

MIT's Oldest and
Largest Newspaper

thetech.com



Volume 145, Number 13

WEATHER, p. 2

	THU: 68°F 60°F
	Mostly cloudy
	FRI: 78°F 59°F
	Partly cloudy
	SAT: 82°F 63°F
	Sunny

Thursday, August 21, 2025

Boston Globe publishes article about Kornbluth's handling of a cancer research scandal at Duke

Article criticizes Kornbluth for not stopping Anil Potti's research misconduct sooner

By Vivian Hir
NEWS EDITOR

On Aug. 13, *The Boston Globe* published an investigative article about President Kornbluth's delay in addressing research misconduct when she was Vice Dean for Basic Science at the Duke School of Medicine.

In 2006, former Duke professors Anil Potti and Joseph Nevins published a paper in *Nature Medicine* claiming that their algorithm could use a patient's genetic markers to predict which chemotherapy drugs were the most effective. However, biostatisticians Keith Baggerly and Kevin Coombes at the MD Anderson Cancer Center were unable to replicate the findings in the paper, which led them to send a letter to *Nature Medicine* questioning the paper's methodology. Bradford Perez, a third-year medical student in Potti's lab, also identified issues with Potti's methodology and data analysis.

These research concerns caused Perez to write a memo to Duke School of Medicine administrators in 2008. Despite the memo, Potti and Nevins were still able to conduct a clinical trial for their research, which ultimately enrolled a total of 117 cancer patients.

In September 2009, Baggerly and Coombes published a paper in the *Annals of Applied Statistics* that claimed that the errors in Potti's research could have harmful effects on the patients. As a result, Kornbluth met with Potti and Nevins regarding the alleged research misconduct case, and Duke suspended

the trials. However, Kornbluth then consulted an external committee to review the case, and the committee did not identify signs of scientific misconduct. In January 2010, Duke restarted the clinical trials. A number of researchers at Duke have criticized Kornbluth for not quickly responding to the research misconduct scandal. Several past and current researchers at Duke did not respond to *The Tech* request for comment by the time of publication.

In 2010, Lisa McShane, a biostatistician from the National Cancer Institute (NCI), conducted an investigation into Potti and Nevins' research, as she believed that the algorithms were falsified. From the investigation, McShane found multiple discrepancies and inconsistencies in the data that Potti was unable to answer. According to the NIH press team, McShane declined to respond to *The Tech*'s request for comment. McShane's in-depth investigation was followed by *The Cancer Letter*'s report in July 2010 that found that Potti lied on his resume, claiming that he was a Rhodes Scholar when he never received the award. As a result, Potti was placed on leave. Nevins retired from Duke in 2013.

In 2015, Duke settled a lawsuit for an undisclosed sum that claimed that patients in Potti's research were harmed in the chemotherapy trials, which was terminated in 2010. The same year, the Office of Research Integrity (ORI) concluded that Potti engaged in research misconduct by falsifying research data. Many of



COLIN CLARK—THE TECH

A courtyard bordering building 6C at MIT on May 8, 2025.

Potti's research papers were retracted as a result.

In response to *The Boston Globe*'s article, Kornbluth wrote a letter to the MIT community on the same day. In her letter, Kornbluth acknowledged her role in the research misconduct case. She stated that she was new to being an university administrator at the time, and that the incident taught her the importance of establishing "timely internal investigative pro-

cesses" and "ensuring that they are entirely independent from those who undertook the research."

Kornbluth admitted that research misconduct can be challenging to identify when an "individual is intent on deception." She emphasized the importance of cultivating a culture of trust in data and people. "It's crucial that we continue to foster a culture in which everyone, regardless of their position, feels empowered

to raise concerns and knows they will be taken seriously," Kornbluth further emphasized.

In a statement to *The Tech*, Deputy Director of Media Relations Sarah McDonnell stated that the presidential search committee in 2022 performed a thorough review of her previous record. According to McDonnell, Kornbluth mentioned the Potti case during the interview process for the purpose of transparency and honesty.

