

MIT COMPARATIVE MEDIA STUDIES

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December 2002

As you look through this newsletter, you will see continued evidence of the breadth of research being supported by the CMS program. There's so much exciting news here: the expanding role nonwestern media plays in our curriculum, the growing number of student-led research initiatives, the professional success of our alum. But, the big news is the approval of Comparative Media Studies as the first interdisciplinary major at MIT. We have all worked incredibly hard over the past decade and a half to build up the undergraduate program to reach this point. I especially want to signal here the important early (and continuing) role **David Thorburn** played in creating a media studies major. As the first director of what was then the Film and Media Studies Program, Thorburn had the vision and the determination to identify core Humanities faculty with an interest in media teaching, to spark new courses, to organize a coherent curriculum for the program, and to recruit a growing number of students. Nothing that has happened in CMS since could have happened without that important early work.

On other fronts, I will be going on leave next year, starting in February, and **William Uricchio** will be stepping in as Acting Director of the Program. This will be the first leave I've taken in more than a decade and I plan to be spending time hiding out in the North Georgia Mountains, working on a magnum opus intended to lay out in accessible prose the cultural significance of various forms of media convergence. It was a hard decision to miss even one moment in the life of this program, but I felt I could give more if I took some time out to refresh my thinking, restore my stamina, and regroup for the next phase of our development. We have an extraordinary team of faculty, staff, and students so I know I leave everything in very good hands. Thanks so much to all of you for the support you have given me in recent years. Looking forward to working with you again very soon.

— **Henry Jenkins**, Director

PEOPLE

HONORS

Wyn Kelly received an MIT Excellence Award in the category "Fostering an Inclusive Workplace." <web.mit.edu/hr/rewards/mitaward.html>

Emma Tang was awarded the Class of 1956 Career Development Chair.

FACULTY UPDATES

Peter Donaldson — In October, Peter provided a keynote address titled "Shakespeare: From Stage and Page to Global Media" for the National Meeting of Foreign Language Teaching at the University of Pennsylvania. In addition he has written articles/chapters on Shakespeare across Media appearing in many publications this year, including *Reel Shakespeare*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, and *Shakespeare after Mass Media*. He currently continues as Director of the Shakespeare Electronic Archive. Current projects include a collaboration with Microsoft under the iCampus Initiative aimed at creating a remote sharable text-video environment for study and discussion of Shakespeare films on-line.

Gilberte Furstenberg — Gilberte's notable speaking engagements for this past October included serving as a panel member of the Seventh Annual McGraw-Hill live Satellite Teleconference and Webcast on the topic of *Teaching culture in the digital millennium*, providing a lecture/presentation at the Berkeley Language Center, University of California at Berkeley on "*Redefining the teaching of culture : the pedagogy of electronic media*," and participating on a panel entitled "*Cultural Exchanges on the Web*" at the annual Consortium Conference on Language Teaching and Learning at The University of Pennsylvania. This year's meeting focused on "Foreign Language Collaborations and the Web."

Mark Lloyd — Mark has been teaching a graduate level seminar entitled Democratic Engagement and Communications Policy. Students have been learning about the political relationship citizens have with media -- focusing on local media and local connections. After a brief introduction to the structural relationship between democratic engagement and media (i.e. a discussion of the rationale behind the constitutional establishment of the post office, the first amendment, and local tax and zoning authority) students studied the local political connections, and then mapped (determined who owned what and what service did they provide) billboard companies, newspapers, broadcasters

(radio and television), cable operators, telephone companies, and Internet Service Providers. In this process they participated in a national town hall meeting on communications policy, met with officials at WGBH (radio, television, Internet), Cambridge Community Television, Cambridge Consumer Affairs Council, and the Massachusetts Assistant Attorney General in charge of Telecommunications. Students are now working on a class project to present a map of our local communications environment and make the connections between the environment and governing institutions.

William Uricchio — Multiple publications have made their way from the desk of William this fall. He and visiting scholar **Marja Roholl** co-authored "From New Deal Propaganda to National Vernacular: Pare Lorentz and the Construction of an American Public Culture" in *Triumph der Bilder: Kultur- und Dokumentarfilme vor 1945 im internationalen Vergleich*. He also added a chapter entitled "Coming to Terms with New York City's Moving Picture Operators, 1906-1913" in *The Moving Image* and another, "Old Media as new Media: Television" in *The New Media Book*. Uricchio also gave multiple lectures including "Cultural Citizenship in the Age of P2P Networks" in Berlin, Germany and "Cultural Industries/Cultural Participation" in Brisbane, Australia. Finally, he organized or participated in workshops in Lisbon, Amsterdam, and Berlin on media and European identity in relation to the European Science Foundation project entitled *Changing Media, Changing Europe*.

