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## MacArthur Foundation Funds New Media Literacies Project

**C**MS has won a \$500,000 award from the John T. and Catherine D. MacArthur Foundation to finance a research initiative to explore the fundamentals of new media literacy – how to define it, how to implement it, and how to sustain it.

Total funding could reach the two million dollar mark once the project moves to its second phase, the development and testing of a new media literacy curriculum.

The New Media Literacies (NML) project is a partnership between MIT, University of Chicago's Center for Urban School Improvement led by Nichole Pinkard, and independent contractor Kristina Woolsey. It is aimed at developing a theoretical framework and curriculum for K-12 learners that integrates new media tools into broader educational, expressive and ethical frameworks.

The NML management team is comprised of CMS Director **Henry Jenkins**, project manager **Margaret Weigel** (CMS alum 02), and MacArthur Program Officer **Connie Yowell** along with Pinkard and Woolsey. They are currently crafting

an outline of the project that will become the primary guidelines for future digital literacy projects funded by MacArthur.

Phase I, the year-long planning phase that began April 1, includes the development of the guidelines, the creation of a community-oriented website, the establishment of an external advisory board, the development of a number of field-tested curricular possibilities, and a comprehensive review of existing new media literacy work.

### Phase II begins in spring

Phase II is scheduled to start April 2006 and continue for three years. This will allow the team to further substantiate, refine and test the project's working assumptions and curricular prototypes. By the end of Phase II, a number of new media curricular materials will be ready for use in both classroom and after-school program settings.

The NML project is also reaching out to a diverse group of educators,  
*continued on page 11*

## CMS and MIT Communications Forum Partner with Taiwan's Kainan University

**S**pecial students and visiting scholars from Kainan University, Taiwan, will join the MIT community beginning in January 2006.

The Asian visitors will be part of a collaboration between Kainan and CMS and the MIT Communications Forum. The partnership aims to fortify and extend the multicultural interests of both the Forum and CMS by adding a Taiwanese perspective to ongoing teaching, scholarship and public forums centered on Asian media and cultures.

**David Thorburn**, director of the Communications Forum, conceived the partnership during a visit to Taiwan in March, where he

gave lectures on new media and met Michael Tang, president of Kainan University. He returned to Taiwan in August to sign a Memorandum of Understanding between MIT and the Taiwan institution.

The collaboration will bring four students and two Kainan faculty members to MIT each year. The  
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Michael Tang, President of Kainan University, presents a commemorative plaque to Communications Forum Director David Thorburn at the August 4, 2005 ceremony in Taiwan inaugurating the MIT-Kainan partnership.

directors' column

## New People Fuel New Ambitions at CMS this Fall

By Henry Jenkins and William Uricchio, CMS Directors

In the academic scheme of things, the ritual of Labor Day usually marks the arrival of a new class.

This year, it's nearly a clean sweep: new students, new staff, new management structure, new projects, and of course, new ambitions. The class of 2007, our largest to date, is profiled in this issue of *IMR*, as are our new visiting scholars and our staff.

The range of backgrounds, expertise and interests across the entire group continues to assure that we stay on target with our commitment to thinking across media, cultures, historical periods, and methodologies. With interests that range from digital storytelling and video games as educational platforms, to amusement parks as interactive narratives, to ethnographies of television wrestling, to the construction of non-fiction in the Chinese film industry, the members of the new class perfectly compliment the returning class of 2006 and the wide-ranging expertise of our faculty.

After our tragic loss of **Chris Pomiecko** last February, we are finally back to a complete staff. **Sarah Wolozin**, our new program administrator, comes to us with a highly de-



Henry Jenkins and William Uricchio

veloped (and deeply appreciated) background in chaos management, combined with media expertise, thanks to her years as a documentary producer. **Gene Fierro's** sharply honed taste for eclectic music, film, literature, and various collectables has found a perfect match with CMS, where he'll be working as undergraduate coordinator. **Jenna Anstey's** background in graphic design together with her knack for languages (try her Afrikaans!) means that we have won far more than an administrative assistant. And **David Edery's** long-term involvement with CMS game ventures together with his newly minted Sloan MBA combine to equal a new communications and development officer armed and ready for one of the tougher games out there

— garnering media attention and project support for the program.

Our alum have also proven to be an invaluable asset in the ongoing operation of the program. Over the summer, we reorganized the management structure of our various research initiatives in order more effectively to handle the mercurial developments on that front. **Brett Camper's** competencies as a gamer and designer are matched only by his coolness as a manager. Both skill sets are helping to guide the work in the Educational Arcade. **Parmesh Shahani's** boundless enthusiasm for trend tracking and creating a social buzz has found an appropriate outlet in the Convergence Culture Consortium (C3) project that he manages. And **Margaret Weigel's** wry sense of humor and impressive design skills are keeping the New Media Literacies project (and its new website) on track as this MacArthur-funded initiative takes form.