DSL introduces the Student Group Funding Council

The SGFC replaces the UA Finance Board for funding MIT undergraduate student organizations

By Vivian Hir
NEWS EDITOR

Starting in the 2025–2026 academic year, student organizations will apply for funding through the Student Group Funding Council (SGFC). This change replaces previous funding sources that include the Undergraduate Association (UA) Finance Board, Graduate Student Council (GSC) Funding Board, and the Association of Student Activities (ASA) Large Event Fund (LEF) and Assisting Recurring Cultural And Diversity Events (ARCADE) funds. The council is composed of nine voting members that include representatives from the UA, ASA, GSC, as well as three elected members.

The SGFC was formed in 2025 based on the recommendations

from the Student Organization Working Group's (SOWG) final report, which proposed a single funding board for all recognized student organizations for greater efficiency and a more streamlined funding process.

Led by the Division of Student Life, the SOWG met in Spring 2023 to discuss and propose changes to student organization policies and structures at MIT, including financial management and recognition processes. According to the report, the new funding board's money comes from the New Fund, which is primarily composed of the Student Life Fee, as well as the LEF and ARCADE funds.

Previously, student groups applied for funding individually through various sources, each one

with different deadlines and rules. These differences resulted in challenges for organizations with both undergraduate and graduate students, since groups were either labeled as undergraduate or graduate. "This binary designation became impractical and inconsistent," Student Organizations, Leadership and Engagement Office (SOLE) Director Paul Murphy wrote.

According to Murphy, the purpose of the SGFC is to improve the funding process by removing the undergraduate and graduate funding distinction and combining these separate funding groups into one.

"The unified structure aims to reduce confusion and create a more equitable and accessible funding process for all student groups," Murphy wrote.

The SGFC has three application cycles (spring, summer, and fall). Each cycle will have a multi-week application window along with an appeal process after preliminary allocations are released. Each funding application will be reviewed by two council members and will be voted on by the entire council. The application requires student groups to provide a detailed budget request and a justification for the requested funds. Funding applications will be evaluated based on educational outcomes and budget review.

The deadline for the SGFC fall funding cycle closed on Aug. 15. Allocations will be released on Aug. 29, and appeals will be released on Sept. 2.

Questions and concerns about SGFC can be sent to sole@mit.edu or sgfc-exec@mit.edu.

IN SHORT

Residential Exploration (REX) will happen from Saturday, Aug. 23, to Wednesday, Aug. 27.

First-year student orientation begins on Sunday, Aug. 24.

Registration opens for all students on Monday, Aug. 25.

Undergraduate registration for first quarter PE&Wellness classes open on Friday, Aug. 29 at 8 a.m.

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

Send news and tips to tt-news-editors@mit.edu.

POLITICAL CARTOON

p. 3

GIRLFRIEND?

xkcd. ENTERTAINMENT, p. 4

SCIENTIFIC EFFECTS BRACKET

xkcd. ENTERTAINMENT, p. 4

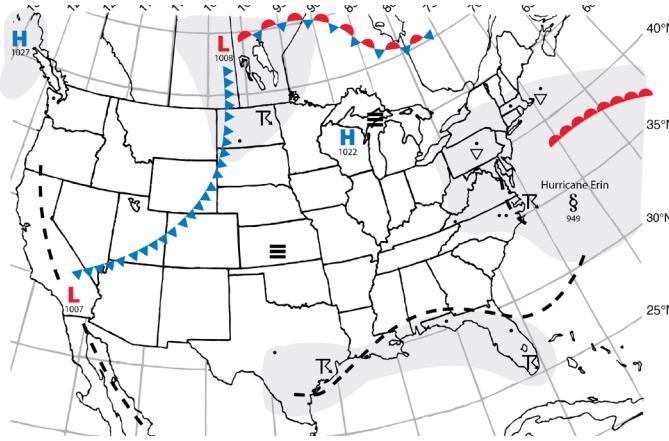
UNIVERSITIES NEED FUNDING

I lose, you lose, we all lose. Everyone loses. **OPINION, p. 3**

SECTIONS

News	1
Weather	2
Opinion	3
Entertainment	4

WEATHER FORECAST



Weather Systems		Weather Fronts		Precipitation Symbols	
H	High Pressure	- - -	Trough	Snow	Rain
L	Low Pressure	---	Warm Front	*	•
§	Hurricane	△△△	Cold Front	▽	▽
		△△△	Stationary Front	Light	*
		△△△		Moderate	..
		△△△		Heavy	**