HELEN THOMAS EVENT — The CMS department was thrilled to welcome veteran journalist Helen Thomas for a special speaking engagement in Bartos Theater on November 4th. Voicing her opinions with great passion, Thomas offered the crowd of MIT students, staff, and faculty a lively and thoroughly engaging commentary on the current administration in Washington.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

THESIS TOPICS — Our second-year graduate students are rolling up their sleeves and digging into their thesis research. Here are the topics they are pursuing:

Stephanie Davenport — Stephanie is studying the cultural significance of a unique kind of cultural institution that she will define as 'artistic research and development' (AR&D) centers. She will focus on the Ars Electronica FutureLab as a case study, based on her summer 2002 internship experience at the Ars Electronica Festival (Linz, Austria).

Nadya Direkova — Nadya is working on a thesis project designing toys for children in bilingual families. Her goal is to create a story-telling doll that reflects the children's identity as people who grow up as agents using two languages and two cultural systems.

Wally Holland — Wally's thesis, as it currently stands, will examine games as spaces for imaginative engagement and learning; He is aiming to offer a framework for understanding the work of educators and students in terms of anthropological approaches to play, and literary-theoretic treatments of the reader as interactor/'player' in the game of the text. Essentially, He is cooking up an anthropology of *Games-to-Teach*.

Robin Hauck — Robin's thesis will be titled "Persistent Paradigms: Representations of Motherhood in American Popular Cinema, 1979-1989: An intertextual, socio-historic study of representations of motherhood through a decade of contradiction and conflict for women." Her paper might also have been titled: 'Hollywood vs. the Women's Movement', or 'Marginalized Madness: Mothers on the American Screen'. Her study will interrogate the persistence of restricting paradigms in the representation of motherhood and the failure of Hollywood to portray mothers' subjectivities.

Zhan Li — Zhan's thesis will compare the discursive construction/operation of the body/self in video games discourse with its construction/operation in Virtual Reality discourse and examine the significance for the relative cultural power of the two media across entertainment, military, medical usages.

Heather Miller — Heather's thesis will be "A Habituated Passion: The development of the discipline of reading in early modern England."

Zachary Nataf — Zachary's thesis work includes reviewing multimedia by and about the cultures of Australia's Warlpiri and of West Africans in Ghana and Mali to learn how the multimediality of these traditional oral cultures anticipated and map onto networked and interactive digital media storytelling.

Alice O'Driscoll — Alice's thesis will be titled "Discipline and Diagnose: Giftedness, Pathology and Ritalin - The Debate." Set against the backdrop of Michel Foucault's work, she will consider Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as one of several disorders (hysteria, schizophrenia) that are socially constructed and attributed to the human condition, when the human condition becomes extraordinary. Has this mental disorder (listed in the DSM IV) become acceptable, even desirable? How is it 'marketed'? How do those who resist Ritalin and the diagnosis talk about the categories of giftedness and genius? The window of 'normality' or 'health' has become so very narrow that it begs the question of whether we are all geniuses or learning disabled? Alice notes that she might need some Ritalin herself to help her focus on this exciting topic over the next 5 months. Wish her luck.

Aswin Punathambekar — "We Are Like This Only: Desis and Hindi Films in the Diaspora." Set in Boston, U.S.A, the overarching goal of Aswin's thesis is to develop a theoretical framework and a set of

analytical tools that might help us understand how Hindi films are watched in the Indian diaspora and what viewers, situated in particular historical, socio-political contexts, bring to bear upon their engagement with these films.

Sangita Shresthova — Sangita's thesis explores "dancing heroines" as a subset of the Indian (specifically Bombay) film dance tradition

Philip Tan — The working title for Philip's thesis is "Just Got Back From The Butcher Shop." He is poking around masses of digital and paper archives in an attempt to trace the evolution of live action role-playing game-development in MIT.

IAP PLANS — Our graduate students have a multitude of flights and activities booked for their January independent activities period. Here's a peek at some of their plans:

Robert J. Bain — R.J. will continue his research as part of the Games-to-Teach project. He is currently developing a conceptual prototype intended to serve as a tool in teaching Advanced Placement and College-level Introductory Psychology.

Stephanie Davenport — For the most part, Stephanie will focus on work for her thesis research, most likely making a trip to Linz, Austria to conduct interviews.

