ANNUAL REPORT

2006/2007

FORUM AT MIT

THE TECHNOLOGY & CULTURE
Tuesday • September 19, 2006
REQUIEM ON THE ISRAEL-LEBANON WAR
Augustus Norton, International Relations; Anthropology, Boston University
Co-sponsored with the Emile Bustani Middle East Seminar and the Center for International Studies

Wednesday • September 20, 2006
TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL CHANGE IN NIGERIA
A Lunchtime Discussion
Chris Abani, Creative Writing, University of California; author of Becoming Abani
Co-sponsored with the MIT Office of the Arts

Friday • September 29, 2006
THE FIFTH ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FAIR
An annual event designed to showcase the many groups, projects and activities at MIT that provide students with an opportunity to work on issues related to international development.

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FUTURE SERIES
A THREE PART SERIES
Co-sponsored with the MIT Museum and the Energy Research Council

Wednesday • October 18, 2006
THE CHALLENGE: MEETING GLOBAL ENERGY DEMANDS SUSTAINABLY
Kerry Emanuel, Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Science, MIT
Ernest Moniz, Physics, MIT

Wednesday • October 25, 2006
THE ROLE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY ECONOMY
Dan Nocera, Chemistry, MIT
Angela Belcher, Materials Science and Engineering, Biological Engineering, MIT

Wednesday • November 1, 2006
GROWING PAINS: TRANSITIONING TO A SUSTAINABLE ENERGY POLICY
John Heywood, Mechanical Engineering; Director, Sloan Automotive Lab, MIT
Stephen Ansolabehere, Political Science, MIT

Thursday • November 2, 2006
TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL ISOLATION
Noboru Tsubaki, Director, Space Design Section, Kyotai University of Art and Design
Xaq Frohlich, Graduate Student, Science, Technology and Society, MIT
Amy McCreath, Coordinator, Technology and Culture Forum, Episcopal Chaplain, MIT
Co-sponsored with the MIT Office of the Arts

Tuesday • November 7, 2006
RETURN OF THE MIDDLE EAST COLD WAR: A VIEW FROM THE REGION’S NEW IDEOLOGICAL BATTLE FRONT
Rami G. Khouri, Syndicated Columnist; Director, Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut
Co-sponsored with the Emile Bustani Middle East Seminar and the Center for International Studies

Sunday • November 19, 2006
CLIMATE ACTION CONFERENCE
Co-sponsored and organized by the Massachusetts Climate Action Network

Wednesday • March 1, 2007
THE FUTURE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY
Allison Macfarlane, Environmental Science and Policy, George Mason University
Andrew Kadak, Nuclear Science and Engineering, MIT
Victor Reis, Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary, US Department of Energy

Wednesday • March 8, 2007
DIVERSE APPLICATIONS OF NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY
Ian Hutchinson, Nuclear Science and Engineering, MIT
Jeffrey Coderre, Nuclear Science and Engineering, MIT
Alan Jasanooff, McGovern Institute for Brain Research, MIT
Dwight Williams, Martin Luther King Visiting Professor of Nuclear Science and Engineering, MIT

Wednesday • March 15, 2007
CAN NUCLEAR ENERGY AND NON-PROLIFERATION CO-EXIST?
Matthew Bunn, Senior Research Associate, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University
Geoff Forden, Science, Technology and Global Security Working Group; Science, Technology and Society, MIT
Marvin Miller, Senior Scientist Emeritus, Center for International Studies, MIT

Tuesday • February 27, 2007
COUNTING THE DEAD IN IRAQ
Gilbert Burnham, Center for Refugee and Disaster Response, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
Co-sponsored with the Emile Bustani Middle East Seminar and the Center for International Studies

Tuesday • March 20, 2007
IRAN: WAR OR PEACE?
Kenneth Pollack, Director of Research, Saban Center for Middle East Policy
Co-sponsored with the Emile Bustani Middle East Seminar and the Center for International Studies

Monday • April 2, 2007
THE LUCIFER EFFECT: UNDERSTANDING HOW GOOD PEOPLE TURN EVIL
Philip Zimbardo, Professor Emeritus, Stanford University; author of The Lucifer Effect: Understanding Why Good People Turn Evil
Co-sponsored with the MIT Leadership Center and the Society for Terrorism Research