Other Symbols	
≡	Fog
TK	Thunderstorm
○○	Haze
Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech	

Temperatures to rebound for the weekend

By Conrad Straden
METEOROLOGIST

Why is it so cold in the middle of August? Well, the unusual combination of a polar air mass and a close pass from Hurricane Erin have brought some unseasonably cold and windy weather to campus this week. Following yesterday's rain, today features stronger northeast winds—both associated with the hurricane's broader influence. Erin will pass over 400 miles to our southeast on Friday, meaning no direct impacts. Out in the ocean, however,

Erin is whipping up huge waves that will cause damaging surf up and down the eastern seaboard. The wave and rip current threat will be greatest for the Boston beaches on Friday and Saturday as the storm heads east and out to sea. Weather wise, this weekend will be pleasant with highs around 80°F and lots of sunshine. As for next week, Monday could feature some afternoon thunderstorms and temperatures will still be running slightly below average. This should make for a pleasant end to the month with highs in the 70s.

AUGUST 21 SITUATION FOR NOON (ET)

Extended Forecast

Today: Mostly Cloudy. Chance for rain early. High around 68°F (20°C). Northeast winds 10-15 mph.

Tonight: Cloudy. Low around 60°F (16°C). Northeast winds 10-15 mph.

Friday: Partly Cloudy. High around 78°F (26°C) and overnight low around 59°F (15°C). North winds 10-15 mph.

Saturday: Sunny. High around 82°F (28°C) and overnight low around 63°F (17°C). Winds light and variable.

Sunday: Mostly Sunny. High around 79°F (26°C) and overnight low around 66°F (19°C). South winds.

Biz pays the billz

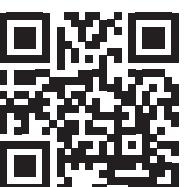
Join the Business Department of
The Tech and earn \$14.25/hr!

Email join@tech.mit.edu



The Mind and Hand Book is the official guide to MIT's expectations of all undergraduate and graduate students, including the policies on academic integrity, alcohol, drugs, hazing, and sexual misconduct.

handbook.mit.edu



THE TECH STAFF

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PUBLISHER Claire Mao '26

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Karie Shen '27

MANAGING EDITOR Geoffrey Enwere '26

JUNIOR OFFICER Vi Trinh '27

CONTENT

NEWS

Vivian Hir '25, NEWS EDITOR.

Sabine Chu '26, ASSOCIATE NEWS EDITOR.

STAFF | Lucy Cai '25, Alex Tang '26, Alor Sahoo '26, Karie Shen '27, Aneesh Sharma '28, Boheng Cao '28.

WEATHER

Lou Lahn '27, CHIEF METEOROLOGIST.

METEOROLOGIST | Conrad Straden '28.

FEATURES & CAMPUS LIFE

Susan Hong '27, FEATURES & CAMPUS LIFE EDITOR.

STAFF | Vivian Hir '25.

ARTS

Angelica Zhu '28, ARTS EDITOR.

STAFF | Cameron Davis G, Cristine Chen '26, Vivian Hir '25, Lucy Cai '25, Kaitlin Yeoh '28.

SPORTS

Hannah Friedman '27 & Matthew Barnett '27, SPORTS EDITORS.

SCIENCE

Veronika Moroz '28, SCIENCE EDITOR.

STAFF | Hailey Pan '27, Sophia Zhang '28, Jierue Chang '28, Eric Wang '28.