Nadya Direkova — As part of her thesis work, Nadya is planning to do some test work on toy prototypes and lead interviews with parents and teachers of bilingual children.

Michael Epstein — Michael Epstein will be in Cambridge, San Francisco, or Brazil. He plans to study Comics and play music with his new band, work on media literacy projects with LeapFrog, or digitize mural projects in Rio de Janeiro. In other words, his plans are still very much in the works.

Clara Fernandez — Clara will be attending two workshops-- Scott McCloud's on Comics, and Sony Imageworks' on Interactive Narrative Storytelling. She expects to also have time to finish editing her book on Vladimir Propp's theories applied to non-folktale topics. The rest of her activities are to be confirmed. However, she plans to enjoy IAP and to organize some film screenings at her place (please bring your own drink).

Cristobal Garcia — Cristobal will continue working on the design of a global politics game and also plans to continue his work on media literacy with fellow CMS graduate student, Neeti Gupta. The two will seek partners for *Unwired*, a research project whose aim is to empower youth in India and Chile as reporters and media producers via the distribution of pocket PCs.

Neeti Gupta — Neeti plans to attend the CMS-sponsored Sony Pictures Imageworks' workshop and participate in other exciting IAP events. With the

help of classmate Matthew Weise, she will continue developing her digital film project - "MIT International Students Spouses". This short digital film is being supported by MIT's Spouses and Partners group and International Students Office. She also will continue working with Cristobal Garcia on *Unwired*, a media literacy project entered MIT's \$50K entrepreneurship competition.

Robin Hauck — Robin will be in Cambridge for most of January, working on her thesis and doing research for the Beijing Film Academy Digital Archive Project. In mid-January she will travel to New York and Los Angeles to conduct research for the big T (thesis, that is). She will also attempt to attend a yoga class or two and learn how to cook Jamaican jerk chicken.

Moneta Ho — In early January, Moneta will be taking a trip to Spain. Having studied architecture as an undergraduate, she is especially excited to see the work of Antonio Gaudi in Barcelona as well as the new Guggenheim in Bilbao. Afterwards, she will be back at MIT as a participant in the workshop with Sony Pictures Imageworks. She will also continue her research work on interface and design and functionality in the MetaMedia project.

Wally Holland — Wally intends to balance the urge to do nothing but watch 'Buffy' over IAP with his more 'official' plans. Those involve furthering the fall semester work on Environmental Detectives; brainstorming and overseeing the development of new wireless apps; pounding out a chapter or two of his thesis; and sending off paper proposals that will hopefully force him to get into the habit of writing down his good ideas instead of just yelling them at Zhan.

Sarah Kamal — Sarah will be attending a workshop for the Mellon Project on Sahrawi and Afghani refugee adolescents and children to be held in Seville, Spain. She will then travel to Kabul, Afghanistan, to do some preliminary groundwork for her research and thesis on media reconstruction in Afghanistan.

Zhan Li — Zhan will be working exclusively on his thesis.

Susannah Mandel — Susannah plans to spend most of January in Cambridge though she hopes to travel to someplace warmer and noisier for a week. She is greatly looking forward to Scott McCloud's week-long course on the theory and practice of comics. She is also looking forward to bicycling in the snow.

Heather Miller — Heather will spend two weeks in her other homeland, Ireland. While there, she will meet Irish educators pioneering multimedia history for the classroom. They will discuss building bridges between their programs and the Young Historians Program (YHP) started by her and Shigeru Miyagawa earlier this year. Back in Cambridge, she will teach YHP at the Baldwin School and collaborate with Margeaux Randolph (Sloan '04) on a YHP module on

African American History. The rest of the time she looks forward to collaborating with the Tempest team and Micheal Boyd from the Royal Shakespeare Company.

Zachary Nataf — Zachary has curated and will present the Festival of International Transgender Film series screening over IAP. For details see <websis.mit.edu/iap/nswomenstud.html>.

Alice O'Driscoll — During IAP Alice plans to work on her thesis, meet Scott McCloud, and work on a co-authored article for "Games-to-Teach."

Aswin Punathambekar — Aswin will conduct fieldwork in Boston towards thesis and primary research for a book on media convergences by Henry Jenkins.

Sangita Shresthova — Sangita will counter the dark and dreary days of January with work on her thesis.

Philip Tan — Philip Tan will be writing and preparing for his 10-day live-action role-playing game with the MIT Assassins' Guild, Nanopunk: Tokyo. He will spend the rest of IAP recovering from that experience. Wish him luck, lend him pity, and give him chocolate. Oh, and his work is all relevant to his thesis, of course.

