. Essentially, Claudia and Halle are getting married in Australia, and they want both Bea and Ben to come because the former is Halle’s sister, while the latter is Claudia’s friend. Since it will start the plot, both Bea and Ben begrudgingly accept, taking the same flight there and even starting a scene on the plane, where Ben kept making subtle jabs against a bystander to get to Bea, which made me writhe in my seat.

Forced proximity is a ubiquitous trope in many enemies-to-lovers stories, so it was no surprise that it also played a part in this movie. It just cemented my initial thoughts about the two leads getting together in the end, and even if it was about the journey, the trip there took the old beaten path. And honestly, Bea and Ben should have gotten together with their ex-lovers.

Bea has an ex-fiancé named Jonathan (Darren Barnet), whom she leaves for ambiguous reasons. When she meets Ben, Bea and Jonathan are on a relationship break, and when Ben finds out, he accuses her of cheating. Likewise, Ben also has relationship drama, as going to Australia makes him meet his ex-girlfriend Margaret (Charlee Fraser), with whom Ben is still somewhat smitten.

After both have misadventures with their respective exes, Bea and Ben decide that they should start “fake” dating each

other to avoid problems with them. I think they should have each gotten back with their exes because Bea and Ben lacked actual chemistry, and the relationship seemed superficial. In contrast, both have better dynamics with their exes because the “fake relationship” vibe is not sold well. As a result, this really dampened the ending when Bea and Ben got together, but Jonathan and Margaret also became a couple in the end? It was a questionable decision since their only interaction on screen was sharing a glance, so it comes off as awfully contrived.

There is also a moment in the movie’s opening scene where Ben talks about a wrench his mom, who is implied to have passed away, gave him. The film highlighted it a few times, so I thought it would be something important later on — a Chekhov’s wrench, in this case. I thought about how the wrench would be about a lead-up to Ben’s backstory about how he can’t form meaningful connections since his mom’s death, but the film subverts this by never reintegrating it into the story. Nothing happened with the wrench because it was brought up twice in the movie and did not impact the later events.

The directors really just wanted to show you Ben’s wrench, I guess.

But this film still had its ups. I love how it could poke fun at itself by lampshading the transpiring events. When Ben is getting picked up by a helicopter for the second time and has them take him to the Sydney Opera House to meet Bea, he asks the pilot why they don’t just pick people up by boat. Of course, they need the helicopter so the lead can express his undying love to the other lead, but it was comical to see the movie acknowledging that this is a movie. A better question to ask would have been why they indulged his request.

And on the topic of helicopters, it made me roll my eyes at how often they were used as plot devices. The first time a helicopter was used was when Bea and Ben went

overboard during a yacht trip in the Sydney Harbor, requiring one to be flown out. This is understandable, but the second time a helicopter was used was when Ben really, really wanted to confess his love to Bea. As with any reasonable man in love, he jumps off a cliff, risking drowning in the process because he’s supposed to be unable to swim, and ends up having to be rescued with a helicopter.

The lampshading doesn’t end there. During the wedding planning, Halle expressed how hectic the weekend was, especially since Bea and Ben hate each other. She said that she feels as though she is just a character in a play, a neat reference to the Bard.

Speaking of Shakespeare, I also appreciated the homage to his work. The most overt references to the Bard happen during the scenes when Bea and Ben’s family and friends try to set them up together. Some of the character’s lines in the film are directly lifted from Shakespeare, especially during the scenes where people talk out loud to convince Bea and Ben to get together.

There were also some references to lines about the play, like “A Skirmish of Wit” being the title of a movie poster, “Assume thy part in some disguise” appearing in the yacht scene, and “Men were deceivers ever” appearing on a book. And in case you missed it, the ending scene spells it out for you — “Much Ado About Nothing.”

Although it is not a faithful adaptation of Much Ado About Nothing, the film still has moments where its wit shines through. I like how the film isn’t an accurate retelling of Shakespeare’s work because some of the original play’s contents, like how Claudio and Hero’s conflict stems from the fact that Hero may not be a virgin, did not age well. It has its memorable moments and certainly witty ones too, but some of the scenes just fall flat. To judge this for what it is — a rom-com — I still think it could have played its cards better. Overall, the film could have benefitted from a bolder approach and shaking up an ancient formula.

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

# A passion for teaching Chinese

Meet Kang Zhou, a Lecturer in Chinese

By Vivian Hir  
EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Hello! This is Faculty Spotlight, a new column that features MIT faculty members and lecturers from diverse disciplines. To begin this column, we have Lecturer Kang Zhou, a Chinese lecturer in the Global Languages department.

**Name and Title:** Kang Zhou, Lecturer in Chinese  
**Department:** Global Languages  
**Classes:**  
Chinese I (Regular) - 21G.101  
Chinese II (Regular) - 21G.102  
Chinese III (Streamlined) - 21G.109  
Chinese Calligraphy - 21G.111

This interview was originally conducted in Chinese and then translated into English. The interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**Did you see yourself becoming a lecturer in Chinese growing up? If not, when did you become interested in this area?**

Growing up, I was interested in communications and media. In high school, I was obsessed with radio and TV broadcasting. It was as if I had forgotten everything else. But I didn't have the opportunity to pursue communications because of my national college entrance results. I ended up attending another university [Xi'an International Studies University]. At that time in Shaanxi province, getting into a university that had a prestigious communications program was difficult.

In college, I realized that I really liked studying Chinese language and culture, so I majored in Teaching Chinese as a Sec-

ond Language. I was in college from 2004 to 2008, and China hosted the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. Lots of foreigners wanted to learn Chinese during this time, so a lot of colleges in China started this major.

**How did you become a Chinese language lecturer in U.S. colleges?**

After college, I pursued a master's degree at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The university had a collaboration with Brown University, so after graduation, I was chosen to go to Brown to teach Chinese for a year.

**What challenges did you experience in your first year as a teacher in the U.S.?**

At that time, I didn't have much teaching experience and this was my first year. I was 24 years old at the time. It was a whole new world, from Chinese pedagogy to the English language to the American education system. I was not prepared.

I was so busy teaching classes and I stayed in the office late at night. I didn't have the mental energy to miss home in my first year. I had doubts about whether I was suited for this job and if I should consider changing industries. At first, it felt like there was a wall between my students and me. I wondered when my students would enjoy my class and when the classroom environment would feel more natural.

First of all, language was a major challenge. The students spoke English at a normal pace that was quick for me. After class, I was sad because I recalled questions students asked me that I didn't understand. Every class felt like a test. I had no way of enjoying the class at the beginning.

Another challenge was culture. In language class, you talk about culture. I was very unfamiliar with American culture, which made it difficult for me to relate with

the students. Not knowing the culture made constructing example sentences that were relevant to the students' lives hard. Ideally, you would like the sentences to be relatable for the students, or else learning Chinese isn't as engaging. It's not just knowing how to say and write, but also what makes the sentence meaningful. I don't want to drill.

But one memory that had a deep impression on me was when my colleagues surprised me on my birthday by bringing me cake at the meeting. It was around the first day of classes, and I was very touched and happy.

**How do you plan your lessons? What is your teaching philosophy?**

Everyone thinks language teachers are relaxed, but there's a lot of planning. For instance, I want them to practice vocabulary and sentences. I also want students to understand the culture, which requires choosing online media sources.

When students do role-playing conversations and discussions, I have to keep listening to my students and hear what they say to check whether they have language difficulties. I want to make sure that they say the Chinese tones correctly and that the grammatical structure is correct.

I also have to check whether the dialogue is culturally appropriate. If the student said this in another country, would this offend someone? Take body language as an example. It's possible that the speech is correct linguistically but might make others feel uncomfortable. I need students to know how to talk to different people like their boss, elders, peers, etc. I need to keep observing what students say is okay and not okay. I need them to keep practicing under different situations so that when they see a Chinese native speaker it is natural.

Another thing is that students come from different backgrounds. I need to consider if the questions are considerate. I can't assume all students are from the same background. I need to think if the question is appropriate or if it might make students feel uncomfortable to answer.

Before class, I look at the students' backgrounds and some may not want to discuss, so I can make adjustments. I look at their situation and context. I want them to be welcomed. I want to make an inclusive environment so students can express themselves openly and feel respected for their views. People may disagree but respect their views, which is not an easy thing to do.

When I ask questions in class, I have to think through them and prepare. Students think I just ask questions spot on but I don't want to ask as if it is a test. I want it to be natural, like a dialogue.

Of course, what is of the utmost importance is how to make the class interesting and use new technologies to help students learn. For instance, I used Padlet for reflections. Having students record their experiences is important so that I am aware of their feelings. This year, I am using Perusall for the spring calligraphy class so they can watch videos.

For instance, I remember that students were anxious on the first day of writing calligraphy. On the second day, I had people talk about their feelings, and reflect on their homework assignment, so I could understand them better. By doing so, students can learn from one another.

People ask me, "Why are you busy even if you are teaching the same class?" It's because education is always changing, and the classes have different students.

Students who take my class get a lot



COURTESY OF ALEXANDER LAIMAN  
**The Oracle kicks things off** with an energetic routine in the theater and dance show "Aristotle Thinks Again" in W97, Friday March 1st.



OMAR OROZCO - THE TECH  
**Drew Lynch delivering a knee-slapper** during his comedy act in Main Kresge on Sunday March 3rd, 2024.



JADE CHONGSATHAPORNPOONG - THE TECH  
**Students talk with potential employers** at the European Career Fair at Johnson Track, Saturday



out of it. Some of the students who stayed with me for many years still contact me. I receive cards. One of them said that they didn't know how they would have survived junior year without Chinese class because of how hard junior year was. Chinese class is a space to express these emotions and foster exchange.

**Were there any insights you gained from teaching remotely during Zoom?**

An interesting realization I had was that some students said that online teaching made them more willing to express themselves and relax because no one saw them. They didn't have to feel judged. They could turn off cameras.

Then I wondered if my current class caused stress. Like if a student says the word incorrectly, they get stressed. This ignited a spark inside of me. How do we reduce these anxieties?

When I ask questions nowadays, I have students first do a small group discussion instead of answering me directly. We have to consider different teaching styles.

**What has your teaching experience at MIT been like? How is it different from earlier experiences?**

I have been at MIT for 8 years. Before MIT, I still felt like I was learning from others how to teach. Now I have the energy to think about what is most suited for MIT students, which is a huge difference. Before, I felt like a new person and just thought of older people. But now I think about MIT students' needs and how I can help students grow over the four years and have a good experience.

For instance, we know that MIT students have a lot of stress, so Gao Laoshi (Panpan Gao) and I started the Chinese meditation videos project during COVID-19. This was not a thing in other colleges.