ENTERTAINMENT

Maanal Mohammed '25, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR.

PHOTO

Michelle Xiang '26 & Lee Chen '26, PHOTO EDITORS.

STAFF | Colin Clark '26.

OPINION

EDITORIAL BOARD: Claire Mao '26, Geoffrey Enwere '26, Karie Shen '27, Vi Trinh '27.

PUBLISHING

PRODUCTION

Evie Zhang '28, PRODUCTION EDITOR.

STAFF | Tracy Nguyen '28, Joseph Mei '28, Laty Niang G.

COPY

Grace Zhang '28 & Boheng Cao '28, COPY CHIEFS.

Eric Wang '28, ASSISTANT COPY CHIEF.

STAFF | Lucy Cai '25.

ADMINISTRATION

OPERATIONS

Peter Pu '26, BUSINESS DIRECTOR.

Colin Clark '26, TECHNOLOGY DIRECTOR.

STAFF | Madeline Leaño '26, Jamie Lim '28, Razzi Masroor '28, Diego Temkin '26.

ADVISORY BOARD

Paul E. Schindler, Jr. '74, Barry S. Surman '84, Deborah A. Levinson '91, Saul Blumenthal '98, Daniel Ryan Bersak '02, Eric J. Cholankeril '02, Marissa Vogt '06, Austin Chu '08, Michael McGraw-Herdeg '08, Marie Y. Thibault '08, Angeline Wang '09, Jeff Guo '11, Anne Cai '14, Jessica L. Wass '14, Bruno Faviero '15, Kali Xu '15, Leon Lin '16, Kath Xu '16, Lenny Martinez Dominguez '17, Charlie J.

Moore '17, William Navarre '17, Emma Bingham '19, Nafisa Syed '19, Áron Ricardo Perez-Lopez '20, Nathan Liang '21, Joanna Lin '21, B. D. Cole.

AT LARGE

Editors-at-Large: Alex Tang '26, Alor Sahoo '26.

Senior Editors: Srinidhi Narayanan '24, Jyotsna Nair '25, Anahita Srinivasan '25, Kate Lu '25.

The Tech (ISSN 0148-9607) is published periodically on Thursdays during the academic year (except during MIT vacations) and monthly during the summer by *The Tech*, Room W20-483, 84 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Mass. 02139. **POSTMASTER:** Please send all address changes to our mailing address: *The Tech*, P.O. Box 391529, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029. **TELEPHONE:** Editorial: (617) 253-1541. Business: (617) 258-8324. Facsimile: (617) 258-8226. **EMAIL:** tt-general@mit.edu (general), tt-ads@mit.edu (advertising). **Advertising, subscription, and typesetting rates available.** Entire contents © 2025 *The Tech*. Printed by *Graphic Developments, Inc.*

SUBMISSION: We accept guest columns and op-eds from members of the MIT community for publication into print and online issues of *The Tech*. We reserve the right to edit all material before publication. For any content submitted to and published by *The Tech*, the creator of the corresponding work grants *The Tech* a royalty-free, irrevocable, and perpetual license to use, reproduce, modify, adapt, publish, and create derivative works from such content. All material submitted becomes property of *The Tech*.

*This issue of The Tech is sponsored by:
THE KNIGHT SCIENCE JOURNALISM PROGRAM @ MIT*

When universities suffer, everyone loses

Undergraduate Association (UA) President Alice Hall and former UA President Enoch Ellis argue that if “universities are starved of funding, the result will be catastrophic”

By Alice Hall and Enoch Ellis

The United States has long prided itself on being a nation of innovation. Until recently, our federal spending reflected this vision. The current administration is changing that.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) serves as a critical source of research funding across the nation. By providing grants to private companies, universities, hospitals, and other research institutions, the NIH has enabled life-changing and life-saving developments that extend far beyond the labs they fund.