Matthew Weise — Matthew will be attending Scott McCloud's comics class as well as the Sony Imagework class. He hopes in between he'll find the time to play videogames.

Yannis Zavoleas — Yannis will participate in Scott McCloud's workshop.

CMS ALUMS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW? — Past students in the CMS undergraduate and graduate programs are now spread across the globe in a diverse range of careers and pursuits. Here's what some of our alums are up to now:

Jim Bizzocchi — Jim is now a Professor of Interactive Arts in the Computational and Design Sciences Program at Simon Fraser University. He currently has three research directions: emergent New Media aesthetics, New Media, New Learning, and visual design for large-scale high-res video display. He also teaches non-linear narrative, gaming, moving image, and reception analysis.

Candis Callison — Candis has continued on in academia and is now a doctoral student in the Program in Science, Technology, and Society at MIT. Her research interests remain media-related and centered on visual constructs -- specifically, GPS technology and data, scientific visualization, peer-to-peer networks, and social movements/political advocacy. Candis is also continuing to investigate issues raised during the course of completing her CMS master's thesis which looked at digital representations of the environment.

Kevin Johnson — Kevin is an Assistant Producer at Electronic Arts in Redwood City, CA and has just finished *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* (based on the New Line movie due in theaters in December) for Playstation 2. He is now helping finish the Xbox and Gamecube versions while also working on the *Return of the King* game.

Belinda de la Libertad (formerly Belinda Garcia) — Belinda is currently working with the Santa Ana Unified School District as the Communications Coordinator for the Public Information Office (comparable to the MIT News Office). She develops "news products" for print, broadcast, and web media that are regularly distributed to 40,000 families and 1,000 community leaders in the city of Santa Ana. Products range from reports on standardized testing to coverage of after-school programs and special events. Her goal is to improve the quality of K-12 education for all Santa Ana children by enhancing the communication between a largely non-English speaking parent population (40,000 strong) and the District faculty/administration. Basically, she keeps parents "in the know" using culturally appropriate media products.

David Spitz — David is a New York-based Senior Consultant with Deloitte Consulting (soon to be Braxton). His work has involved consulting to organizations across industries in the area of Content Management strategy, process and technology, with a particular focus on the Content & Media industry segment. Since July 2002, David has been responsible for managing Deloitte Consulting's strategic relationship with AOL Time Warner. He is currently preparing his MIT master's thesis "Contested Code(s): Toward a Social History of Napster" for publication in an information systems journal.

Phillip Tiongson — Phillip is finishing up his MFA in Film Directing at Columbia University. He is writing and directing his thesis film and hopes to shoot in March 2003. He also makes interactive art projects exhibited in various spots around New York City. And if you are in the city, stop by the Asia Society and Museum and check out the new lobby information system that he helped to design and build.

Qi Wang — Qi is currently enrolled in the PhD program in Critical Studies, Department of Film, Television and Digital Media, School of Theatre, Film and Television, UCLA. His professional goals are to become a film scholar and filmmaker.

Margaret Weigel — Margaret currently works as a Teaching Fellow at Harvard University's Visual and Environmental Studies department, writes essays for WBUR.org, and designs websites and multimedia materials, including the current CMS and NYC's American Theatre Wing team website collaboration.

Margaret Wong — Margaret is now working for MIT Web Communications Services (Information Systems) as a Web Consultant fulltime. She is also

pursuing a graphics design certificate at MassArt, and is aiming for the day she stops being a student and becomes a full time graphics/web designer.

IN THE CLASSROOM

CMS BECOMES FIRST INTERDISCIPLINARY MAJOR!!! — Effective Fall 2003, the undergraduate program in Comparative Media Studies has been approved as MIT's first interdisciplinary full Major (Course 21CMS). Founded in 1984 as Film & Media Studies, the undergraduate program initially offered students a concentration in FMS. In the early 1990s, a Minor and Major Department in Humanities (course 21) were implemented. In 1998, the graduate program in Comparative Media Studies was created, and the name of the undergraduate program was changed to Comparative Media Studies.

While still offering a large selection of courses in film studies, the focus of the program has shifted to encompass the study of media in the context of its from transhistorical and transmedia perspectives. Increasingly CMS courses are designed to teach students about the forms of media, as well as the text. CMS courses interrogate media by considering them broadly as representational systems and more narrowly through the production, reception and meanings of particular texts.