The IAP Chinese calligraphy class was unthought of. We didn't know if MIT students would like this class. The class turned out to be a success and students enjoyed art. From this class, I don't only want them to understand calligraphy. I encourage students to bring in their knowledge from other classes to calligraphy, like computer science



PHOTO COURTESY OF KANG ZHOU

Kang Zhou is a lecturer in Chinese.

and apply it to calligraphy.

The video projects students made were very inspiring, especially the time a student made a website that converts text to unique calligraphy fonts that the student made. The intersection of applied MIT knowledge and calligraphy captivated me. This year, a student bought a bone from a butcher shop and carved oracle bone script characters, then went to the lab and burned the bone. This is what is so special about MIT students. They are hands-on. They dare to think and do it.

The current spring semester students said that they want to make paper, ink, and other things. They really want to apply their thoughts to real life. I like the mind and hand (mens et manus) culture at MIT, as this philosophy has guided me in Chinese class. It reminds me of the Chinese idiom 知行合一 (zhi xing he yi). You can know things, but can you apply them?

Public service is also important to me. In Streamlined Chinese III (21G.109), we made an MIT insider tour website. A lot of Chinese tourists visit MIT, but they don't know what to see. They just take a picture at Killian Court. On the website, we have Chinese and

English descriptions. We had people share different places in MIT like the Banana Lounge and explain why it has MIT's energy and spirit.

This project not only helps students practice the language, but it's also very practical. We put it online and now tourists can read the website. In the future, we can expand and do more things, like introducing a club, event, or research.

We want to have a connection with a culture and society. Using the language to do something meaningful and valuable is what I care about more and more. By doing so, students will think that the language they are learning is useful.

**What recommendations do you have for people who want to study Chinese independently? What resources do you suggest?**

Independent learning is possible. There are some good online resources. For instance, Liao Laoshi (Haohsiang Liao) has an MITx class with lots of students. The class is a great way to learn, especially for those who don't have the opportunity to step into the classroom, but still have an interest in the

language. Liao Laoshi's online teaching style allows students from around the world to benefit, which is very good.

It is possible to learn independently, but learning a language requires teachers and classmates for feedback and interaction. This is the only way to improve more quickly. The online classes need to think of a community to promote dialogue. They have their own benefits, but there are some things they can work on and improve.

For MIT students, my office is open. If you want to understand and learn Chinese, I welcome you. For my current Chinese calligraphy class, in April there will be an activity. I used the Mind Hand Heart innovation fund for students to build community. I will have each student invite two people who have no experience with calligraphy, even those who don't know how to speak Chinese. They can come and drink tea. I call it 'the fragrance of tea and ink.' I want to open up my classroom so students have opportunities if they are interested. We want to attract more students.

**What have you learned from your students? What would you say to your younger self?**

My students are very outstanding and hard-working. They are curious not only about STEM, but also humanities like Chinese language and culture. They ask interesting questions. The projects they made were things I never thought of. It's eye-opening. Their curiosity motivates me to provide a better education for them so they can display their talent. A teacher inspires students, and students inspire a teacher.

If I could say anything to my younger self, I would tell him the world is quite fascinating and not to be scared. I would also tell this to my students and encourage them to get out of their comfort zone. I would also tell my past self to teach students with true intentions and know their stories. This is very important. At first, I was very scared of saying the wrong thing and making mistakes because my background was very different and removed from theirs. But having these heartfelt conversations and trying to understand each other is important.



OMAR OROZCO - THE TECH

Nuclear fusion experts at a panel discussing the market for nuclear fusion energy at FusionXInvest on February 21, 2024.

Sol. to Lost in Thought

from page 16

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OMAR OROZCO - THE TECH

Audience fills 26-100 as they await the early screening of A24's Problemista on February 23, 2024.



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

# New genetics of the inactive X chromosome reveals its surprisingly active role in the cell

The sex chromosome has been misunderstood for nearly sixty years. Researchers at the Whitehead Institute are working to restore its reputation.

By Christina Kim

Imagine you are back in high school biology. It is the first day of the genetics unit, and your teacher projects an image of various colorful worms of different shapes and sizes on the whiteboard. These neon-striped figures aren't worms, though; they are tightly wound strands of DNA — all of our DNA.

You've just been introduced to the human chromosomes: 46 strands of DNA, packed into each of the 30 trillion cells in our bodies, that comprise the body's entire blueprint. Pointing at the picture, your teacher tells you that our chromosomes exist in twenty-three pairs of identical copies. For the most part.

The one exception is our twenty-third pair. This duo comprises the sex chromosomes, which determine our biological gender at conception: an X and Y chromosome in typical males and two X chromosomes in typical females.

The X and Y chromosomes could not be more different from one another. Bearing nearly one thousand genes, the X chromosome stands several times taller than its Y counterpart, whose gene count is in the dozens. In a male's complete set of chromosomes, the X and Y stick out like sore thumbs compared to the twenty-two identical twins that make up the autosomes, or the non-sex chromosomes. On the other hand, the two X chromosomes in females look identical, just like the autosomes. But there's indeed a vital difference between the two.

Nearly sixty years ago, English geneticist Mary Lyon discovered that one of the two X chromosomes in every female cell is genetically silenced in a process known as X inactivation. Lyon argued that this balances the number of X-linked genes expressed between XX females and XY males, a conclusion long taught in numerous biology textbooks. However, recent work suggests that it's wrong to think the allegedly inactive X chromosome is doing nothing. Rather, it may be a key contributor to sex differences in biology.

Sexes of most species are inherently different in how they look and experience life. In humans especially, there is a wide variety of sex-based differences in health and disease that scientists have yet to understand in full. Many diseases and disorders, including autism, systemic lupus, and several cancers, vary in prevalence and severity between males and females. What happens on the cellular level to induce these differences has been a long-standing question in science — one that geneticist Dr. David C. Page has been chasing for decades. New research from his lab at the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research reveals unexpected functions of the inactive X chromosome, "Xi" for short, opening new insights into the fundamental differences between the sexes.

### The real sex chromosomes

Excluding environmental and social determinants, all biologically-based differences between XX and XY individuals find their origins in the sex chromosomes. While this might seem obvious, it isn't a reality that the field acknowledges, says Page. Frankly, when it comes to research on sex differences in health and disease, the sex chromosomes aren't at all in the spotlight. But in the Page Lab, they are.

Since the lab was first established at the Whitehead Institute in 1984, its research has defended the honor of the tiny Y chromosome, which has historically been neglected by scientists for its seemingly insignificant number of genes compared to its chromosomal peers. In 1990, the decades-long search for the sex-determining gene was resolved when Dr. Andrew Sinclair and his team identified a Y chromosome gene called SRY.

In February 2023, research published by Page's group in Cell Genomics revealed that the active X chromosome — the most intensely studied chromosome in human genetics — is virtually identical between male and female cells. When Page shared this finding with members of the National

Academy of Medicine at their 2023 Annual Meeting, he was met with many puzzled looks: "Isn't the X a female chromosome?"

"No, there is nothing female about the first X chromosome," he responded. "It might as well be the 45th autosome."

If the active X in females and the single X in males are the same, then the search for what drives sex-based differences in humans must look elsewhere. Work from the Page group suggests that only Xi and Y are responsible for assigning our sex at birth — that they are the real sex chromosomes. "We can stop saying that females are XX and males are XY," Page asserted, "and start saying females are Xi and males are Y."

### The inactive X is not so inactive

The second X chromosome has carried the burden of being called "inactive" for sixty years. "That does not invite people to devote their careers to studying it," said Page. Current work on Xi focuses on the mechanism underlying its inactivation and not much else. But around ten years ago, the Page Lab unintentionally embarked on one of the first journeys in Xi research beyond its inactivation.

The group began studying naturally occurring cases of sex aneuploidy — a genetic disorder defined by an abnormal number of sex chromosomes — to better understand X and Y's impact on human health. While most of us are either XY and XX, some people can be born — and live, albeit with severe health consequences — with one, two, or even three extra copies of either X or Y. By quantifying gene expression in cells with widespread variety in sex aneuploidy, Page and his colleagues could trace how "adding" one X or Y chromosome at a time influences cellular activity. In cooperation with the National Institutes of Health and several other clinicians, the Page Lab received skin biopsies and blood samples from 176 people with different combinations of X and Y chromosomes.

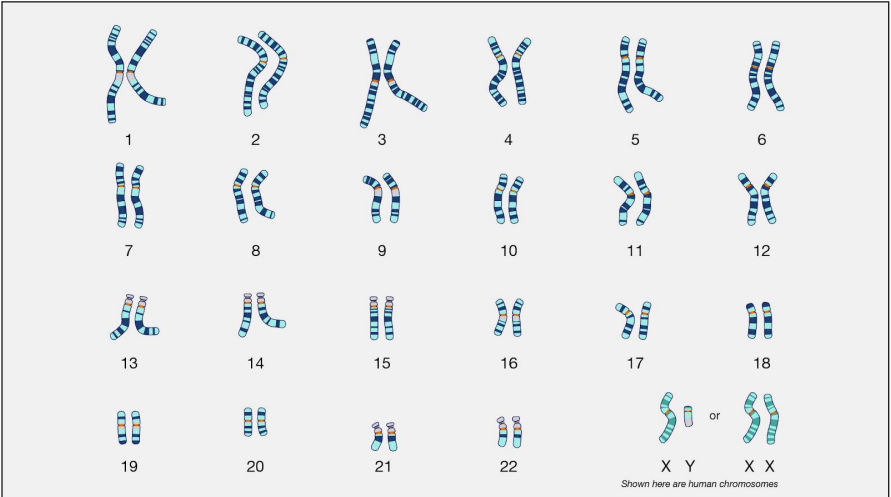
"We didn't know we'd end up studying Xi," Page recalled. But the best science, he said, arises when something unanticipated appears in your peripheral vision. "You turn your gaze towards it and, before you know it, you're walking in a different direction."

While the study was not designed to explore Xi, X inactivation inevitably made it about Xi. As Mary Lyon argued, nature permits only one active copy of X in every cell, possibly to balance X-linked gene dosage for survival. For people with more than one copy of X, all but one is inactivated in the womb, which means that every person with extra copies of X really has extra copies of Xi. And by comparing gene expression across aneuploidies of increasing X, "we were going to get a quantitative description of the Xi like there's never been," Page noted.

To the researchers' surprise, they observed clear changes in the expression of thousands of genes with each addition of Xi. "So many genes throughout the genome seem to care about how many X chromosomes you have," said Dr. Adriana San Roman, a postdoc in the Page Lab and first author of both studies. These affected genes were distributed throughout the human genome — some were on the active X chromosome, and many were found on the autosomes. For Xi, this pointed to a new and robust description of its purpose beyond inactivation: gene regulation. Targeting a wide spread of genes, Xi may play a crucial role in the life of a cell. It seems that the inactive X chromosome has been misnamed.

Page is no stranger to a misunderstood chromosome. As his group began to unravel the mysteries of the inactive X decades after doing the same for the Y, Page thought, "Oh my gosh, the human Xi is as misunderstood as the Y chromosome ever was."