Although it can be hard to predict how work in highly specialized labs ever makes it to the doors of the average American, everything from the ways we grow food to the ways we care for our aging parents has been improved by research funded by the NIH. While the end goal of some research is immediately clear, the significance of other projects may only emerge over time. Take well-known drugs such as Ozempic and synthetic insulin: without NIH support in early development stages — before substantial private capital got involved — these life-changing medications would not have been possible.

Recent shifts in government perspective have questioned the value of basic research across all scientific disciplines and brought an abrupt halt to important projects. Research to prevent strokes and heart disease: terminated. Work to further understand and prevent obesity: canceled. Efforts to save millions of Americans fighting against cancer: slashed. And with proposed 40% cuts, this is just the beginning.

In the past decade alone, NIH funding has generated almost \$800 billion in returns. According to a 2025 report, the \$36.94 billion awarded by the NIH to researchers across all 50 U.S. states and Washington, D.C. supported over 400,000 jobs. But now, this research is at risk. Despite seeing economic returns of \$2.56 for every dollar spent, chaotic efforts to cut inefficient government spending have put the NIH in the crosshairs.

We must understand that the economic and strategic leverage the U.S. enjoys today was not achieved by accident. It came from deliberate investment in research. If we become complacent, we will lose it. No matter what issues people may have with universities, there are better solutions that won't harm millions of Americans as collateral damage.

As MIT students, we've seen the impact our university has on the rest of the country. It's estimated that since 2014, MIT alumni have launched roughly 30,200 active companies that employ 4.6 million people and generate \$1.9 trillion in annual revenues. These benefits ripple through the economy, from small business owners in every state all the way to us as consumers. These returns help boost GDP and decrease the deficit, making them a worthwhile investment.

This story is not unique to MIT. In 2023, the Michigan University Research Corridor added over 81,000 jobs and contributed nearly \$24 billion to the state economy. The University of Alabama System is the state's largest employer with roughly 67,000 employees and an economic impact of \$18.6 billion annually. Over the 2019-2020 fiscal year, the University of South Florida generated \$14.07 in economic impact from every dollar of state funding.

It's these direct economic returns, coupled with the impacts of innovation, that have allowed America to be as dominant as we are. It's no surprise that the United States ranks first in global GDP and leads the world in many advanced technological sectors.

If our universities are starved of funding, the result will be catastrophic. Our innovation infrastructure will be devastated; our technological competitiveness with rivals like China will wane. Our nation's ability to respond to current issues such as declining birth rates or the obesity epidemic will be limited, and our ability to respond to any unprecedented future crises will be compromised. So we call on everyone to reject the notion that research is negotiable, because even though current research cuts are being drawn along partisan lines, their impact won't be.

At the time of writing, the White House has seemingly backpedaled in freezing over \$15 billion in NIH funding after initially putting a block on any new grants or grants up for renewal.

We must remind ourselves — and our leaders — that the level of innovation that safeguards American health, economic prosperity, and international influence is not guaranteed. Public and private colleges are united in opposition to these policies that will cripple the American enterprise, and we urge you to do the same. The question is not whether universities deserve support, but whether we can afford to forsake them.

OPINION POLICY

Management

The Opinion department is collectively managed by the Editorial Board of *The Tech*, which consists of the Publisher, Editor-in-Chief, Managing Editor, Executive Editor, and Opinion Editor.

Editorials

Editorials are the official opinion of *The Tech*. They are written by the Editorial Board.

Guest Submissions

A Guest Submission, which may be designated as either a Guest Column or a Letter to the Editor, may be written and submitted by any member of the MIT community.

Guest Columns express a particular opinion on campus-relevant matters;

and a Letter to the Editor is an open letter addressed directly to the “Editor,” in reference to a Guest Columns express a particular opinion on campus-relevant matters; and a Letter to the Editor is an open letter addressed directly to the “Editor,” in reference to a particular piece or set of pieces published.

Electronic submissions are encouraged and should be sent to tt-opinions@mit.edu. Hard copy submissions should be addressed to *The Tech*, P.O. Box 391529, Cambridge, Mass. 02139-7029, or sent by interdepartmental mail to Room W20-483. Electronic submissions will be prioritized over hard copy submissions. All submissions are due on Thursday two weeks before the date of publication (i.e. by the publication prior to the target publication).