One of the biggest changes to the procedure of majoring in CMS is that students will no longer have to get approval for a major departure proposal; they can declare their CMS major directly. In the process of creating the full major, the program has crafted new requirements for students. The full major requires 21L.011 the Film Experience, 21L.015 Introduction to Media Studies; and a capstone course chosen from one of the following: 21L.706 Studies in Film, 21F.015 International Studies in Media; or 21L.715 Media in a Cultural Context. In addition to the three required courses, students must take seven electives, one of which must be an advanced-level course.

First proposed in 1998, the full major has finally become a reality for CMS!

IAP 2003 COURSES AND ACTIVITIES — A wide variety of courses sponsored by CMS are available this IAP— <<http://websis.mit.edu/iap/nscms.html>>. Highlights from the selection include:

Comics 2003—A Fast-Changing Landscape

Wed Jan 15, 7-9pm, Room 10-250

Cartoonist **Scott McCloud** discusses recent developments in comics and graphic novels and the recently accelerated evolution of comics on the Web.

Comics: Theory and Practice

Mon Jan 13 thru Fri Jan 17, 9am-4pm, 1-135

Scott McCloud presents a visual lecture and intensive hands-on workshop in the art of making comics. Strong emphasis will be given to developing

clarity, storytelling skills and personal expression. Students will learn and apply a variety of techniques for presenting narratives through comics, as well as a wide arsenal of skills applicable to any form of graphic communication. The course culminates in the creation of original comics short features, written and drawn by each student.

Storytelling and Games in the Digital Age

Mon Jan 20 thru Fri Jan 24, 9am-5pm, 56-114

Student teams develop story concepts for various media, including motion picture visual effects and computer games. Sponsored by MIT Comparative Media Studies (CMS) and Sony Pictures Imageworks (SPI), this non-technical activity focuses on the theoretical, historical, cultural, social, and aesthetic elements of interactive narrative and game structures. Morning lectures explore linear and non-linear storytelling across media, audio-visual elements, game theory, and techniques to increase the depth of interactive console games and enhance storytelling. Afternoons run as workshops where participants collaborate in teams to design interactive story scenarios to be presented during a final session on Friday afternoon.

NEW COURSE OFFERINGS: SPRING 2003

Indian Popular Culture (21F.011)

Thursday, 7-10pm

Arundhati Banerjee's course aims to provide an overview of Indian popular culture over the last two decades, through a variety of material such as popular fiction, music, television and Bombay cinema. The class will explore major themes and their representations in relation to current social and political issues. In particular, students will examine the elements of the formulaic "masala movie", music and melodrama, the ideas of nostalgia and incumbent change in youth culture, as well as shifting questions of gender and sexuality in popular fiction. During the course, students will look at some journalistic writing, advertising clips and political cartoons to understand the relation between the popular culture and the social imagery of a nation. Taught in English

Visualizing Cultures (21F.027 / CMS.874)

Tuesday, 7-10pm

John Dower and **Shigeru Miyagawa's** course will include extensive reading and discussion of how visual images impose a variety of identities on individuals and societies. Case studies drawn primarily from the Pacific region, and include: identities of individuals in a society; identities of a country through history; us/them in times of war; and identities of an entire geographic region of the world (Orient/Occident). All types of visual images from both popular and high cultures are discussed.

Topics in the Avant-garde and Literature and Cinema: Avant-garde and Kulturindustrie (21F.031)

Tuesday, 7-10pm

This course, taught by **Charity Scribner**, begins by

examining the terms "avant-garde" and "Kulturindustrie" in French and German culture of the early twentieth century. Considering the origins of these concepts in surrealist and dadaist literature, art, and cinema, the course then expands to engage parallel formations across Europe, particularly in the former Soviet Union. Guiding questions are these: What connections between art and revolution did avant-garde writers and artists imagine? What strategies did they deploy to meet their modernist imperatives? To what extent did their projects maintain a critical stance towards the culture industry? Surveying key interventions in the fields of poetry, painting, sculpture, photography, film, and music, the readings also include signal moments in critical thought of the last century.

Topics in Culture and Globalization: Consumer Activism, the Internet, and the Asian Perspective (21F.035)

Wednesday, 7-10pm

The concept of globalization fosters the understanding of the interconnectedness of cultures and societies geographically wide apart; America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. **Ian Condry's** course will scan existing debates over globalization in four continents. It will explore how globalization impacts everyday life in the First and Third World; how globalization leads to a common cosmopolitan culture; the emergence of a global youth culture; and religious, social, and political movements that challenge globalization. Materials examined will include pop music, advertisements, film posters, and political cartoons.