The impact of Xi "dose" on autosomal and the active X gene expression may be the genetic basis of the symptoms of multiple-X aneuploidies. At the same time, an important question is raised about what the inactive X is doing in people without sex aneuploidy: could it be a driver of sex differences in typical males and females?



COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL HUMAN GENOME RESEARCH INSTITUTE

### The human karyotype.

In other words, do Xi and Y impact autosomal and active X gene expression differently?

To explore this, the researchers in Page's group compared their results from investigating multiple-X and multiple-Y aneuploidies. Again, they saw something surprising: for every additional Xi or Y chromosome in an individual, many autosomal genes responded in strikingly similar ways. They published the results in a second Cell Genomics paper in January 2024. "The correlations that we see are remarkable," said San Roman, "I was very confused about this at first."

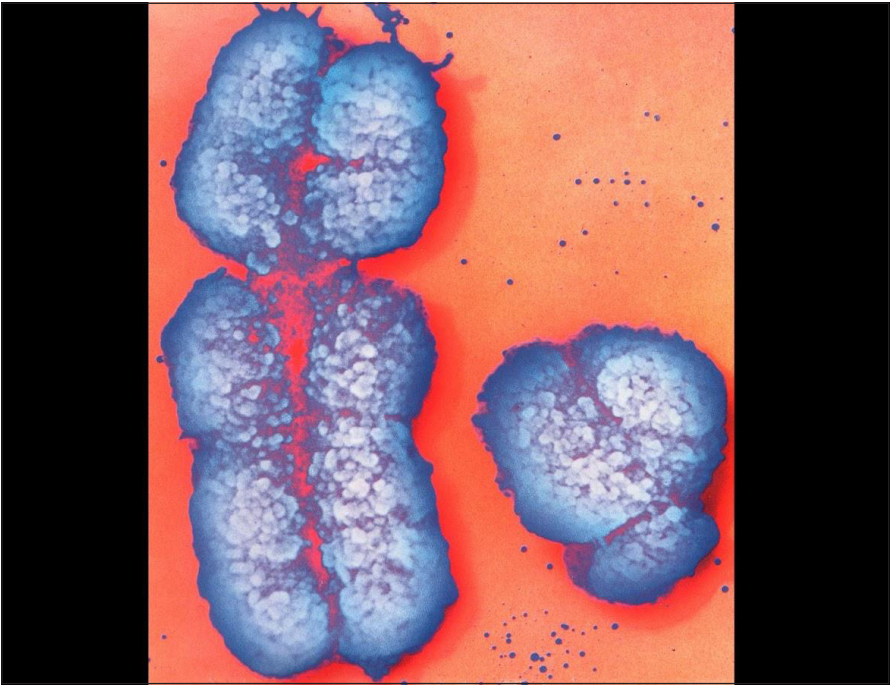
Since having either Xi or Y is the only cell-intrinsic way in which the human sexes are different, it was easy to expect that having increased numbers of one or the other would impact gene expression differently. "But that's not what the data was telling us," said Page.

These unexpected findings may reflect

The findings from the Page Lab raise several questions about Xi's function. For example, by what mechanism is Xi exerting autosomal gene regulation? One possibility may involve gene products called non-coding RNAs expressed exclusively on Xi. One of these is XIST, the primary driver of X inactivation. Dr. Phil Sharp, a 1993 Nobel Laureate and molecular biologist at the Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research, has done significant work in non-coding RNAs. He suspects that those such as XIST could underlie Xi-mediated gene regulation.

"It's mechanistically interesting," said Sharp. He hypothesizes that higher-fold dosages of XIST could form condensates in multiple-X aneuploidies. A contemporary principle in biology, membrane-less RNA-rich condensates have been demonstrated to influence cell activity in various ways.

Other gene products, such as proteins,



COURTESY OF DR. DAVID PAGE

### The X (left) and Y (right) chromosomes.

the similar evolutionary origins of X and Y. The two were descendants of an ordinary pair of autosomes, which some believe could have contained an identical set of genes that were crucial for cell survival and thus preserved over time. These hypothetical gene pairs could explain Xi and Y's similar effects on gene expression observed in the Page group's findings. But while this theory may explain the shared functions of Xi and Y, the question remains: where do sex differences come from?

San Roman notes one hypothesis. It stems from an observation from the sex aneuploidy study: while Xi and Y influence autosomal gene expression quite similarly, it seems that Xi can push a little harder. Genes that responded — either increasing or decreasing in expression — to the addition of Xi seemed to do so with slightly larger effect sizes, San Roman says. Perhaps some of the sex biases we see in health and disease are simply due to differences in how much Xi and Y influence gene expression.

### For Xi research, this is just the beginning

are being investigated to understand Xi's role in the cell. Dr. Kathy Liu, a biochemist from the University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine, is also interested in the biology of sex-based differences; she studies homologous proteins of the X and Y chromosomes in the context of human cancers.

For her, the Page group uncovering new genetics of Xi is "really paradigm-shifting," but it demands plenty more research. Gene expression doesn't necessarily equate to protein function, she said. "Without protein-level information, I'm not one hundred percent convinced."

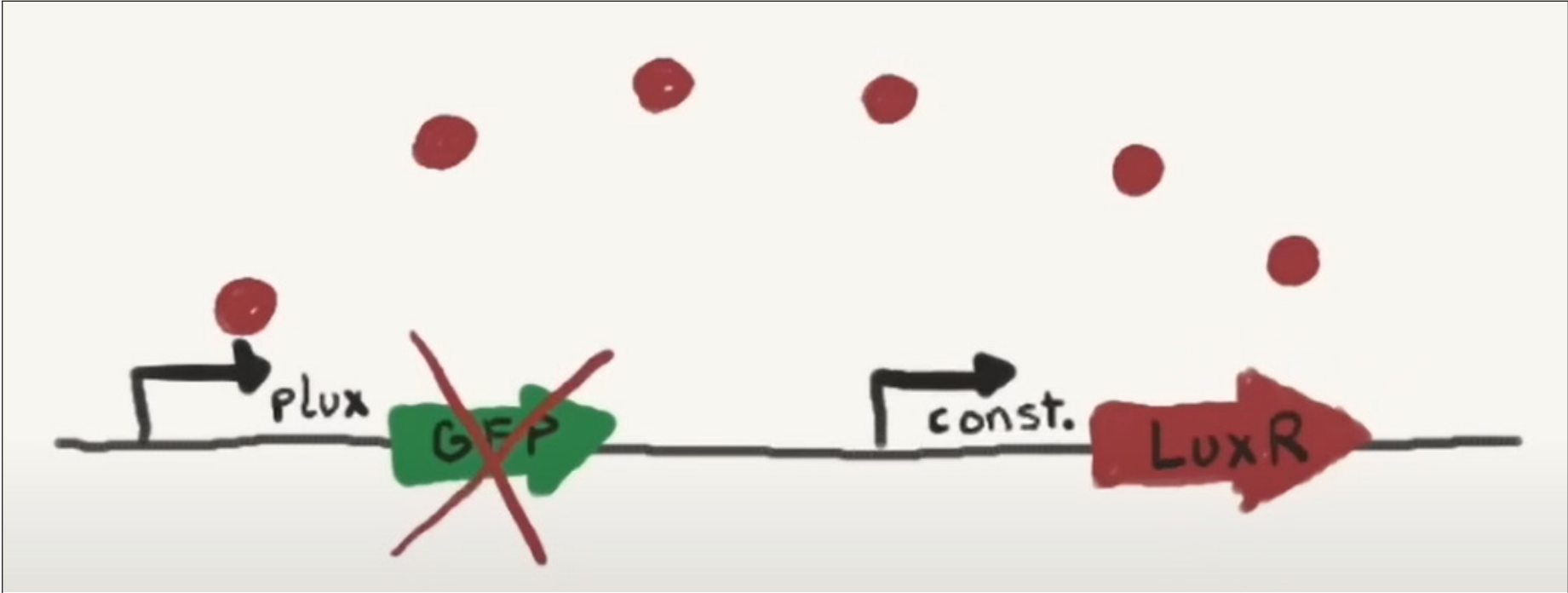
Much of the inactive X chromosome remains a mystery, but the Page Lab has taken one of the first of many steps toward resolving its overlooked role in the cell. It will likely be a long time before it's fully clear how Xi contributes to sex differences in health and disease, but a sense of familiarity keeps Page hopeful. "I know this gig," he said. "You take a chromosome that is underappreciated, and you study it like crazy. And people will not believe you until you're almost done."



RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT

# E. coli doesn't just cause Doom and mayhem in your guts

MIT graduate student creates a novel bacterial screen display to run a video game



Ramlan's drawing depicting the LuxR plasmid repressing the GFP, inhibiting fluorescence

COURTESY OF LAUREN RAMLAN'S YOUTUBE CHANNEL

**By Russel Ismael**  
*NEWS EDITOR*

In 1993, Doom was released, changing the landscape of first-person shooters for years to come. Doom is a video game where you play as a Martian soldier trying to fight off hordes of invading demons with an arsenal fit for a small army. Despite coming out decades ago, Doom still has a stranglehold on pop culture, and it is considered to be one of the most iconic video games ever created, spoken in the same breath as the Mario series or Pong.

But Doom is not just limited to pop culture — it can also now be found in bacterial culture. Ren Ramlan, a PhD student in Course 20, based her 20.405 Principles of Synthetic Biology class project on proving that Doom can run on E. coli. She was able to have the bacteria arrange itself to show the video game's title screen, becoming the first to do so. Ramlan was inspired to run Doom on bacteria because of the culture surrounding the game and the running joke of how it can run on anything. From microwaves to pregnancy tests, Ramlan is just continuing the tradition of "Doom running on everything," an internet phenomenon regarding where people try to have all kinds of electronics process Doom.

"I chose Doom solely because I had seen it as a trend on the internet. I remember reading about somebody running Doom on a toaster," Ramlan explained in an interview with The Tech. "So, what drove me to pick it because it

already had the culture of people doing silly things with it."

Ramlan stated that running Doom on a microbial display is a unique way of interacting with bacteria. "Bacterial displays, or cellular displays in general, are this really intriguing way for humans to interface with the world of microorganisms." By having bacteria display a video game, Ramlan reconceptualized how people see bacteria, showing that it can potentially be used outside a lab or medical setting. "I think that perhaps a lot of people don't really think of bacteria as something that we really look at."

She was first inspired to do this when MIT Professor Christopher Voigt's lab created a circuit that they had programmed into E. coli using genetic circuit design, where biological parts interact with each other for a logical function, then choose their display through a fluorescent output state in 2020.

"It's really highlighting the computing power of biology," Ramlan explained. She added that while a bacterial display may not beat a traditional computer screen now, such displays still occupy their own "niche."