Do you like **telling stories** about your life?

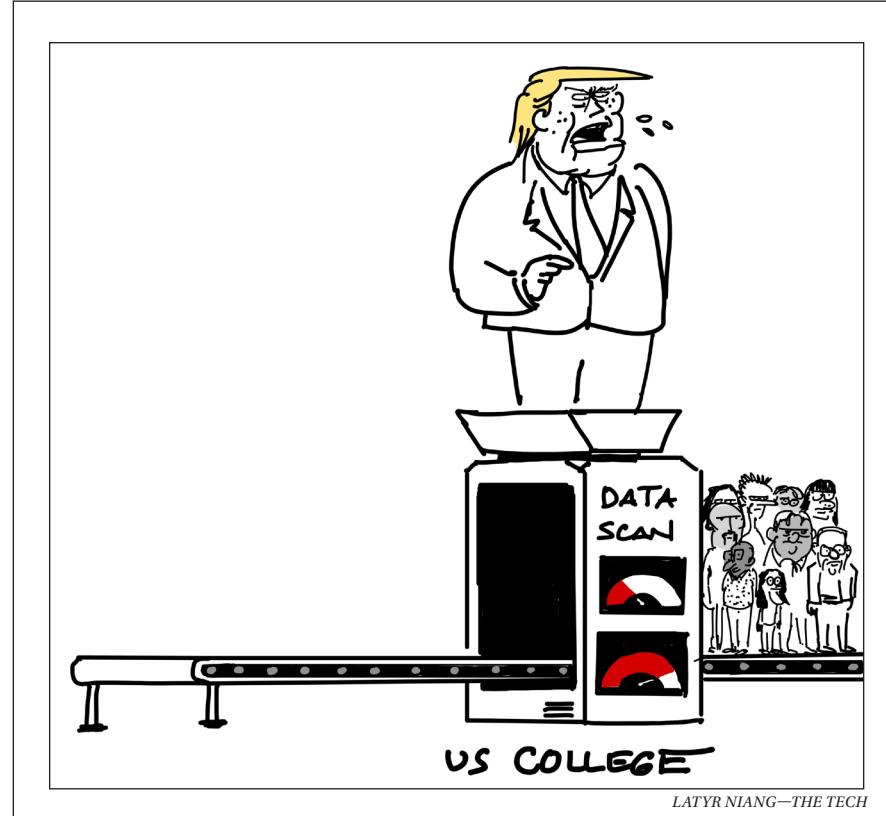


Are you dying to share your **latest discoveries**?



Join **Campus Life @ The Tech** and share your stories with our 15,000+ readers!