The funding situation for these projects remains dynamic as the significant grants from MacArthur and Maryland Public Television attest, but we continue to seek long-term support for our various research activities.

CMS faculty and students continue to be well represented in international conferences, internships, and research projects, while Germany is particularly well represented in the latest wave of CMS visiting scholars. The Communications Forum's new relationship with Kainan University in Taiwan together with our faculty and visiting scholar activities in China and Japan assure increased activity in Asia.

We always look forward to an exciting year, but this year's mix of new people, perspectives, and opportunities promises to be particularly dynamic.

### Education Arcade To Collaborate with Maryland Public Television and Johns Hopkins University

In Spring 2006, the Education Arcade will launch an important new partnership — the Learning Games to Go (LGG) Project in collaboration with Maryland Public Television and the Center for Technology at Johns Hopkins.

LGG will be built from the ground up as a set of four online games, each having components that are usable on mobile technologies, including PDAs, cell phones, GIS technology, and virtual reality equipment. Targeting middle school students, the games will provide embedded supports and guidance for struggling readers to ensure that all students acquire the expected mathematics content knowledge and increase their ability to read for information.

The project was recently awarded a multiyear grant as part of the Federal Star Schools program. This news came as the newsletter was going to press so we will provide fuller information in the next issue.

incoming

## Comparative Media Welcomes New Graduate Students

### Ivan Askwith

*NYU, BA Gallatin School 2003*

Studying in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, Askwith was able to put together a curriculum focused on cutting-edge issues in technoculture, looking especially at the impact of new media on cultural production and online communities. He has published extensively as a freelance journalist, writing on issues related to media convergence for *Salon*, MSNBC, and Air Europe. Askwith worked as a research assistant to Steven Johnson, author of *Emergence* and *Everything Bad Is Good For You*, who will speak at a Communications Forum on October 6.

### Alexander Austin

*Reed College BA Mathematics 2001*

Austin attended the prestigious Clarion Science Fiction Writer's Workshop and has published critical essays and reviews in the *New York Review of Science Fiction* and *Strangehorizons.com*. He has a strong interest in political communication and in the ways political campaigns are taking advantage of the changing political landscape, the manner by which blogs function to shape political opinion, and the ways that entertainment programs and video games are taking on functions that were once the exclusive domain of news.

### Tracy Daniels

*Pratt Institute BA Fashion*

*Merchandizing and Marketing 1989*

Daniels has more than 12 years of experience in public relations, marketing, event planning and project management, as well as in production and postproduction work with such New York studios as Big Apple, Kaufman Astoria, Lifetime and Silvercup. Daniels has taken a range of CMS subjects while working in the Office of the President and at the MIT Media Lab. She is currently working on a documentary about a local artist who paints portraits of children lost in the Nazi concentration camps.

### Kristina Drzaic

*Notre Dame BA Film, Television and Theater 2005*

As a student at Notre Dame, Drzaic tried her hand at a range of different forms of media production including film and video, troubleshooting for the university's Information Technology Services, DJing for the student radio station, and performing with the Koraci Croatia Folklore Ensemble. What draws Drzaic to CMS is a strong interest in working with the Education Arcade.



**Graduate student Amanda Finkelberg worked as a visual effects artist on such big-budget films as *Spiderman 2* before joining CMS this fall.**

### Amanda Finkelberg

*Pomona College BA Media Arts/Political Science 1996*

Finkelberg has worked as a visual effects artist for such films as *The Manchurian Candidate*, *I Robot*, *Spiderman 2*, *Star Wars Episode II*, and *The Matrix Reloaded*. In 2004, she started her own 2D effects company, Rig-Out, which specialized in erasing wires, rigs, and other background details. She has a strong interest in media literacy and she has been doing media education projects with men in a parole recovery center in downtown Los Angeles.

### Samuel Ford

*Western Kentucky University  
BA Journalism 2005*

Ford has a long-standing interest in Appalachian and Southern culture, in-

cluding Bluegrass music and especially professional wrestling. As an undergraduate, he created a comprehensive bibliography of scholarly and journalistic work on wrestling including ethnographic interviews with wrestling fans and performers for an essay he is now revising for publication in the *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*.

### Neal Grigsby

*University of California at Berkeley BA Film Studies 1998*

For the past six years, Grigsby has worked as an "ontologist" (and entertainment editor) at LookSmart, an Internet directory, where his daily tasks involved formalizing the relationships between pure concepts and popular apprehensions as they regard media. In fact, his core interests seem well described by the more philosophical definition of ontology, that is, with a concern for the essential nature of being.