J-Pop: Japanese Popular Culture (21F.039)

Monday and Wednesday, 10-11:30am

Ian Condry's other course will examine Japanese popular culture as a way of understanding the changing character of media, capitalism, fan communities and culture. Topics will include manga (comic books), hip-hop and other popular music in Japan, anime (Japanese animated films) and feature films, sports (sumo, soccer, baseball), and online communication. Emphasis will be on contemporary popular culture and theories of gender, sexuality, race, and the workings of power in global culture industries. Each student will be expected to present analysis of the course materials during in-class discussions and to develop a final project based on a particular aspect of J-Pop. Several films will be screened outside of regular class meeting times. No prerequisites.

Race and Identity: "Transnational US-Asian Culture" (21L.504)

Monday and Wednesday, 3:30-5pm

Christina Klein will instruct an experimental class being taught in tandem with an identical class at National Chengchi University in Taiwan. Developed jointly by the instructors at these two institutions, this class investigates the dynamic processes of cultural flows between the US and Asia as they are imagined and explored in contemporary expressive forms such as literature, film, and music. MIT

students will engage in regular discussion, via the Internet, with students in Taiwan.

Media in Cultural context: A Political History of U.S. Communications Policy (21L.715 /CMS.871)

Monday and Wednesday, 3:30-5pm

Mark Lloyd will present a survey of major U.S. communications policy developments and the political times in which they occurred. Beginning with the postal service and ending with the Internet, the course will examine American political thought and its influence on the media and communications services. The course will lean heavily on Ithiel de Sola Pool's book *Technologies of Freedom* but I will borrow from a variety of other writers and my own research and analysis of this subject. It will end with a discussion of the practical implications of current communication policy problems and proposals and how they are influenced by current dominant political thought.

RESEARCH

GAMES-TO-TEACH — This fall, the Games-to-Teach Project continued its work exploring the potential of "next-generation" educational games. Led by director **Kurt Squire**, the group brought several new students on board and began working on five game concepts in the Humanities and Social Sciences. These game concepts include:

1) **Revolution**: A multiplayer game set during the American War for Independence developed in conjunction with MIT Historian **Pauline Maier** and Colonial Williamsburg.

2) **Hola!**: An action role-playing game (designed with MIT Faculty **Douglas Morgenstern**) where the player, a photojournalist travels to exotic foreign lands to photograph fashion models, uncover political espionage, or document the romance of the tango.

3) **Sole Survivor**: A real time adventure strategy game where the player has been abducted by aliens and using psychological principles must train an army of "prototypes" to overturn the ship. Being developed with input from **Steven Pinker**, **Bruce Blumberg** and **Jeremy Wolfe** at MIT.

4) **Dreamtime**: A multiplayer simulation construction game where players enter Aboriginal Dreamtime and learn about Aboriginal culture through participating in the creation of Aboriginal art.

5) **System Thinker Toolkit**: A multiplayer collaboration toy where players develop systemic models of entertainment games, learning the principles of systems dynamics in the process. Developed in conjunction with **Peter Senge**.

Philip Tan and his team of UROPs have continued development on **Supercharged**, and it is approaching an Alpha release. This fall, the team

brought **Yannis Zavoleas** on board as art director, and he has begun redefining the look and feel of the game, adjusting the back story as appropriate. The team development added magnetic fields to the simulation as well as power-ups and data reporting mechanisms to give teachers feedback on students' work. After initial usability testing, the team also overhauled the control scheme, the level design, and has identified a list of new features to help players locate themselves in the game space.

This fall, **Walter Holland** and UROP **Kodjo Hesse** ran the first usability test and implementation of ***Environmental Detectives***, a Pocket PC simulation game for use in environmental science classes. A group of seven Terrascope students played the game on a windy, rainy Saturday afternoon, providing excellent feedback on the game design. Students enjoyed the hydrology simulation portion of the game, but were really taken by the idea of augmented reality gaming. They wanted even more characterization and location-based events, such as races through virtual spaces or location-based puzzles. We are bringing a new team of UROPs on to flesh out these features over IAP and will test the game in several MIT classes in the spring.

META-MEDIA — In its second year, the MetaMedia project has begun to develop several new expandable media archives, including the History of Comics, Royal Shakespeare Company Performances, the History of the Beijing Film Academy, an American Dance Archive, as well as several foreign language and culture projects. At the same time, the MetaMedia team has expanded existing media modules to include more media documents and significantly enhanced the underlying technical framework to allow user collaboration and sharing of materials within and across the archives. The MetaMedia project has been presented at several conferences and workshops in the US and Europe.