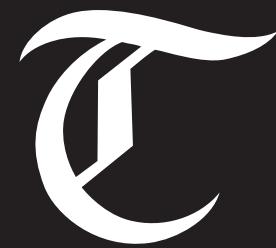
E-mail tt-join@mit.edu

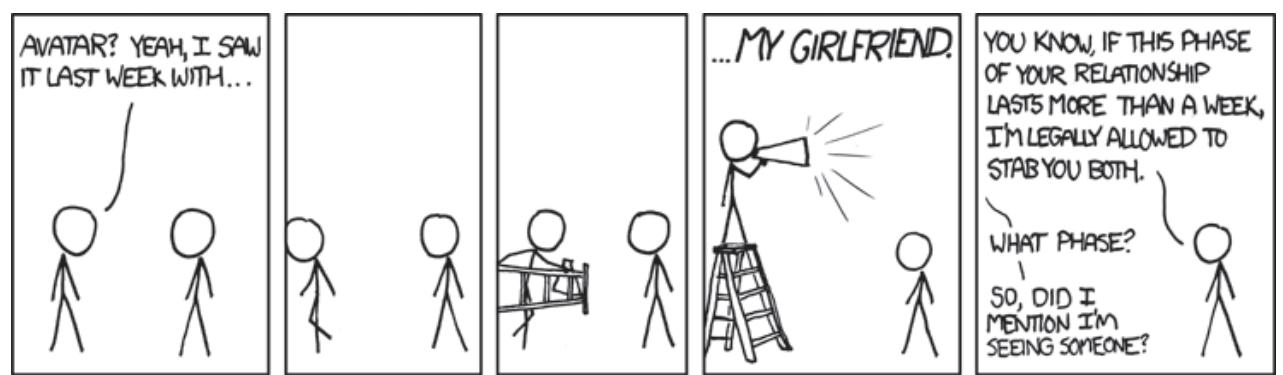


LATYR NIANG—THE TECH

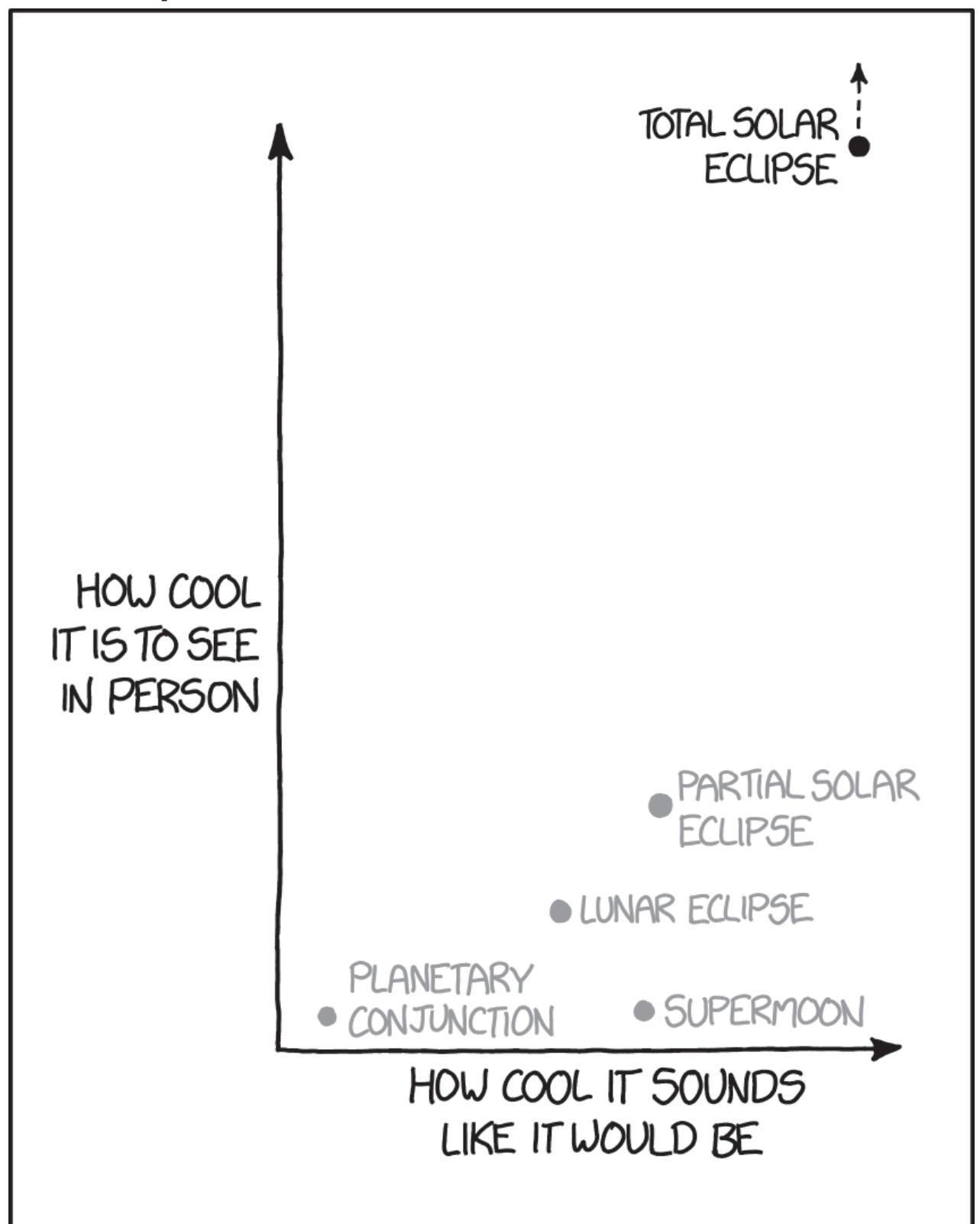
Have something to say?
Write **opinion** for *The Tech*!