### Rena Huang

*Wuhan University BA English 1995*

*Foreign Affairs College*

*BA Diplomacy 1997*

After her undergraduate training, Huang won a highly competitive position as a researcher working on regional security issues in the Asia Pacific for the China Center for International Studies of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, where she edited the in-house journal and authored a monthly review of world events. She has also worked as the Manager of Strategic Development for the Haiyun Cultural Development Company, which produces and distributes television documentaries for global circulation.

### Orit Kuritsky

*Tel Aviv University*

*Literature / Humanities 1993*

Kuritsky has worked in television and radio production for the better part of the last decade. In Israel, she was the content editor of a children's series focused on electronic games, and the producer of a documentary focused on children's

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## New Staff Settling into Comparative Media Gigs and Digs



**Jenna Anstey** is the new administrative assistant for CMS and will be handling Henry and William's schedules and helping out in the office as needed. She has a professional background in marketing and design with a focus on corporate clients. Though self taught as a graphic designer, she's been trained in classical animation, illustration and fine art. Anstey has worked in many different environments including accounting firms and airports.



**David Edery** is the new development and communications officer for CMS. Edery recently graduated from the Sloan School of Management with his MBA. During his time at Sloan, he worked informally with CMS on a number of initiatives, and was project manager of Cyclescore,

which fuses video games and exercise equipment. He will be responsible for creating and maintaining external and internal partnerships to support the growth of CMS. In addition, he will assist Henry Jenkins in operationalizing CMS research initiatives.



**Generoso "Gene" Fierro** is the new undergraduate administrator. He previously worked in a financial capacity at the Center for Materials Science and Engineering, and is a station manager at the campus radio station WMBR where he DJs the show "Generoso's Bovine Ska and Rocksteady," featuring music of Jamaica prior to reggae (1955-1969). The show has been on the air since 1997. A filmmaker and avid film fan, Fierro is working on a documentary of the San Francisco band Deerhoof.



**Sarah Wolozin** is the new program administrator and will be handling the financial and grant administration for CMS as well as administering the graduate program. She has a documentary film background and just spent the last ten years on the freelance documentary film circuit here in Boston. She has produced documentaries for PBS and cable on a wide range of topics from African-American arts to American healthcare. She looks forward to using her producing skills to administer the CMS program and help take it to the next level.

### New Graduate Students from page 3

lives in the Vilna ghetto during World War II. In the U.S., she was a producer for the NPR series, *The Connection*.

#### **Geoffrey Long**

*Kenyon College*

*BA English and Philosophy 2000*

While at Kenyon, Long became involved in the Integrated Program in Humane Studies, a program that made extensive use of media and new technologies as resources for cultural analysis. "I've been a writer, a publisher and an editor," writes Long, "and for the last couple of years I've been trying to answer two questions: What is digital storytelling? And how will the art of narrative evolve in the 21st century?"

#### **Peter Rausch**

*Florida Atlantic University Honors College BA American Studies 2004*

Rausch has an undergraduate background in American Literature and culture. His undergraduate thesis, "Games as Protected Speech," uses the legal struggles over game regulation after Columbine to open up a space for under-

standing questions of narrative, game design, and policy, and includes close readings of a range of contemporary games. In making the case that video games express ideas and thus enjoy first amendment protection, he developed a theory of game design as an artistic practice.

#### **Daniel Roy**

*UMass Amherst*

*BS Computer Science 2005*

Since entering university, Roy has worked toward the goal of improving educational games and ultimately making them a more accessible component of the traditional school curriculum. Roy received the Harold Grinspoon Entrepreneurship Award for his work in game design, as well as the prestigious International Game Developers Association GDC scholarship. At CMS, he'll work with the Education Arcade, developing games that appeal to the growing segment of disenfranchised students who learn best through interactive media.

#### **Karen Verschooren**

*Catholic University of Leuven*

*BA Communications 2004*

*Free University of Brussels*

*MA Media Arts and Sciences 2005*

Verschooren entered University of Leuven with plans to become a journalist. As an exchange student at the Complutense University of Madrid, she did extensive archival research into Spanish cinema before 1920, work that formed the basis for her undergraduate thesis. While at CMS, she hopes to better understand how journalism is altered by its media context and how new media are affecting the practice of journalism.

### **In Medias Res**

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people, places, things

## CMSers Report a Productive Summer and a Busy Fall

### Faculty

**Christopher Capozzola** (History) is returning from a research leave, during which he completed work on his book *Uncle Sam Wants You: The Politics of Obligation in America's First World War*. This fall, in addition to his regular classes, he is also leading a Freshman Advising Seminar on "War and Mass Media in Modern American History."