"We think of biological computers as ones that won't surpass regular computers, but we ourselves are biological computers," Ramlan stated. "We can highlight how good biology is at computing. I mean, we run on a four-letter code, right?" she said, referencing the four bases found in DNA — A, T, C, and G.

When doing this project, Ramlan

chose E. coli because "it's the model organism when it comes to bacteria."

She said, "Most bioengineers, genetic engineers, and synthetic biologists have worked with E. coli at one point or another because it's just the bacteria everyone uses. As such, it has the most widely characterized genetic toolkit."

E. coli does not necessarily have an intrinsic property that makes them the go-to for bacterial displays. "You could run this on a lot of different things," Ramlan explained. "You could use it in human cells, 3T3 [cells]1, HeLa cells2; anything you can give a fluorescent protein to, which is just a piece of DNA that most cells can express, might be able to do this."

Her experience with E. coli began on Stanford University's International Genetically Engineered Machine team as an undergraduate, which is an annual synthetic biology competition across universities, so choosing E. coli was an easy solution for her.

"It's one of those things that I didn't think about at all because it's so normal for me to use E. coli," Ramlan shared. "But then once people started engaging with [my project] on the Internet, I realized that nobody has any idea where that came from."

As it stands, Ramlan's Doom simulation takes 70 minutes to generate one frame for the display. It would therefore take 599 years for a player to complete the game based on Ramlan's calculations. To speed up this centuries-long endeavor,

Ramlan joked that "you could theoretically plate a bunch of cells on a bunch of different plates, and then just swap them out each frame so you could [finish the game] quickly." However, to retain the same cells each time, Ramlan proposed a method called "quenching."

In her paper, Ramlan writes that quenching speeds up the rate of turning back off once tagged with a fluorescent molecule, increasing the game's frame rate.

"What makes the cells glow is that they have this fluorescent molecule that's floating," Ramlan explained. "You can take a second molecule, and put it on top — it's like putting a blanket on a lamp." She added, "That would help because the main issue of what makes the frame rate so slow is that it takes so long for the protein light to fade."

Ramlan envisions biotechnology to be advanced enough to fully encode Doom on a biological system. Already, Institute research groups seek to achieve similar outcomes, such as Professor Ron Weiss' lab group, which is interested in coding computational power into neurons. Hopefully, these video games will take less than 600 years to finish.

"In the future, I would do two things," Ramlan stated. "I would integrate Ron Weiss' knowledge and approach to biological computing to come up with, theoretically, what would you need to know to fully encode this game just on cells."

Ramlan continued, "The second thing is, I would like to try it in the lab!"





GUEST COLUMN

A Bavarian MIT?

How a German University reengineers higher education for entrepreneurs and innovators

By Said Werner

In Fall 2023, Bavaria attracted over 7.2 million visitors, solidifying its status as a dream destination. These figures set a new milestone for the Munich Wiesn, the internationally acclaimed Oktoberfest. Equally record-breaking, and a hot topic for study abroad programs, is the ascendance of Bavaria's Technical University of Munich (TUM).

For several years, TUM has been heralded as Germany's leading university, consistently securing top spots in the Shanghai Ranking, QS, and THE, with its graduates being ranked 13th worldwide in employer esteem. Despite Germany's innovation economy having a hard time, TUM students have consistently produced successful high-growth startups, prompting a question: What's going on in the land of Dirndl, Lederhosen, and why does it matter to MIT?

Since becoming TUM's president in 2019, Thomas Hoffmann has been a lucky duck. He was named German University Manager of the Year in November 2023. Soon after, he secured funding from the Dieter Schwarz Foundation for 41 new professorships over 30 years, closely tied to the wealthiest German and his Lidl supermarket chain.

What is likely the largest private investment in a public university in Germany's history is also an anomaly for its egalitarian higher education system. Anne MacLachlan of the Berkeley Center for Studies in Higher Education predicted in 2018 that the emergence of a German elite university akin to those in the United States was improbable.

Yet, if TUM were a franchise, it would already be an export hit with four German spin-offs in different regions, a Singapore campus, and liaison offices in Brussels, San Francisco, Sao Paulo, Beijing, and Mumbai. This expansion somewhat mirrors former Stanford President Gerhard Casper's 2015 call for German universities to evolve into foundation universities.

TUM's latest donations mark yet another stride in an ambitious journey dating back to 1990. The initial spark was in California, where TUM graduate student Helmut Schönenberger undertook a study comparing his alma mater with Stanford University, which led to the recommendation of creating a startup center in Munich. By 2002, with prominent support from BMW heiress Susanne Klatten, TUM founded UnternehmerTUM (Eng: EntrepreneurTUM).

Dedicated to fostering entrepreneurship, the spin-off averages 80 startups annually, launching notable scale-ups

like Flix and Celonis. With a workforce of over 400, UnternehmerTUM stands as Europe's largest startup accelerator, offering comprehensive support across various growth stages, including a three-month digital product school, the XPlore go-to-market program, and an incubator for validating business models.

The organization also spearheads cooperative ventures like the Digital Hub Mobility, focusing on technology scouting for SMEs, and the Circular Republic funding platform, initiated with BMW. Additionally, it runs BEFIVE, catering to construction and real estate firms, and FamilienUnternehmerTUM, which fosters innovation within the family businesses of the renowned German Mittelstand. Today, as a vice president on Hoffmann's executive team, Schönenberger plays a pivotal role in redefining entrepreneurship as a crucial link bridging research and teaching, basically positioning it as the third foundational pillar.

Regarding teaching, a key component of TUM's entrepreneurial formula is its in-house Management & Technology degree. This program, especially favored by international students, enjoys great popularity in the student-based CHE survey. Its interdisciplinary framework aligns with Stanford empirical studies recommending integrating business and engineering education to nurture entrepreneurial mindsets.

Sheri Sheppard, a corresponding study author, was named a TUM Honorary Professor in 2023. Her collaboration with the TUM School of Management has previously facilitated opportunities for students, e.g., from the Center for Digital Technology and Management (CDTM), to undertake research in Silicon Valley. In partnership with Ludwig Maximilian University, Munich's oldest university, CDTM is another part of TUM's focus on entrepreneurship.

This center offers a joint honors degree in technology management, similar to Boston's Cross Registration, enabling students from MIT and Harvard to take courses at multiple universities and utilize all of the regional ecosystem's resources. Comparable to FC Bayern Munich's distinct status in soccer, this study model is in a class by itself.

Across Europe, TUM's Champions League profile extended its influence by establishing a distinctive entrepreneurial ecosystem. Since 2011, UnternehmerTUM has managed its nearly \$400 million venture capital fund, UVC Partners, setting a precedent in the academic world. While East Coast startup founders might reference MIT's The Engine, it's

noteworthy that UVC Partners predates it by around five years. Despite The Engine's larger fund, surpassing \$1 billion in 2023, both funds concentrate on seed and early-stage investments. In Munich, UVC Partners is crucial in mitigating the German bottleneck problem, where risk capital availability diminishes at each successive financing stage. TUM's focus on deep-tech startups, with one in ten founded at the university, pairs well with its Industry Engagement Program launched in 2023. This program partners with companies like BMW and Siemens, offering them customized access to the Academy for Innovators and Entrepreneurs for intrapreneurship training and consulting by TUM students and researchers. On the academic front, TUM's twelve Venture Labs provide specialized support, e.g., for artificial intelligence to biotechnology startups, akin to the interdisciplinary innovation initiatives fostered by organizations such as the MIT Media Lab.

It is fair to say that Cambridge startups significantly gain from local ties to large companies, exemplified by the MIT Industrial Liaison Program started in 1948, alongside over 50 accelerators in the Boston area and global connections like the Cambridge Venture Café. However, unlike Silicon Valley's, Cambridge's tech scene has a relatively short history, beginning about 65 years ago with the exit of the Lever Brothers soap factory, leading to a drop in city tax revenues. In response, Mayor Edward Crane leased the empty factory spaces to the MIT Corporation, catalyzing the transformation into a technology hub to boost city finances.

Today, Kendall Square hosts around 2,000 companies, including leading biotech firms and over 600 startups. While Munich's scale is different, it boasts over 450 large companies with at least 250 employees and recently expanded startup opportunities with the 118k square feet Munich Urban Co-lab, initiated by UnternehmerTUM and the city's economic development agency.

Support for TUM's initiatives also comes significantly from the Bavarian state government. Starting from the upcoming term, the university will soon charge tuition fees to new non-EU students, albeit much lower than those of prestigious U.S. institutions like MIT, Stanford, Berkeley, the Ivy League, or Stoxbridge in the United Kingdom. These additional funds will likely help TUM compete more closely with its Swiss counterpart, ETH Zurich, which benefits from higher public funding. Further legislative reforms to speed up

hiring processes for top scholars.

Highlighted by Berkeley economist Enrico Moretti, such initiatives not only enhance the academic landscape but also bolster the urban economy by generating five additional non-sector jobs for every high-tech position.

At MIT, one is well-versed in legislative efforts to boost innovation ecosystems. The Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program (REAP) emphasizes the role of government policy, university initiatives, committed corporates, venture capitalists, and entrepreneurs. Munich's approach, encouraging collaboration among all key players, mirrors MIT's contribution to Greater Boston's economic growth, where, as of 2014, more than 30k startups founded by MIT graduates employed 4.6 million people and generated nearly two trillion USD, surpassing half of Germany's economy.

On the one hand, replicating this success in Munich may seem exaggerated even with its GDP consistently above the national average. On the other hand, Kendall Square was not built in a day either, while TUM has clearly been proactive in unraveling the intricacies of its regional entrepreneurial ecosystem. With experience spanning over 80 regions from 30 countries since 2010, REAP understands that governments across the globe see this effort as a Rosetta Stone to translating innovative entrepreneurship into tangible economic growth. The absence of German regions from REAP may reflect the disability at which the public higher education sector forms strong ecosystem partnerships.

TUM stands out as an exception. Despite its size, with over 45,000 students as of 2023, making it the largest technical university in Germany, its demonstration is that even the biggest "tankers" in the higher education sector can navigate swiftly.

This capability suggests that robust transformation is achievable within Germany's educational landscape. Observing the similarities between the logos of TUM and TIM's home leads to an inevitable conclusion: Against all odds, Munich is on its way to establishing Germany's first elite university for entrepreneurs and innovators. Its blueprint is obvious.

Said D. Werner is affiliate project lead at Professor Fiona Murray's Lab for Innovation-Driven Entrepreneurship & Geopolitics. Before, he advised the Parliamentary State Secretary to the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and spent a term as Vice President of Student Affairs at Zeppelin University Friedrichshafen in Germany.