Thursday • April 26, 2007
CONTEMPLATION AND EDUCATION: TRAINING THE MIND: FROM STRESS TO BLISS
Robert Thurman, Je Tsong Khapa Professor of Buddhist Studies, Columbia University
Co-sponsored with MIT Prajnopaya

Saturday • May 19, 2007
YOUTH SUMMIT ON GLOBAL WARMING
Co-Sponsored with Boston Latin School Youth Climate Action Network with assistance from the MIT Energy Club
On any day during the academic year, you will find the walls of the Infinite Corridor filled with posters for exciting and wide-ranging events from lectures by biotech CEOs to world-premiers of plays, from Ted Kennedy to Margaret Cho, from beast roasts to Mahler. That is why I am always so touched when, as happens quite often, someone stops me in the hall to thank me for some recent TAC event. They are so glad to have come, they are thankful for what we do and their lives are richer for it.

After six years with TAC, I can see that we are not only affecting individual lives, but also helping to change the culture of MIT. Five years ago, when we contributed to the founding of the International Development Fair, finding people engaged in development-related projects at MIT was challenging, as was attracting a modest crowd of students curious about such work. Each year the IDF has grown, enrollment in development-related classes has increased, and MIT’s administration has increasingly focused attention on issues like appropriate technologies, global travel for students, global climate change and related research.
And while we remain the oldest and most comprehensive venue for discussing ethical issues at MIT, we are glad to no longer be the only venue for such conversation. Classes on ethical issues are cropping up in many departments. The Institute is looking for ways to build reflection on experience and conversation about values into the fabric of MIT life. Discussions about MIT’s responsibility to teach and speak about ethics in science and engineering are part of strategic planning at several levels within the Institute, and because of our 40+ year track record, we’re at the table. It is an exciting time, and it is a great pleasure to see the seeds planted by my predecessors, our steering committee and long-time supporters bear fruit in this way.

In 2006-07 we again covered a broad range of issues, but among the most popular and most appreciated programs were those that delved into difficult moral questions and the greatest threats of our time. The generation of students at MIT today grew up with reports from wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, code oranges, and headlines of corporate scandal. It is clear they are trying to find their moorings and make a positive difference. Hence their rapt attention to Joe Cirincione detailing the risks posed by government inaction on the nuclear threat, their appreciation for Philip Zimbardo’s insight into the systemic failings that led to the horrors of Abu Ghraib, their many questions for Chris Abani about how to combat human rights abuses, and their curiosity about Robert Thurman’s “science of the mind” as a discipline leading to the alleviation of suffering.

The Technology and Culture Forum is not simply a series of programs. It is a community of scholars and citizens who care deeply about the role of science and technology in bringing about positive change. Our success arises from the creative energy and elbow grease of our steering committee, our donors, our development team, and our program partners. My deepest thanks to all of them, especially Patricia Weinmann, whose dedication to our mission and great camaraderie are enormously helpful.

This year, TAC began mentoring a student club at the Boston Latin School. The club, BLS Youth Climate Action Network BLSYouthCAN <www.blsyouthcan.org>, began as a small group of students concerned about global warming. Over the winter, the club expanded to over 125 members and on May 19, BLSYouthCAN and TAC hosted a Youth Summit on Global Warming. More than 225 students from the metropolitan area enjoyed a day of facts and fun. Among the speakers were Mayor Thomas Menino, MIT’s Professor Kerry Emanuel and Linda Lopez, Director of Membership and Public Education for the Natural Resources Defense Council. Workshop leaders included MIT staff and administration and graduate students from MIT’s Energy Club.
This summer, I will be on sabbatical for three months, reflecting on and writing about the role of the university as a mentoring community. As I head off for this time of renewal, I am so very aware of how profoundly the TAC community continues to mentor me in so many ways. Chief among such mentors was long-time steering committee member Robert Mann, who could not have been more loyal to our work. His mental and moral tenacity drove forward many excellent programs through the years and his support was unwavering. This annual report is dedicated to his memory.

Amy McCreath
(The Rev.)

Dear Friends:

For 45 years the Technology and Culture Forum has been the MIT focus for connections among individual values, career interests, problems and opportunities at the intersection of technology, science and society, and moral and ethical issues. Its work engages students, faculty and staff. The vitality of this enterprise depends crucially on private financial support from alumni and friends. Please consider a gift this year for the Forum.

Thank you,
Paul E. Gray, President Emeritus

A SPECIAL THANKS to our
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The Technology and Culture Forum at MIT 2006-2007

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