**Beth Coleman** (Writing and Humanistic Studies) spent the summer working on her monograph "Difference Engines," which explores contemporary issues of race and technology. Her fiction text "Mano a Mano," appeared in the exhibition catalogue for British painter Chris Ofili, and she was awarded a Dean's Fund for Faculty Development award for her presentation on Machinima tools. Coleman has an upcoming installation at the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York (Nov. 10), the theme of which is "generative aesthetics."

**Ian Condry** (Foreign Languages and Literatures) has been awarded grants from Harvard's Reischauer Institute for Japanese Studies and MIT's Center for International Studies to begin a new collaborative research project, "Cool Japan: Media, Culture and Technology." The project will explore contemporary Japanese culture through the lens of global media, including music, anime, and film.

**Thomas DeFrantz** (Music and Theater Arts) scripted and narrated the special "Alvin Ailey's Revelations," broadcast in September on BBC Radio. He will create The House Music Project as a commission for the University of Texas, Dallas. This summer, DeFrantz designed and initiated "Corporeal Ideologies," a new course for the American Dance Festival MFA program, which explored current political, social, and metaphysical interrogations of dance practice.

**Aden Evens** (Writing and Humanistic Studies) spent his summer vacation patching together an article about creativity in software engineering. Instead of writing the other three articles he had planned to complete this summer, he has spent lots of time checking the Amazon website to see if anyone purchased a copy of his new book, *Sound Ideas: Music, Machines, and Experience*.

**Kurt Fendt** (FL&L) was appointed external examiner at Cambridge University where, for the previous two years, he has been internal examiner for a course on humanities computing in the Department of Modern and Medieval Languages as part of the Cambridge-MIT Institute (CMI). At the end of June, Fendt gave a keynote speech entitled "Creative Learners - Collaborative Tools: New Modes of On-line Learning and Teaching" at the Microlearning Conference 2005 at Innsbruck University, Austria.

**Stefan Helmreich** (Anthropology) published the article, "How Scientists Think; About 'Natives,' for Example. A Problem of Taxonomy among Biologists of Alien Species in Hawaii," in the *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. Another article, "Cetology Now," is forthcoming in *Melville Society Extracts*. He is at work on a book about how representations of the ocean and its life are transforming in the digital age.

**Diana Henderson** (Literature) won the 2005 Everett Moore Baker Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching. This fall, she is teaching the CMS graduate subject Major Media texts while serving as Secretary of the Faculty. During the summer, she finished editing Blackwell's *Concise Companion to Shakespeare on Screen*, which includes her essay on Campbell Scott's *Hamlet*. Henderson also submitted her book on modern collaborations with Shakespeare (Cornell, 2006), and commissioned essays for *Alternative Shakespeares: 3* (Routledge, 2007). She arrived in

London hours after the bombings, but nonetheless enjoyed working at the British Library, meeting with Royal Shakespeare Company Director Michael Boyd, and seeing plays.

**Henry Jenkins** (CMS) spent an intense month of travel in June (San Francisco, Melbourne, Honolulu, Vancouver, Madison, San Francisco, Boston) and amidst a valiant struggle to raise money to fund CMS graduate students for the coming year, he completed three book projects -- doing final revisions of *Convergence Culture* (due out from New York University Press next spring) and editing two books of collected essays, *Fans, Bloggers, and Gamers: Essays on Media Consumption* and *The Wow Climax: Essays on Affect and Popular Art*.

**Chappell Lawson** (Political Science) received a \$240,000 National Science Foundation grant for the Mexico 2006 Panel Study, a project on campaign effects in Mexico. He will be co-teaching the first year seminar for Ph.D. students in political science with Roger Petersen, and is beginning a study of the survival (and breakdown) of democratic regimes, from ancient Greece to the present.

**William Mitchell** (Media Arts and Sciences) will be on sabbatical in 2005/06. His current projects include design of a concept car for General Motors and electronically mediated public spaces in Barcelona and Zaragoza. His most recent book, *Placing Words*, appears from the MIT Press in September.

**Charity Scribner** (FL&L) returns to teach at MIT this September after having drafted part of a book on the Red Army Faction while a Humboldt Fellow in Berlin. She presented a paper on socialist realist culture at the Society of Architectural Historians conference in Paris late this summer. Scribner has been awarded MIT's Class of 1954 Career Development Professorship.

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## CMS Colloquium and Communications Forum Calendar

**September 15**  
5-7 p.m.  
2-105

**Colloquium: *Madison & Vine: Why Entertainment and Advertising Must Converge to Survive***

**Scott Donaton** is the editor of *Advertising Age* and author of *Madison & Vine: Why the Entertainment & Advertising Industries Must Converge to Survive*.