OPINION POLICY

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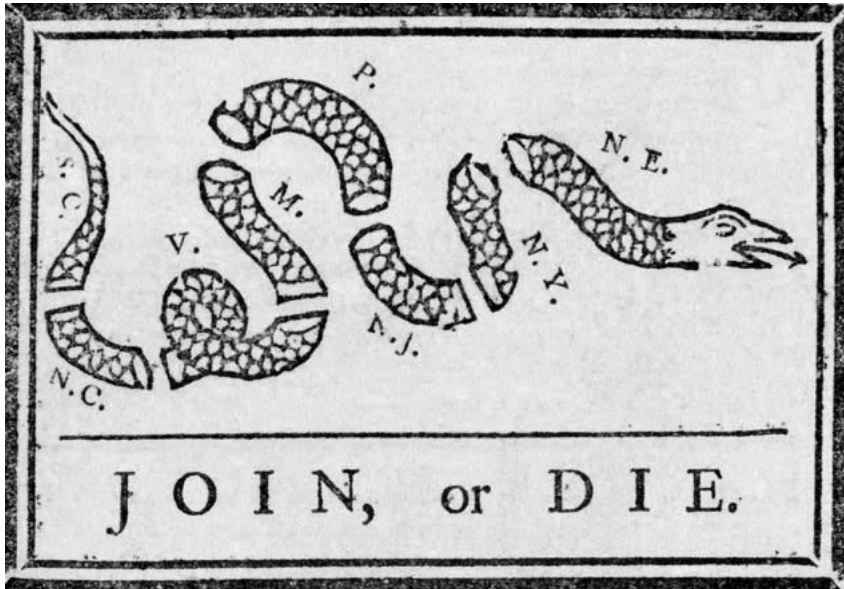
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GUEST COLUMN

# MLK Jr. Gala Action & Remarks

*The BSU and BGSA led the C4P in action to ask: are we at MIT truly respecting the legacy of MLK?*

The following article is a guest piece co-submitted to *The Tech* by Austin Cole and the Coalition For Palestine (C4P). Included in it is a transcript of remarks made by Austin Cole as part of the MIT MLK Jr. Gala on Saturday, Feb. 17th, alongside an organized demonstration by C4P.

By Coalition For Palestine,  
Speech by Austin Cole

On Saturday, February 17th, the MIT Coalition For Palestine (C4P), an alliance of 14 student and staff/faculty groups on campus, coordinated two actions at the 50th annual gala celebrating and honoring the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This event, hosted by MIT’s president Sally Kornbluth, aims to celebrate the life and legacy of the inspiring civil rights activist and revolutionary whose words echo throughout our history books. On Saturday, the Black Student Union (BSU) and Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) led the C4P in action to ask a very pointed question: *are we at MIT truly respecting the legacy of MLK?*

Prior to the start of the event, community members gathered at a rally outside the Boston Cambridge Marriott hotel, the venue of the gala, to lodge their protest against MIT administration’s recent suspension of the student group Coalition Against Apartheid (CAA), which has been actively campaigning on campus and locally to end the genocide of the Palestinian people being perpetrated by the Israeli government and military.

On the night of Sunday, Feb. 11th, Israel resumed its carpet bombing campaign in Rafah, an act of aggression which even United States spokespeople have said would not receive American support. These sudden events prompted the CAA to lead an emergency rally on Monday, 2/12 in response to the escalation of bombing in Rafah, where 1.5 million Palestinians have been forced to set up makeshift refugee shelters to flee the Israeli aggression.

Despite attempts at open communication with administrators to ensure safety, the CAA was subsequently suspended as a student organization, and 13 of its student leaders were temporarily banned from all leadership positions on campus, even those without any relation to CAA activities. Additionally, these student leaders face disciplinary charges which could include “permanent suspension,” putting their international members at risk of deportation. President Kornbluth communicated the details of the group suspension in a public video despite an institutional policy of confidentiality in disciplinary cases.

In response to this blatant suppression, the BSU and BGSA led the coalition in a rally on Saturday, Feb 17th. Addressing over 150 community members as well as the gala attendees entering the hotel, the speakers noted the deep irony in having MIT administrators participate in an event honoring MLK, whose legacy of protest, direct action, and civil disobedience is perhaps best exemplified at MIT through the Coalition.

The gala itself, organized by staff, faculty, and students who form a crucial support network for Black students and community members at MIT, represents an inspiring effort to honor the rich history of Black liberation; however, the C4P made it clear that they find the attendance of MIT administrators who have enforced suppressive free speech policies to be an absolute disrespect to the memory, legacy, and ongoing struggle of this movement.

To confront these administrators with their contradictions, student attendees of the gala participated in a resolute display of solidarity and protest, voicing their support for the CAA and making the following demands:

- Reinstate the CAA and retract threats to

- student organizers.
- Remove the suppressive free-speech policies (e.g., “time, place, and manner” restrictions) which have been used to suppress protest on campus.
- Cut research and corporate ties with the Israeli Ministry of Defense.

Inside the gala, a disruption occurred during the end of remarks given by Austin Cole, the graduate student speaker for the event and a Masters student in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning (DUSP) and Sloan School of Management. Austin called on the attendees to rise from their seats in honor of Dr. King’s legacy and words. He asked that they continue to stay standing if they agreed with additional statements, which connected Dr. King’s struggle with the genocide in Gaza and unjust reprisals on MIT’s campus.

Most of the crowd stood throughout, though notable MIT administrators sat down once the CAA was referenced. As people stood, students handed out pamphlets detailing the hypocrisy of the administration and outlining the C4P’s demands. Finally, dozens of students and MIT community members joined Austin on stage in front of the crowd, linking arms while reciting a joint statement. A transcript of this powerful speech, including the disruption, can be found below [editorial comments in brackets].

Transcript (Speech):

Good evening, my name is Austin Cole, and I’m a grad student in urban planning and business here at MIT. I am here by the grace of God, the will of my mother, and the love of my beautiful partner.

I believe part of developing both intelligence and character is the process of crafting our place in this world. This process is fundamentally about how we relate to others, to the earth, to the moral universe, and to ourselves. In his letter from a Birmingham jail, Dr. King wrote: “All men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.” This quote has always resonated, but it feels especially pertinent today when we are in another extended battle for the soul of this country and campus.

Dr. King’s idea of relationship and mutuality came up for me while I was a college summer intern at the state department. I remember sitting in a conference room watching as the news flipped between the murder of Mike Brown in Ferguson and the so-called migrant crisis at the southern border. As a Black man in the US studying political economy in Latin America, I felt the connections of the physical violence of a state murder of an unarmed Black teenager with the structural violence of our foreign policy and immigration system.

Those connections might not have solidified had I not offered to my team of Latin American experts that maybe we should think about solutions to the migrant crisis in the context of the US destabilizing those countries from the 50s until today. As you can imagine, I was met with silence and blank stares and after a moment the conversation changed.

This was an early career reminder that the institutions that depend on upholding structural inequalities are not going to provide the solutions. How could I honestly be in relation with the masses at our border or the crowds in Ferguson while upholding such institutional norms?

It was in Dr. King’s understanding of mutuality and relationship that late last year I suggested to senior MIT administrators that a reason the institution struggles to confront racism is because it is intertwined with a racist, violent, and unfortu-

nately profitable military project. Like most universities, MIT remains comfortably enmeshed within the three evils of US society that Dr. King decried in a 1967 speech: racism, excessive materialism, and militarism. Yet, the suggestion that MIT might start to divorce itself from militarism, just like my 2014 comment at the state department, was met with dismissal.

Such dismissals only forestall a more just future, and because of this it is incumbent upon me and others to struggle inside and especially outside of these institutions of extreme intelligence and questionable character. I feel called to oppose the complicity of this institution and others in the genocide in Gaza, the ongoing Nakba, the criminalization of our youth, and deadly militarism at home and abroad. While I am called to oppose this loudly, we all have different roles to play in this long struggle of societal reconstruction. If we don’t see a role for ourselves in advancing this reconstruction, then we consign ourselves to complicity in genocides and injustices because we are benefiting from their violence. While this is difficult, to truly honor the legacy of Dr. King, some things must be done because they are right despite, as he said, being quote, “Neither safe nor politic nor popular.”

In closing, Dr. King told us, and young people of Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee showed us, that we need to be “creatively maladjusted” to the institutions that direct or are complicit in the injustices we fight, or else we perpetuate their injustices ourselves. For me this has meant organizing on and outside of this campus and I have found a beloved community in doing so.

I hope that from bottom up, this spirit of justice will emerge from all corners of this institute because thus far we’ve failed to heed the warning of Dr. King that, “When scientific power outruns moral power we end up with guided missiles and misguided men”. At minimum, I hope that each of us considers what it means to honor Dr. King and to carry the torch of justice while within this institution or others. As for me and mine, we choose to fight and build collectively. Like Dr. King, we choose to be among those creatively maladjusted to injustice wherever it may surface. I hope that you will join us.

And to show that you will not be alone, and in the name of education being both intelligence and character, I would ask everyone who is able to please rise if you believe in the dream of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King’s and his words that ‘injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere’, if you cannot stand please raise your glass.

[audience stood]

Now please stay standing if you believe that standing against injustice, in whatever role you can do so in, aligns with your moral character and values.

[during this time, students began handing out pamphlets]

Please stay standing if you believe in Dr. King’s legacy that supporting or remaining neutral to the genocide and destruction of a people’s land qualifies as an injustice.

Please stay standing if you believe that it is reasonable for people of conscience — students/staff/faculty/community members — to fight for the beloved community by protesting against injustice and institutional complicity without being threatened with suspension, expulsion, or firing.

[MIT administrators sat]

I thank everyone who’s standing, and I invite all of you to come up to the front and stand together.

[students, faculty, and staff began walking to the front of the stage]

For those of you who have sat down or

lowered your glasses, I ask you to grapple with why you did so: is it fear, worry, uncertainty, disagreement? These are understandable feelings, and can be overcome by solidarity, bravery, moral clarity, and a willingness to learn. I encourage all of us to think about what we are willing to stand for and in this time of a genocide in which this institution is directly complicit, what are we comfortable with not standing for or supporting?

For example, are we comfortable with CAA student members not being allowed to use conventional pathways to report harassment after reading Dr King’s “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” as a form of protest against suppressive free speech policies on campus?

On behalf of the large movement inside and outside this room, I thank the MLK Committee for your steadfast work and the love and care that you have shown us students and this institute despite all the challenges of this year, I thank those of you who stood or raised your glass for your solidarity and bravery, I thank those who may not have stood but will consider the gravity of this space and legacy and find a future role for themselves.

For those gathered up here at the front, we will read a short joint statement, please repeat after me:

We members of the MIT community [repeated by students at front]

— students, staff, faculty — [repeated] recognize the importance of honoring Dr. King’s legacy of action [repeated].

We recognize the work of the MIT Coalition Against Apartheid [repeated], both historically and today [repeated], to free us from complicity [repeated]

In colonial and oppressive military projects [repeated].