The MetaMedia Framework: The technical framework has been significantly enhanced to accommodate a growing list of expandable archives and to allow users – students as well as faculty – to share comments and interpretations, and to collaborate on the construction of new archives or extensions to existing ones. New modular user interfaces are being implemented to provide flexible access to the archives and a range of tools for annotation and sharing. Presentations of the MetaMedia framework and its content modules at a conference at the University of Pennsylvania, at the Fraunhofer Institute in Germany, and Berkeley University have initiated new joint projects. At the same time, the MetaMedia team has expanded its contacts with the DSpace project, the OKI initiative at MIT, the WorldWideWeb Consortium, and the Apache Open Source community.

Current MetaMedia Project Modules include:

1) **American Authors:** The module that originally included materials on Melville's *Moby-Dick* has been significantly enhanced by **Wyn Kelley** to include

media documents on novels by Tony Morrison and Harriet Beecher Stowe. More authors will be added in the spring of 2003.

2) **American Dance Archive: Tommy de Frantz's** new project allows students to analyze historic dance performances from multiple perspectives and varying degrees of detail. Original scores and commentaries enrich the video recordings in the archive.

3) **Beijing Film Academy:** Still in its conceptual stage, the project aims to document the rich history of the Beijing Film Academy and the artistic influence of its graduates on Chinese and International Film. The project is a collaboration between CMS, the Beijing Film Academy, Harvard Film Archive, and international experts on Chinese film.

4) **Berliner sehen Exchange:** This project is an extension to the Berliner sehen project by **Ellen Crocker** and **Kurt Fendt**. It allows educators who have adopted the Berliner sehen Hypermedia Documentary for their German Studies courses to exchange and discuss relevant curricular documents such as assignments, syllabi, student texts, and classroom recordings. The Exchange currently includes faculty from Harvard, Cornell, Vassar, Williams, and MIT.

5) **Cultura:** This project by **Gilberte Furstenberg** fosters the awareness of the subtle differences between the French and the American cultures and engages students on both sides of the Atlantic in a dialogue to gain a deeper understanding of each other's cultures. This project is currently being ported to the MetaMedia framework.

6) **Declaration of Independence:** Work has begun on documenting the process and influences that lead to the Declaration of Independence. This project by **Pauline Maier** allows students to experience this important document within its rich historical context.

7) **History of Comics:** This new media archive by **Henry Jenkins** documents the history of comics as an art form rooted both in popular culture and 'high art'. The project invites formal and content-based analysis by allowing students and researchers to add their own comments and write multimedia essays. Christopher Capozzola has agreed to add content from a social historian's perspective and will be testing the archive with his students in the Spring Term.

8) **MITUPV Archive:** Fostering the exchange between students on all aspects of Academic life at the technical University in Valencia, Spain and MIT, this ongoing project by **Douglas Morgenstern** already contains hundreds of student filmed materials. The MetaMedia project currently builds an archive of this project that allows students of the current semester to compare their contributions to those of other students in previous semesters.

9) **Royal Shakespeare Performance Archives:** This project is a collaboration with the Royal

Shakespeare Company in England and aims to document the process of putting Shakespeare performances on stage by capturing different stages of the production as well as all relevant documents that shape the performance. A model archive is being built on the basis of **Janet Sonnenberg's** production of Hamlet at MIT.

GLOBALIZATION AND CONVERGENCE — Research in the Globalization and Convergence group has progressed rapidly this fall, with multiple efforts nearing a stage of fruition. Graduate student **Michael Epstein** is currently writing a white paper on media literacy mapping the various communal, academic, and industry efforts around this subject. The paper culls video interviews with MIT, Harvard, and secondary school theorists and practitioners in the field of media literacy. A website featuring these video interviews and excerpts from the white paper is also in progress.

Meanwhile, fellow graduate student **Sarah Kamal's** draft paper on groundwater management policy in Canada has been well received, and has now entered an iterative review and edit mode with specialists at the University of Waterloo, Ontario. Working with **Chap Lawson** and funded by MIT's Center for International Studies, she has also made great strides on her quantitative research on rally effects. Finally, her involvement with an ethnographic study of adolescent Afghan refugees in Iran and media reconstruction (developing a community radio station) in Afghanistan will begin in earnest over IAP.