**September 22**  
5-7 p.m.  
32-155  
Stata Center

**Forum: *The Future of the Digital Commons***

**Nancy Kranich**, former president, American Library Association  
**Steven Pinker**, Harvard University  
**Ann Wolpert**, director, MIT Libraries

Arguments and legal confrontations over the control of music, writing and visual materials have become a permanent feature of contemporary life and will almost certainly enlarge and intensify in future years. As corporate producers and distributors — including some universities and private libraries — move aggressively to claim ownership of digital content, others defend an alternative vision. This alternative embraces ideals of sharing and civic community and warns that recent extensions of copyright threaten creativity and the free exchange of ideas. Is there a future for this idea of a digital commons? Is the American tradition of free public libraries a valuable precedent for the digital age? Is the commercialization of cyberspace already a problem for those seeking reliable information? Our speakers and our audience will engage these and related questions.

**September 29**  
5-7 p.m.  
2-105

**Colloquium: *What is Machinima?***

**Paul Marino** is an award-winning animation film director and designer, who has worked with the Machinima medium for the past seven years. He leads the Academy of Machinima Arts and Sciences, a non-profit organization to promote Machinima, and oversees the Academy's annual Machinima Film Festival. He's the author of the world's first book about Machinima: *3D Game-based Filmmaking: The Art of Machinima* (Paraglyph Press, August 2004) and recently collaborated with Rooster Teeth Productions on a series of Machinima shorts for the Independent Film Channel.

**October 6**  
5-7 p.m.  
Bartos Theater

**Forum: *Is Popular Culture Good for You?***

**Steven Johnson**, author, *Everything Bad Is Good For You*  
**Jason Mittell**, Middlebury College

Critics have long accused the mass media of “dumbing down” our cultural lives in their appeal to the lowest common denominator. Stephen Johnson's best-selling provocation, *Everything Bad Is Good For You*, has argued exactly the opposite. He says popular culture is rich and complex, challenging and rewarding the intelligence of its users. What evidence supports the claim that popular culture is becoming more complex? What standards should be used to evaluate contemporary popular culture? How does the popular culture of our time resemble and differ from older forms of popular entertainment?

**October 13**  
5-7 p.m.  
2-105

**Colloquium: *A Screen of Moving Pictures: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film***

**Giuliana Bruno** is professor of Visual and Environmental Studies at Harvard University. Professor Bruno shows that, today, as art melts into moving images, architecture mobilizes cinematic visions, and cinema becomes a common language of border-crossing, a new moving space- a screen of vital cultural memory- comes to shape our visual culture. She claims that such screen has its origin in modernity's own mobilized space. Hence, in the spirit of her latest book, *Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture, and Film* (Verso, 2002). Bruno will traverse this history of film's mobile cultural landscape with forays into the fields of architecture, design, cultural geography, cartography, and art.

**What are the differences between the CMS Colloquium and Communications Forum? What is the Forum's relationship to CMS? Get the FAQs on page 10.**

**October 20**  
**5-7 p.m.**  
**location TBA**

**Forum: *Spinners and Bloggers: Political Communications in the Digital Age***

**Deborah Hayes**, PEW Charitable Trust  
**Rebecca MacKinnon**, Berkman Center for Internet & Society, Harvard Law School

For decades, perhaps for as long as independent newspapers have existed, political operatives have used “spin” to shape the way the news media respond to candidates and their policies. Spin can be understood as a kind of top-down power that depends on the social network linking political leaders and the news media. Some have argued that weblogs or blogs have emerged in recent years to disrupt this culture of spin. How can we understand the interplay between spin and blogs? How do each shape, some would say manipulate public opinion? How are each subject to abuse? Is the culture of spin and blogging contributing to the polarization of American political discourse?

**October 27**  
**5-7 p.m.**  
**2-105**

**Colloquium: *Beijing Film Academy***

**Sun Lijun** is dean and professor of doctoral studies at the Animation School of Beijing Film Academy. His works include short films *Little Conch* and *Good Neighbor*, the TV series *Three Little Foxes* and the feature film *The Little Soldier Zhang Ga*. Professor Sun will discuss animation education and the animation industry in China: how students are recruited, and how professionals are cultivated.

**November 3**  
**5-7 p.m.**  
**2-105**

**Colloquium: *MTV World***

**Nusrat Durrani** is general manager of MTV World, a new division of MTV created to launch new MTV-branded channels that serve ethnic audiences in the U.S. The channels launched so far include MTV Desi for South Asian-Americans, MTV Chi for Chinese-Americans, and MTV K for Korean-Americans. Before working at MTV, Durrani was marketing manager for Honda in Dubai, U.A.E.