MIT admin has tried to silence the CAA [repeated],

condemning its protests and sanctioning its organizers [repeated].

Dr. King knew [repeated] that unjust rules never compel those in power [repeated], and even just rules can be applied unjustly [repeated].

In his words [repeated], “we do not need allies [repeated] more devoted to order than to justice.” [repeated]

We call on MIT [repeated]: to reinstate the CAA [repeated], retract threats against student leaders [repeated],

and to remove its unjust protest policy [repeated].

This is a minimum to honor Dr. King’s legacy [repeated].

We are all CAA! [repeated]

Thank you all, now a moment of silence for those facing bombardement and murder in Rafah, those throughout Gaza under genocide, those in all of Palestine facing colonization and oppression, all Palestinians throughout the diaspora, and those facing the end results of materialism and militarism from the streets of Boston to Haiti to the Congo to Sudan and beyond. Please bow your heads. [audience bows heads]

Thank you, as we all take our seats, let us remember the words of Dr. King: “He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.”

Free the people.  
Free the land.  
And free, free Palestine! [repeated]

Austin Cole is a 3rd year Master’s student in Business and City Planning, a member of the Black Graduate Student Association, and member of the MIT Graduate Student Union-UE. He was chosen as the Graduate Speaker for the 50th MLK Celebration Gala.

Have something to say?

Write opinion for *The Tech*!



GUEST COLUMN

# From the River to the Sea to Every Mountain Top

*Do you know what actually exists from the river to the sea? A fractured patchwork of different political jurisdictions, within which about seven million Palestinians live without the same basic rights as seven million Jews*

By Richard Solomon

*Colonizers write about flowers.  
I tell you about children throwing  
rocks at Israeli tanks  
seconds before becoming daisies.  
– Noor Hindi, “Fuck Your Lecture on  
Craft, My People Are Dying”*

Today I learned my former host-brother is sleeping on the cold, cratered streets of Deir al-Balah in Gaza – his house destroyed by an Israeli missile, his cousins and uncle assassinated, his family surviving off animal feed and a plant called khoubiza, or mallow, which grows wild between the gutted concrete and shorn rebar. We’am, a host-sister, told me four months ago the bread lines grow long. I wake up every day wondering if she is dead. Fadi, a dentist student I met in Cairo is now trapped in Rafah with his elders, his family home destroyed by an Israeli bomb, ‘fighting to preserve the humanity that remains,’ he told me. Ma bdi akl. Bdi aish – ‘I don’t want food; I want to live.’ At least 30,000 people have been killed by the Israeli military since October – among the highest rates of killing in any war of this century. About 1.9 million or 85% of Gaza’s population are displaced, and the World Health Organization projects another 74,000 will die of starvation and disease in the next six months. The Israeli military, with American arms and taxes, has destroyed levels of civilian infrastructure on par with the Nazi and Allied bombing campaigns of Guernica, Dresden, Warsaw, Hiroshima, and Tokyo. The horror is palpable in the mass graves, the ruins of churches, mosques, schools, hospitals, and libraries, the cries of children buried under rubble which we hear on Instagram every day.

This war is also driven by clear genocidal impulses. “I am personally proud of the ruins of Gaza” said Israeli minister May Golan last week, “that every baby, even 80 years from now, will tell their grandchildren what the Jews did.” This retributive sentiment is not limited to Golan’s mainstream Likud party or MIT alumnus Benjamin Netanyahu, who sits at the helm of the Israeli government. It is shared by cabinet ministers, the major parties, military brass, and common soldiers. The sentiment is obvious in the smiles of Israeli soldiers who jeer at and humiliate their hostages, in the pride and impunity with which they livestream their favorite collection of dead women’s underwear, in the glee of Israeli counter-protestors who block the few aid trucks into Gaza and eat cotton candy and slushies while Gazans on the other side starve. The sentiment is also shared by the broader Israeli public, two-thirds of whom oppose “the transfer of humanitarian aid to Gaza residents.” This festival of horrors did not begin with the Hamas attack on October 7. Societies do not disfigure into fascist revelry overnight. What is happening in Gaza is the dark fruit of over a century of settler colonialism and apartheid in the Holy Land, consecrated by American firepower, ideology, and institutions.

**Agenda Setting and Things Left Unsaid**  
MIT plays a unique role in this unholy alliance. It is a prestigious academic node of the U.S. military-industrial complex and the head of \$23.5 billion endowment. When my comrades and I in the MIT Coalition Against Apartheid (CAA) challenge this node, we face a withering campaign of sanctions, hate speech, and misdirection. This is partially manifested in the way MIT chooses to define the relevant issue space. In my field of political science, there is an old insight by E.E. Schattschneider that “some issues are organized into politics while others are organized out.” The people who set agendas, who decide the rules of the game, and define the terms of debate have a

special kind of authority. They decide, in other words, the institutional arena in which popular contention happens. This agenda-setting is sometimes called the hidden, “second face” of power.

At MIT in 2024, a core issue organized into university politics is the “question” of free speech over campus safety and order, particularly in view of protests against Israeli apartheid and the ongoing, mass killing of Palestinians in Gaza. By the lights of President Sally Kornbluth, Provost Cynthia Barnhart, and Chancellor Melissa Nobles, the twin obligations of campus order and free speech are imagined as a trade-off – one that requires a delicate “balance” and lends itself to obsessive scrutiny into such high-stakes affairs as whether the MIT CAA properly filled out an event form or met with administrators three business days in advance before a vigil. According to President Kornbluth’s letter, the CAA was suspended for violating these “normal permission processes.” Its MIT-hosted website was shut down and 13 of its student organizers were sanctioned presumably for the same reason. Now isn’t the enforcement of reasonable, ‘rules for the road’ for campus protest always a good thing?

No. As Martin Luther King Jr. explained in his Letter from a Birmingham Jail, a law can be “just on its face but unjust in its application.” As he explains:

“I was arrested Friday on a charge of parading without a permit. Now there is nothing wrong with an ordinance which requires a permit for a parade, but when the ordinance is used to preserve segregation and to deny citizens the first amendment privilege of peaceful assembly and peaceful protest, then it becomes unjust...I hope you can see the distinction I am trying to point out. In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law as the rabid segregationist would do. This would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do it openly, lovingly...”

MIT uses its rules to preserve ties with an Israeli apartheid state and de-mobilize students of conscience toward less political fora. It’s also clear we should be skeptical of MIT’s framing. Universities do not threaten students with suspension over jangled doorknobs or event forms, any more than the Confederacy went to war with the U.S. North over abstract theories of federalism and states’ rights. In W.E.B. Du Bois’ words, slaveholding Virginia fought “for property and privilege.” Similarly, MIT suspends its anti-apartheid students not out of an abstract commitment to rules about permits; Fossil Free MIT held a sit-in around the clock in the Infinite Corridor for four straight months in 2016, despite violating regulations in force at the time against after-hours activity. The Black Graduate Student Association have righteously “disrupted the peace” with protests in and around Lobby 7 over the 2019/2020 year, while groups like MIT Students Against War and Democratize MIT have marched through the halls of the School of Architecture and Planning in protest of the institute’s ties with convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein, libertarian oil baron David Koch, and the autocratic Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Do you think they worried about permits?

Nor are the admin’s sanctions exactly about safety; both actions in Lobby 7 on November 7 and February 12 as well as all events in between were peaceful, non-violent, allowed egress, and gave public notice. No organizer incited harassment or hatred against any individual or ethnic group. I know because I was there and because the reports by MIT’s own admin and faculty say so. Instead MIT administrators, under pressure, shut down anti-apartheid students and cancel their events to preserve a particular status quo of power and reputation. This pressure comes from sections of the U.S.

Congress, donor class, faculty, trustees, and staff, who see the CAA and our peers at Harvard, Brandeis, and elsewhere as an unruly and potentially bigoted mob that must be taught a lesson.

These sanctions are emblematic of a new red scare in national media, whose hysteria about wide-spread antisemitism in the pro-Palestine student movement is exceeded only by the dull tranquility of general MIT student life. According to two orthodox Jewish students writing in November, “campus life has, for the most part, remained the same.” MIT remains a place where students go to class and struggle over p-sets, where the dining halls offer kosher and halal options, where Hillel, Chabad, and the MIT Israel Alliance run rallies, speaker circuits, and inter-collegiate kumzit, where “Jewish and Muslim students peacefully coexist” at MIT’s Religious Activity Center, “as they have for decades,” where campus initiatives such as Standing Against Hate and Dialogues Across Difference trundle along, but where most students, for better or worse, are stubbornly apathetic toward political and human rights causes they don’t think immediately affect them.

What then are the issues ‘organized out’ of university politics? First, MIT receives direct funding by the Israeli Ministry of Defense for surveillance and ballistic targeting research. Consider the project names from MIT’s financial disclosures: Algorithms for Underwater Persistent Monitoring, Multifunctional Fiber System for Magnetic Wave Sensing, Heterogenous Multiagent Systems for Perimeter Defense Problems, and Rapidly Scanning Random Trees for Pursuit Evasion Games. Should we not be disturbed? “Our scientific power has outrun our spiritual power,” said Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “We have guided missiles and misguided men.” Second, MIT hosts venues such as the Startup Exchange to connect its students and faculty to weapon manufacturers like Elbit, Raytheon, Caterpillar, Inc and BAE system. These firms are the raw suppliers of Israeli occupation hardware – its drones, D9 bulldozers, fighter jets, and artillery. Lockheed Martin even sponsors a \$150,000 seed fund, administered by the MIT International Science and Technology Initiative, to connect students with its weapon laboratories and offices in Israel.

Third, the MIT Corporation dynamically manages a \$23.5 billion endowment. In a world of increasingly complex asset securitization (ETFs, hedge funds, and private equity), the specifics of MIT’s opaque portfolio are difficult to fully chart. But if investigations at Harvard are any guide, endowments as large as MIT’s likely hold assets of companies which the UN, Human Rights Watch, and Amnesty International believe to support the Israeli settler enterprise in the occupied Palestinian territories. Does MIT also invest in Israeli bonds, like Norway’s sovereign wealth fund did until a few weeks ago? We don’t fully know. Finally, MIT holds the unique distinction of being the only American university to host a weapons lab entirely bankrolled by the U.S. Department of Defense; the Lincoln Laboratories currently hold a \$20 billion contract over the 2015-2025 period and conduct classified research in ballistics, surveillance, reconnaissance, cyberwarfare, and “war games.” The dark fruits of these innovations are ultimately routed not just to the U.S. military itself but repackaged in the form of aid to American client states and allies. The state of Israel receives the lion’s share of such Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants.