Stephanie Davenport is working with Orangelmagineering, the research and development division of one of the leading European mobile operators, to locate partnership opportunities with large US-based retail sportswear and electronics manufacturers in the area of wearable computing.

Aswin Punathambekar is conducting primary research for a book authored by **Henry Jenkins**. His work includes extensive research on various aspects of media convergence, including mapping key discussions and debates concerning the technological, economic, social, aesthetic, grassroots and global dimensions of media change.

Finally, **Sangita Shresthova** has continued to forward the partnership between CMS and Initiative Media to develop a model for determining the role and value of advertising in an age of media convergence. **Brian Theisen, Alex Chisholm,** and **Henry Jenkins** round out the CMS side of the collaboration.

YOUNG HISTORIANS PROGRAM — This Fall, graduate student **Heather Miller** has continued her work with the Young Historians Program, teaching to seventh and eighth graders at the Baldwin School, a Cambridge public school. Young Historians continue to use the Computer Clubhouse at the Museum of Science as their laboratory. Undergraduate **Ray Vichot** is YHP's UROP and works with Heather on

curriculum building. New to YHP are Sloan major, **Margeaux Randolph** and CMS graduate student **Neeti Gupta**, both of whom plan to open YHP summer programs in New Orleans and Seattle respectively. Heather Miller has been working with UNDP-China to involve YHP as the education component of poverty alleviation through Artisan Development program. This Asian YHP site would open in the summer of 2004.

ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY — **Bryan Arbuszewski, Alex Chisholm, Neeti Gupta, Henry Jenkins,** and **Heather Miller** have spent the semester developing the concept for a computer and video game inspired by *The Tempest*; their work with **Michael Boyd** and **Tom Piper** at the RSC will result in a plan on how to further implement the game come spring; a discussion to review the concept will be scheduled in January when Boyd and Piper are expected to be at MIT for a week. **Janet Sonenberg** and **Alex Chisholm** spent a long weekend in November interviewing RSC collaborators in London and Stratford-upon-Avon, gathering material for Sonenberg's February production of (*a deconstructed*) *Hamlet*; Michael Boyd will be in residence at MIT for a week to work Sonenberg and her cast during IAP. **Peter Donaldson** and **Claire Venables**, RSC Education Director, have begun talking about developing a "multimedia dramaturgical" tool for use in the development of the RSC's production of *Richard III* next year.

PALIMPSEST IN FLUX — CMS graduate student **Yannis Zavoleas**, fellow MIT students **Lydia Kallipoliti, Alexandros Tsamis,** and **Alexandra Sinistera,** and MIT professor **John Fernandez** collaborated on a project on ephemeral structures for the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens as part of an international architectural competition. They are developing a physical structure which is highly responsive to the movement of visitors; walls inflate or deflate and their thermochromic coverings change color according to the flow of activities, encouraging a game-like exploration of urban space.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEDIA IN TRANSITION 3: TELEVISION — CMS will host its third Media in Transition conference April 18-20, 2003. This year's topic centers on television's political and cultural role at the dawn of our new millennium. It will aim to ask bold and clear questions, and to start to answer them in light of the medium's 75-year history as well as the emerging scholarship on this most powerful of communications systems. What is the role of television in specific societies or regions today? How is this role changing? What part are digital technologies and new systems of communication playing in this transition? What are the likely outcomes of present trends? What are the darkest possibilities? What does the history of television in diverse countries and regions tell us about its possible futures? The full program and registration details may be found at: <<http://web.mit.edu/mit3>>.

ONGOING RESOURCES

CMS WEB SITE — The CMS web site is located at <<http://web.mit.edu/cms>>. Please let us know if you'd like to see your work linked from the site, especially new courses and new research projects. Suggestions should be sent to <cms-webmaster@mit.edu>.

NEW UNDERGRADUATE CMS WEB SITE! — The undergraduate web site has been redesigned to reflect the style and navigation of the overall CMS website. The new undergraduate site can be found at <<http://web.mit.edu/cms/ugrad>>. Spring 2003 course listings and updated student and faculty lists are now available. Check it out!

CMS-RESEARCH@MIT.EDU — Members of CMS's three research labs post weekly updates of their projects, guest speakers, and research summaries to this mailing list, which includes a diverse group of recipients here at MIT and beyond. The goal is to keep people informed of ongoing activities in the labs and encourage participation in weekly conversations. Traffic is limited and usually amounts to three or four messages each week during the academic year. If you would like to be added to the list, please send a message to <cms@mit.edu>.

*Compiled and Edited by
Brian Theisen, 12 December 2002*