**November 10**  
**5-7 p.m.**  
**2-105**

**Colloquium: *Video Games Are Bigger than Movies? Not So Fast: What Will it Take for Video Games To Emerge as The 21st Century's Dominant Entertainment Form?***

**Doug Lowenstein** is president of the Entertainment Software Association. Lowenstein will challenge the idea that video games are bigger than movies. Yes, when you add video game hardware sales and software sales together, you come up with a figure that exceeds the total box office take of the film industry. But including hardware sales in the figure skews the comparison. Why not include the sales of DVD players? In truth, the worldwide film industry stands at about \$45 billion and the worldwide video game industry checks in at around \$28 billion. Lowenstein will provide his thoughts on what will need to be done to overtake the movie industry.

**November 17**  
**5-7 p.m.**  
**Bartos Theater**  
**Media Lab**

**Forum: *Cell Phone Culture***

**Jing Wang**, head, MIT Foreign Languages and Literatures

No contemporary cultural artifact embodies the genius and the disruptive excess of capitalism as clearly as the cell phone. Ubiquitous in most developed societies in Europe, the Americas and Asia, the cell phone has become a laboratory - some would say an asylum - for testing the limits of technological convergence. Less a telephone today than a multi-purpose computer, cell phones are game consoles, still cameras, email systems, text messengers, carriers of entertainment and business data, nodes of commerce. Particular age cohorts and subcultures have begun to appropriate cell phones for idiosyncratic uses that help to define their niche or social identity. Today's Forum will examine the cell phone as a technological object and as a cultural form whose uses and meaning are increasingly various, an artifact uniquely of our time that is enacting, to borrow the words of a contemporary novelist, “a ceaseless spectacle of transition.”

**December 1**  
**5-7 p.m.**  
**2-105**

**Colloquium: *What Civil Disobedience Has Done for You Lately***

**John Fucile** is an award-winning filmmaker who was recently arrested for selling DVDs of his own films on the streets of Manhattan. He won a landmark ruling giving unprecedented freedom to independent artists who distribute their own work. Fucile will discuss today's digital revolution, his case and its implications for artists and media creators.

**Faculty from page 5**

**Irving Singer** (Philosophy) is offering two new courses in fall 2005. One is entitled "The Nature of Creativity"; the other is entitled "Film as Visual and Literary Mythmaking." Both are based on new books that Singer has been writing for some time. He spent the summer working on them, and each is now half finished. The paperback edition of his recent book *Three Philosophical Filmmakers: Hitchcock, Welles, Renoir* (MIT Press) will appear in early fall 2005.

**David Thorburn** (Literature) had a busy and productive summer. He spent three weeks in New Zealand as the William Evans Visiting Fellow at the University of Otago, where he delivered public lectures on new media and met informally with the Department of Communication Studies and with the English Department. Both groups were intensely interested in the ground principles of the CMS curriculum. In August, he traveled to Taiwan where he completed arrangements for the collaboration between Kainan University and CMS and the Communications Forum (see story on page 1).

**Edward Baron Turk** (FL&L), on a sabbatical leave this academic year, is co-editing a special issue of *The French Review*, the journal of the American Association of Teachers of French, to be devoted entirely to French and Francophone film studies. It is scheduled to appear in spring 2006.

**William Uricchio** (CMS) has been making the rounds of Dutch universities where he is evaluating and accrediting academic programs in the cultural sector (art history, literature, media studies) as a corollary to his ongoing work on the profile for national media research for the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences. In addition to his annual stint in Utrecht, he has given talks at conferences and universities from Ann Arbor to Bonn. *Media Cultures*, a collection of essays on the German and U.S. media scene post 9/11 edited by Uricchio, will be published this fall in Germany.

**Jing Wang** (FL&L), the new head of Foreign Languages and Literatures, held a Beijing conference she co-organized with Professor Wen Tiejun (Dean of the new School of Agricultural and Rural Development at People's University) on the topic "The Third Space of the 'Commons': The Debate on the 'Public' and the 'Private' Divide in the Reform Policies of the PRC." Wang gave a paper on the three major policy discourses "creative industries," "creative commons," and "cultural industries" and weighed the pros and cons of the Chinese adoption of each discourse.

**Graduate Students**

**Vanessa Bertozzi** received the Sun Fellowship from the MIT-Germany Program (MISTI). She traveled to Venice to work with **Michael Epstein** (CMS alum 04) on History Unwired. She produced and shot two "mini-mobile-docs" for this GPS-enabled PDA walking tour. Bertozzi also worked at Open Source, a new PRI radio show ([www.radioopensource.org](http://www.radioopensource.org)) with host Christopher Lydon. The concept behind Open Source, she says, is to mash-up radio and the web, with the aim of involving the listeners to the point of consumer-producer convergence. This year, Bertozzi will concentrate on her thesis "Homeschooling Families' Creative Use of Digital Technology."