Of course, none of these issues are on the table when MIT sends campus-wide announcements about the CAA or organizes a seminar on antisemitism. Why would it? There are no institutional incentives absent a vigorous, disruptive

anti-war movement among students and faculty. And so the tension between what’s said and unsaid slides into a bizarre kind of Orwellian doublethink: MIT condemns the incitement of violence, but then hosts a research lab to perfect state violence. It talks endlessly about a safe campus but collaborates with the Israeli military to make a very unsafe Middle East. It stands against hate but not against genocide. It extols free speech but then sanctions the students who use free speech. Its President introduces a principle of “institutional neutrality” on world crises while MIT collaborates with a principal party in said crisis.

**Whose Rules?**

In the end, MIT asks the CAA to follow rules. Very well. Must institutions follow rules? When universities – their endowments and weapon research labs – provide material support to a foreign government engaged in the ethnic cleansing of a civilian population, are they breaking the rules? Rules like the Geneva and Genocide Conventions, the Material Support clause, the Leahy Laws? Or do rules just mean that students fill out event forms? Instead, students of conscience are encouraged to de-mobilize toward less political fora, to refocus their passions toward the question of whose feelings are hurt and why, to subordinate the causes of justice to the more worthy goal of a “smooth functioning of the campus community,” to protest but only in ways that are inoffensive, undisruptive and easily ignored, and to engage in civil ‘Dialogues across Difference’ – a worthy activity, but far from an activism that challenge power and vested interest. Do you see the subtle shift? The political is evacuated of its moral urgency. The material erodes into the discursive. The solidarity of ‘We’ collapses into the attention-seeking of ‘I’. The demand for justice and equality is abandoned in favor of a preference for order.

No. Conscience requires that MIT reinstate the CAA, retract its threats against student organizers, and remove bureaucratic obstructions to protest. These are intermediate steps, of course. The long-term goal is that the MIT Corporation capitulates to a rising tide of student and faculty power; that it stops accepting money from the Israeli military, ends partnerships with arms companies like Lockheed Martin that sell to the Israeli military; divests its endowment and declares it free of Israeli bonds and the stock of companies that facilitate the occupation of the Palestinian territories; and announces clear redlines to the U.S. federal government that Lincoln Labs research should not benefit the Israeli government so long as it engages in policies of apartheid, occupation, and genocide.

This agenda invites a list of ignorant and cynical complaints. Aren’t we missing the main villain? Aren’t universities soft targets? Why not protest at the local, state, or federal capitol instead of in Lobby 7? Or just call Congress representatives? Why not be satisfied with campus teach-ins, vigils, charity events, and raising awareness? Why waste energy punching at walls that won’t budge? Studies show for instance that the divestment campaigns for Free South Africa in the 1980s had no long-term impact on company share price. Why attempt pressure tactics on MIT that will not seriously impede Israel’s ability to procure weapons or MIT graduate labor? Why be so focused on Israel anyway while Indonesia occupies West Papua, China, Tibet, and Russia Ukraine? Aren’t you just cosplaying revolutionary for your own psychological benefit?

The answer is that universities like MIT do matter as targets of student activism; they are complicit in a regime



**Palestine**, from Page 14

of Israeli apartheid but espouse public commitments to equality and human flourishing. These contradictions can be challenged by students and faculty who do not enjoy such unique leverage in other arenas. And because of Israel’s unique and historic dependence on American public finance, arms, and diplomacy, students at American universities have leverage over Israel to a degree we simply don’t have for the people of West Papua, Tibet, or Ukraine. It is true that divesting MIT of Israel, like the divestment campaigns against apartheid South Africa, may have no long-term impact on company profits or the Israeli bond market; less scrupulous actors buy up the divested shares. Same story for arms embargoes or consumer boycotts.

But this critique misses the point. To divest a university like MIT, or strip it of ties to Israeli military, or announce a major strike pledge to withhold our labor from firms complicit in the Israeli occupation sends a costly signal about our values. The struggle against oppressive regimes is a struggle against their legitimacy as much as their material capabilities. If Israel can oppress Palestinians with our science, let them do it without us. We do not need to participate. MIT should, instead, affirm human life.

Of course, MIT is just one front in generating momentum for a mass movement and making inroads into state power. It is the beginning, not the end. It is not limited to campus direct action. Members from the MIT CAA have protested at the Capitol twice, on November 4 and January 13. We show up in Boston and at the Cambridge City Council regularly. We hold teach-ins, with Leila Farskh, Les Field, and Miko Peled, and these complement the events organized by coalition members – the teach-ins by MIT Black Student Union on Black/Palestinian solidarity, shabbat dinners by MIT Jews for Ceasefire, the political readings of Readings for Revolution, and fundraisers by Palestine@MIT. The CAA is a broad coalition; it contains the multitudes of the MIT student fabric – Christian, Jewish, Muslim, secular, Black, White, Arab, Desi, Hispanic, Queer, graduate, undergraduate, and so on. It is united by the principle that the fight for Palestinian liberation occurs within a broader movement for the liberation of all oppressed peoples and that every human being has the right to a life of dignity.

**Motives**

We are each moved to support Palestine for different reasons. For me, the Holy Land is a place of profound meaning to my Christian faith. It is where I discovered Oscar Romero’s “violence of love” that beats weapons into sickles for work. Palestine is where my friends live under apartheid and occupation. This Israeli occupation is a brutal and degrading regime I have seen with my own eyes over my time living in the Palestinian territories and in Jerusalem itself. I hear it in the stories of Gazan children who stayed in my family home over the years with the Palestine Children’s Relief Fund to receive medical treatment. I support the Palestinian people because I am tired of watching old men and women on video show me scabs and bruises from when they were detained and beaten in Israeli military. I am haunted by the orphan in Gaza who tells me in Arabic that all his family were killed and that he sleeps on the unlit road hoping someone would run him over. There are at least 17,000 orphans now in Gaza.

I support the end to apartheid because Mahmoud Darwish said “the occupier and myself – both of us suffer from exile. He is an exile in me and I am the victim of his exile.” Because in the state of Israel today, about 2 million Arab citizens of Israel live under surveillance, many in communities suffering under organized abandon by the state and planned “judahzation.” Because in Jerusalem, my friend Ahmed lives in annexed Israeli territory, but he and his wife do not have full voting rights. There are 372,000 of them. Because Iman in Ramallah has never seen the Mediterranean or the Sea of Galilee. To do so requires a permit, like the old South African pass laws. Should she fall in love, she cannot easily marry a Palestinian from Haifa, Nazareth, or Jerusalem (or a Jew for that matter), without leaving the country.

I support the end to apartheid because my mother’s friend Samir lives with his three children in Bethlehem enclosed by

checkpoints, walls, watchtowers, and ever-growing Israeli settlements. An Israeli citizen in the same physical space falls under Israeli civil law; Samir falls under Israeli military law. There are 2.7 million such Palestinians in the West Bank. I support the end to apartheid because my colleague Dana lives in the diaspora, cut off from the land of her grandparents who were expelled by Zionist militias. Anyone born of a Jewish mother can easily visit or obtain residency rights in the land of Israel and historic Palestine. The Palestinian diaspora cannot, and there are 6 million of them.

I support the end to apartheid because in 1948, more than 90% of Palestine’s Christian and Muslim Arabs within the borders of the declared state of Israel were expelled as stateless refugees. The few who remained, many in northern cities such as Nazareth and Haifa, lived under military rule until 1966. Upon winning the 1967 war against its Arab neighbors, Israel then occupied the Sinai, Golan Heights, Gaza and the West Bank – subjecting large, urbanized populations of Palestinians in the latter two regions to a regime of military rule that has lasted now more than half a century. In 1980, Israel formalized its annexation of East Jerusalem, conferring on Palestinian residents of Jerusalem a special ID status short of full citizenship and voting rights. With the Oslo Accords of the 1990s, Israel outsourced the governance of major Palestinian cities in the occupied territories to the newly-created Palestinian Authority but retained about two-thirds of the land, called Area C, for its own military and settler enterprise.

I support the end to apartheid because these settlers live under different laws, hold different IDs, drive on different roads, attend different schools, and vote in different elections than their native Palestinian neighbors. Their most influential voices in Knesset politics (Tkuma, Otzma Yehudit, Jewish Home, Likud parties) embrace an irridentist, messianic, theocratic, and far-right vision of Jewish supremacy at any cost. Since 2003, Israel has built a massive Separation Wall through Jerusalem and the West Bank. It withdrew from Gaza in 2005, swapping a direct land occupation for a crippling blockade by air, land, and sea.

Some of my fellow MIT students take issue with the chant “from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.” But do you know what actually exists from the river to the sea? A fractured patchwork of different political jurisdictions, within which about seven million Palestinians live without the same basic rights as seven million Jews. Human rights groups call it apartheid. It is an apartheid of walls, concrete, checkpoints, housing demolitions, settler attacks, censorship, confiscated land, and imprisonment without trial.

Inevitably, this regime inspires armed and at times brutal resistance. As Thomas Paine wrote of the uprisings against the French plantation colony in Haiti in the 1790s, “It is the natural consequence of slavery and must be expected every where.” The last few decades have been punctuated by periodic, devastating wars in Gaza, where Hamas organizes the last hold-out of serious Palestinian armed resistance to Israeli rule. Tareq Baconi calls this cycle the “violent equilibrium.” Since the early 2000s, Israel created a security architecture that would allow Israel to divide-and-conquer the West Bank and Gaza, prevent the emergence of a Palestinian state, and repress any serious resistance to its rule. The implicit wager of Israel’s right-wing rulers was that the cost of these wars would be small enough to be ignored by the Israeli public. That the Palestinians, entombed behind concrete and fences, could be ignored forever. One wonders if the October 7 attacks have torn asunder this illusion.

These wars of course reflect a colonial double standard: that any Palestinian violence is the sui generis act of a savage, not of a severely constrained political actor operating in the Manichean divisions of the settler-colony. That Palestinian violence justifies Israeli violence of any form – hospitals, mosques, churches, schools, apartment buildings, power plants, civil infrastructure are all valid targets. That no Israeli violence ever justifies any Palestinian violence (one must suffer occupation with saintly resolve, even gratitude); that Israel has an iron-clad right to self-defense, but that Palestinians have none.

I support the end to apartheid be-

cause this unholy and precarious arrangement is underwritten by American weapons, justified publicly by American politicians and diplomats, bankrolled by American taxes, shielded by American military assets, sanctified by American pastors and rabbis, and ignored by the American public. It is an arrangement papered over by MIT itself, which refuses to divest its \$23.5 billion endowment from Israeli companies or end its partnerships with the Israeli government and US-based weapons suppliers. Instead, the administration prefers to represent itself, deceptively, as a neutral midwife of higher education. This is a lie. I follow Noam Chomsky, Willard R. Johnson, the MIT Physics Department and other former lights of the MIT community who took a principled stand against war, nuclear armament, and apartheid in their own time, and who connected that stand with the policy of the university. It requires me to say, along with the Palestinian Knesset member Ayman Odeh, “Cursed be they who cry out: Revenge. We choose life.” We choose life in Palestine.