tt-opinions@mit.edu

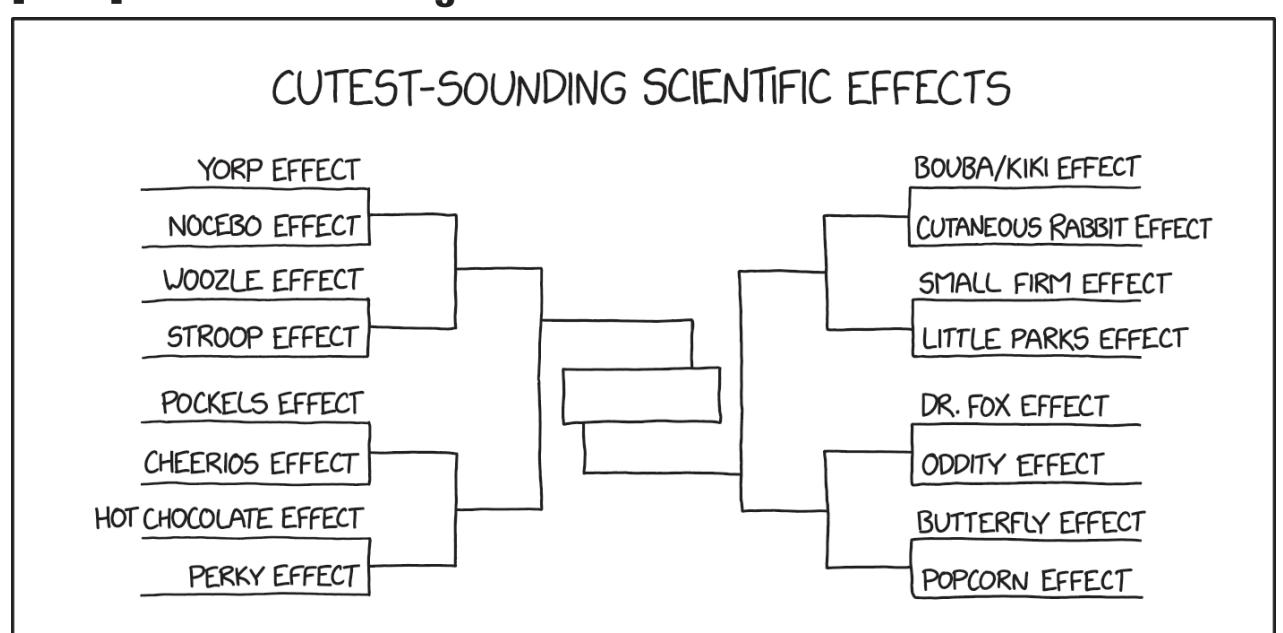


[684] We Get It

uh, don't know— Well, do you love her? ;;; Anyway, what were you saying about the movie? ;;; The most brutal way I've ever seen someone handle this was, 'Oh, you have a girlfriend. Are you going to get married?' ;;;

[1880] Eclipse Review

I watched from a beautiful nature reserve in central Missouri, and it was—without exaggeration—the coolest thing I've ever seen.

[2611] Cutest-Sounding Scientific Effects

he Stroop-YORP number of a scientific paper is how many of the 16 finalist names (sans effect) it manages to casually sneak into the text.