**Veronica Bollow** spent the summer developing the Pathway Project, a multi-country initiative to create an indigenous digital storytelling network. She led media production workshops in Onigaming (Canada) and Kuna Yala (Panama). In Buenos Aires, she directed a short film in collaboration with the Argentine media-arts-social project Eloisa Cartonera ([www.eloisacartonera.com.ar](http://www.eloisacartonera.com.ar)).

**Amulya Gopalakrishnan** spent the summer in India, researching collective media memories of the 80s. She's interested in the way young adults recast this decade, being the first generation to grow up with television, and an idea of India enacted through state-run TV that everyone shared, briefly, before the

country opened up its markets and airwaves. She continued assisting **Pablo Boczkowski** with his research on digital institutional repositories.

**Ravi Purushotma** has been preparing the web infrastructure for CMS's New Media Literacies project [[www.projectnml.org](http://www.projectnml.org)]. This fall, he will continue work on that project, building curricula prototypes schools can use to help students gain the skills needed to participate in a network society. He will also be speaking at a foreign language educators conference hosted by the State University of New York system about his work with *Sims 2* and the use of other popular technologies for learning about foreign language and culture.

**James Nadeau** spent the summer working as the programming director for films with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender content at the Rhode Island International Film Festival. The Rhode Island International Film Festival is one of only 49 festivals in the world that is an Oscar-qualifying festival, and the only one in New England. He wrote his second article on the contemporary art scene in Boston for the Big, Red, Shiny website ([www.bigredandshiny.com](http://www.bigredandshiny.com)) and is currently planning a trip to London to see the Open Systems: Rethinking Art c.1970 show as research for his thesis. Nadeau has been designated as an Arts Scholar at MIT for the coming year.

**Alicia Verlager**, a.k.a. Kestrell, attended a number of science fiction conventions as part of her thesis, which will explore images of disability and technology in science fiction narratives. She attended Readercon and Gaylaxicon (this last is an international science fiction convention which focuses on gay/lesbian/queer SF media), and is preparing to attend the upcoming Harry Potter academic conference at which **Henry Jenkins** will be a keynote speaker, and WisCon 2006.

**Visiting Scholars**

**Jörn Ahrens** from the cultural studies department of Berlin's Humboldt University will be joining us for a year beginning in November. Ahrens most



## C3 Launches Advertising Blogs

In conjunction with its Convergence Culture Consortium (C3), CMS is maintaining two weblogs on media and advertising.

One of the blogs, called *Adverlab* (MIT Advertising Lab), “is on a mission to bridge the gap between geekdom and advertising,” says the blog’s creator **Ilya Vedrashko** (CMS 07). Located at [adverlab.blogspot.com](http://adverlab.blogspot.com), this blog focuses on advertising technology.

The *Adverlab* was named one of the best advertising blogs by *Fast Company* magazine in April, and earned Vedrashko an internship at an advertising agency.

The second blog resides on CMS’s Branding Cultures website at [web.mit.edu/cms/bcc](http://web.mit.edu/cms/bcc) and covers all aspects of advertising, branding and consumption, often with an eye towards the offbeat.

### Visiting Scholars *continued*

recently headed a research project on the cultural effects of bioscience, and plans to continue related work here in a project that focuses on myth and modernity through the case of the Alien films. Drawing on such markers as “survival instincts” or the perception of danger, his project will use filmic representation to explore the shifting borders between nature and culture in biotech and artificial intelligence. His stay is sponsored by a Feodor Lynen Fellowship from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation.

**Cristobal Garcia**, a CMS alum (04) now working for Price Waterhouse Cooper, continues the innovative bridge building evident in his work as founding member of History Unwired, MIT’s Global Agenda Game project, and his Chilean-based World Internet Project. He will be working with **Eric Klopfer** on an IIT/Ericsson project to develop wireless media applications (location-aware, peer-to-peer, games-on-the-run, etc.), and will also be involved in a research initiative to explore the creative practices of videogame developers in the UK and US.

**Peter Müller** is an installation artist who has shown work in Frankfurt, Berlin, and Cape Town. His work moves across media forms, and includes

video, film, typography and stage, and recent examples include “US Antarctic Research Station John Dwyer” (scale model installation) and “The Magic Bullet” (video installation). Müller is interested in the diverse conceptions of science that circulate in society, and in their representation and embodiment in narrative staging processes. These wide-ranging manifestations provide the material that he will work with while visiting CMS during the fall. Müller’s stay is supported by a German Academic Exchange Service Fellowship.