This principle also requires us to recognize that basic tradeoff between war and human flourishing which Dwight D. Eisenhower once identified in his Cross of Iron speech: “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children.” We want our science and engineering to affirm all human life, not death.

Finally, I support the end to apartheid because I am moved by my Palestinian and Israeli comrades: Amjad Iraqi, Mosab Abu Toha, Yuval Avraham, Daniel Boyarin, Gideon Levy, Noura Erakat, Rashida Tlaib. I am guided by the witness of Aaron Bushnell. By leftist Jews in the United States. By the US Civil Rights movement and the black radical tradition. And by the legacies of Irish unification and the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa. I also recall the 1995 Dayton Accords, which however imperfect, stopped the Bosnian genocide, ended the Balkan war, and established a multi-ethnic, consociational democracy in Bosnia which has held for three decades. These legacies convince me that a meaningful off-ramp to Israeli apartheid and its genocidal war in Gaza requires a permanent and immediate ceasefire, a release of all captives held by Hamas and Israel, an end to the siege on Gaza, a return of refugees to their homes, a war crimes tribunal, and a global campaign to compel Israel to end apartheid in favor of mass enfranchisement, equal rights, and the creation of progressive, secular, social democracy in a free Palestine from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean.

This is not a utopian or alien position; it is quite possible and rooted in the oldest political visions of the Palestinian national movement and Jewish tradition. The coalitions exist to achieve it. In fact, it’s the only future that does not preserve Israel as an ethnic supremacist state or lead to mass population transfers, terrorism, and ethnic cleansing. To do this, the anti-apartheid coalition must gain leverage into the American state. This process of course starts locally, in places such as MIT or Cambridge. It is what guided me and my partner to support the MIT CAA and participate in the sit-ins, which I understand as a disruptive and conspicuous act of protest and civil disobedience against the will of the MIT administration. We will likely continue to attend and support the coalition at future direct actions.

**Hamas and Zionists**

Supporters of Israel may continue to see us as unruly bigots, committing vile acts of anti-Israeli or anti-Jewish hatred that make students feel unsafe on campus. So did white southerners think that integrated bussing made their communities unsafe. “When I criticize a system, they think I criticize them” wrote Thomas Merton. “And that is of course because they fully accept the system and identify themselves with it.” Zionists like to object to a particular means of contention – this or that chant, the defiant tone, a lack of enthusiasm for the depoliticized venues of dialogue. But how do you dialogue in good faith with an ethnic supremacist? “We can disagree and still love each other” said James Baldwin,

“unless your disagreement is rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist.” No anti-apartheid student should be obligated to engage in morally exhausting exercises unless they want to.

Moreover anti-Zionism – that is, opposition to the establishment and maintenance of a Jewish state by force – is quite kosher. It is rooted in mainstream Jewish tradition and spans Reformed, Conservative, Orthodox and Hassidic sects. Its roots lie in Biblical scripture and the Hebrew prophets, the writings of Rashi, Maimonides, Mendelssohn, Teitelbaum, and Judah Leon Magnes. In secular circles, we see its progressive values at work in the historic Israeli Matzpen and Communist parties, the Hadash, and Israel’s beleaguered human rights community – B’Tselem, Breaking the Silence, Yesh Din, and Adalah. In the United States, we have IfNotNow, Jewish Voices for Peace and MIT’s own Jews for Ceasefire. Frequently it is said these groups do not represent the Jewish community. Neither did the Jews who took a stand against apartheid South Africa or volunteered for Freedom Summer in Mississippi. “People who demand justice when they have the luxury of indifference are rarely representative,” Peter Beinart once observed. “That’s why we remember their courage.”

Zionists in the press and on campus sometimes tar us as Hamas apologists and to that end harass and dox students by putting their personal information on blacklist sites like Canary Mission. This is the tactic of bullies and cowards, but it is likely driven by a sense of insecurity. “I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly” wrote James Baldwin, “is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with pain.” Indeed, it can be painful to see the dead bodies of one’s kin in Sderot and Be’eri; it was painful for me, and I am not Israeli. But to go beyond vapid condemnations of Hamas, one must ask why Hamas’ call to arms resonates among the young orphans who make up its brigades. As a scholar of Islamist politics, I point to the classic studies of Hamas by Khaled Hroub, Jeroen Gunning, Sara Roy, and Tareq Baconi, who locate the overriding answer to this question in the intransigence of the Israeli occupation.

Put yourself in their shoes. If you watched a foreign people take your grandfather’s land, torture your uncle, shoot your cousin, imprison your sister, invade your holy site, and subject your nation to a humiliating siege in a calorie-counted ghetto while the world watches and does nothing, would it not also be tempting to take up arms? It was so in the Warsaw Ghetto in 1943. It was resentment against British rule, not bigotry against the Protestant, that propelled Irish youth to join the Irish Republican Army struggle in Ulster. To end the cycle of violence in Palestine, one needs a Good Friday Agreement. One must show the world that mass, civic non-violence also can make material gains, that it carries dignity and ennobles. This is precisely what the MIT CAA is trying to do.

Finally, the cynics might see us as deluded peaceniks – utopian, cringe, stupid. Yet I am similarly struck by the pessimism of those who until the very last moment could not imagine the Berlin Wall falling, who saw “one man, one vote” in South Africa as a pipe dream, and who believed Jim Crow was etched in stone. For this reason, I think we must commit to an irrational, radical hope – to a solidarity that is global and indivisible, that is founded as Robin Kelly once wrote, “not on shared experience but shared principles.” No one can fully grasp what lies beyond the moral horizon. But we can continue the long march to that horizon, undaunted by the world’s grief – committed to “mourn the dead” as the protest slogan goes, “and fight like hell for the living” – from the river to the sea to every mountain top. I hope you join us. People are dying.

*Richard Solomon is a PhD student in the MIT Department of Political Science where he studies Middle East politics and the political economy of trade. He is a member of the MIT Coalition for Palestine and the MIT Grads for Palestine. Before MIT, he worked as a consular diplomat with the U.S. Department of State in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The views expressed above are his alone and do not represent the views of the U.S. government or any MIT affiliated organization.*



# Protestors march from Cambridge City Hall to MIT calling for end to Israeli intervention in Gaza

Numerous student and local activism groups from the Boston area participated, including some from MIT

By **Ellie Montemayor**  
*PUBLISHER*

On March 2, thousands congregated in front of Cambridge City Hall as part of a nationwide rally in support of a ceasefire in Gaza. The protest had numerous student and local activism groups from the Boston area including MIT, and was one of over 60 marches coordinated across the United States that day under a so-called Global Day of Action.

The nationwide event, titled “Hands Off Rafah,” came after the Israeli government announced that its forces would move into Rafah, a city in the Gaza Strip. This particular contingent of the nationwide demonstration was organized by the Boston Coalition for Palestine.

The protestors convened at 1 P.M., obstructing Mass. Ave between Inman St and Bigelow St while police established barricades around the crowd. Many waved Palestinian flags and signs calling for an end of the Israeli intervention in Gaza, and several addressed the crowd, speaking about their experiences with Islamophobia and the ongoing war. Some attendees glued posters referencing the war in Gaza on surfaces in front of the City Hall.

Flanked by police, the demonstration continued down Mass. Ave. The group was

led by a pickup truck retrofitted with speakers as some led chants. Bus lines and traffic routes were diverted as the march occupied the street.

By 3 PM, the protestors reached Vassar St. “MIT, you can’t hide — you’re supporting genocide,” the protestors chanted as they marched into campus, reaching the crosswalk in-between Building 7 and the Stratton Student Center.

“We cannot forget that MIT partially suspended their students that were peacefully protesting for Palestine in November,” one atop the leading pickup truck said.

The protestors climbed up the steps in front of Lobby 7 by 3:15 P.M., and continued with the rally’s roster of speakers.

An MIT graduate student spoke on topics including previous rights movements held on MIT’s campus, the Institute’s links to defense organizations, research tied to the conflict, and the suspension of the MIT Coalition Against Apartheid (CAA).

“MIT, every decision you’ve made about these students of conscience have been at the expense and infringement of our rights... I want to end this with a message to the MIT and their admin: you can try to unjust me, and cowardly suppress and suspend these students — but you will never suspend the movement,” the student said.

The rally ended shortly after 4 PM.



Protesters gather on Memorial Drive outside Lobby 7, rallying in support for Palestine, Saturday, March 2

KATE LU - THE TECH



ELLIE MONTEMAYOR—THE TECH

The MIT Fencing team competes in the New England Intercollegiate Fencing Conference championships held at the Johnson Athletic Center track.

Meet your fellow tech staff.  
(aka, your new 3 a.m. pset support group)



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## Lost in Thought by Manaal Mohammed '25

Solution, page 9

**Across**

- 01 Pettily hurts, say
- 07 Setting for drills
- 15 Hummus ingredient
- 16 Like calamine cream
- 17 AA offshoot
- 18 Cleared out
- 19 Not once
- 20 Drivers’ org.
- 21 Gobs
- 22 Keeper of night visions?
- 25 Peace pact
- 26 Death marker
- 30 New Mexico ski locale
- 32 Where to buy chips
- 34 It might come after a long time?
- 35 || symbols
- 36 Default support chat helper
- 37 “Stat!”
- 38 Shooting option, briefly
- 39 It might be black or green
- 40 Double-reed player
- 42 Eye 29-down
- 43 Greet, perhaps
- 45 Peanut butter cup brand
- 47 Taken in by awe

- 51 Sanskrit’s language group
- 54 Select
- 55 Gala, for one
- 56 Beanbag game
- 58 Be under the influence of, as acid
- 59 Way to take something
- 60 Mark on a letter, occasionally
- 61 BBC flagship program
- 62 Many cleaning tasks

**Down**

- 01 Attitude
- 02 More wan
- 03 “Well, in all honesty..”
- 04 One who is tone deaf might have these
- 05 Parisian giant?
- 06 Sloth, for one
- 07 Wolves in fairy tales, typically
- 08 Headphones style
- 09 Some ESPN highlights
- 10 Seals, as a gift
- 11 It’s pointless
- 12 Chapati-making need
- 13 Hosted, shortly

- 14 Degrees of significant magnitude, shortly
- 20 It might be hashed
- 23 Well-known left-leaning magazine
- 24 “Perfect as is!”
- 27 Final meal, famously?
- 28 Unappealing to look at
- 29 See 42-across
- 30 Tater bits
- 31 \_\_\_ 51
- 33 Magazine perfume sample, commonly
- 36 Hippie-influenced style
- 41 “Forgive me, Father”
- 42 1973 Pacino role
- 44 Bond swaps?
- 46 20-down, for one
- 48 Passes (out)
- 49 Git command
- 50 “Smallville” family
- 51 Determined words
- 52 Carrot on a snowman, typically
- 53 Tie
- 57 They might be frozen
- 58 Tic follower

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