**Stefan Werning** hails from Bonn University where he has been primarily involved with musicology and interactive media, in particular games, where he has focused on developing tools and strategies for “close reading.” He has gained a comparative take on the media landscape through internships at the German parliament, a music production house, and at the Fraunhofer Institute for Media Communications, and has most recently been working on game development with the German publisher Langenscheidt (together with Codemasters and Playit). Werning wants to pursue his interests in interactive media by participating in the Education Arcade and Metamedia projects. He will be here from October through December thanks to a German Academic Exchange Fellowship.

## CMS Grad To Be Insight Analyst At Minnesota Public Radio



CMS alum **Joellen Easton** (05) has accepted a position as public insight analyst with Minnesota Public Radio, where she will work on extending the news-gathering process into the community, and on translating MPR News’ public insight model from their regional to their national American Public Media programs.

The position relates directly to Easton’s CMS Master’s thesis, “High-Interactivity Radio: Using the Internet to Enhance Community Among Radio Listeners,” which can be viewed at [web.mit.edu/joellen/www/high%20interactivity%20radio\\_final.pdf](http://web.mit.edu/joellen/www/high%20interactivity%20radio_final.pdf). Easton begins a two-month training program in Minnesota in early October.

### CMS Alum Alert

**If you are a graduate of CMS, then we’d like to hear from you. Drop us a note at [cms@mit.edu](mailto:cms@mit.edu) and let us know what you are doing now, and let us know the best email address for contacting you as we update our mailing lists.**

### Alum Film Shows on PBS

**Alex Rotaru**, a graduate of the Film and Media Studies Program (the precursor to CMS), is the co-producer, editor and cinematographer of *The Hobart Shakespearians*, a documentary now being shown on PBS stations around the country.

*The Hobart Shakespearians* follows fifth-grade teacher Rafe Esquith and his Latino and Asian-American students from Central Los Angeles as they learn to perform Shakespeare’s plays. The PBS website about the film ([www.pbs.org/pov/pov2005/hobart/](http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2005/hobart/)) calls it the story of “how one man’s uncommon commitment and resourcefulness have opened up worlds of opportunity for his ‘disadvantaged’ students.”

Check local PBS listings for air dates and times.

## Frequently Asked Questions: MIT Communications Forum

### What is the MIT Communications Forum?

*Short answer:* The public outreach arm of CMS, the Forum is responsible for nearly all CMS conferences, panel discussions and lecture series that are open to the general public.

Translating specialized or technical perspectives into a discourse accessible to non-specialists is a defining ambition of the Forum.

When engineers, scientists, other academics or media practitioners address the Forum, they accept a responsibility to speak in a common language that must be understood and used by literate citizens and professionals in many fields.

*Historical answer:* For more than 25 years, the Forum has played a unique role at MIT and beyond as a site for cutting-edge discussion of the cultural, political, economic and technological impact of communications, with special emphasis on emerging technologies.

Leading scholars, journalists, media producers, political figures and corporate executives have appeared at conferences and panels sponsored by the Forum.

The Forum's founding director was the late Ithiel deSola Pool of the MIT political science department, a pioneer in the study of communications. Its current director is **David Thorburn**, Professor of Literature and Comparative Media, who

has held the position since 1996.

Originally housed in the School of Engineering and affiliated with the Center for Transportation, Policy, and Industrial Development, the Forum moved to the School of Humanities and Social Science in 1998. In that year Thorburn and **Henry Jenkins**, who would become director of CMS, jointly supervised a three-year series of lectures and conferences devoted to "Media in Transition." Funded by a grant of more than \$600,000 from the John and Mary R. Markle Foundation, the Media in Transition Project culminated in an international conference that marked the launch of the Program in Comparative Media Studies, the first graduate program in Humanities at MIT.

### What's the difference between CMS Colloquiums and Communications Forums?

In general, colloquiums are internal events, usually involving a single speaker, and are sometimes more informal or more technical and theoretical than the public Forums.

Colloquiums are mainly aimed at the CMS community. Forums are always open to the public and aim to reach a national and international audience through the Forum website, which posts summaries, audio transcripts and sometimes video records of its events.

### How is the Forum governed?

By a volunteer board of scholars and corporate leaders, including MIT's Henry Jenkins, Ann Wolpert, director of Libraries; Lester Thurow of the Sloan School; **William Mitchell** of the Media Lab; and Karen Sollins of the Lab for Computer Science. Other board members include Steven Pinker, Harvard, James Carey, Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, and the television writer and producer John Romano.

### How is the Forum funded?

The Communications Forum is funded by corporate sponsors from the MIT Industrial Liaison Program, by other corporations and by foundation grants. Beginning in January, 2006, a portion of its funding will come from its first partnership with an educational institution, Kainan University, Taiwan.

### Do CMS students have a role in the Communications Forum?

Emphatically, yes. CMS graduate students often write the text summaries of Forums that are posted on the website. Many have delivered papers or served as moderators of panel discussions at Forum conferences.

The private receptions held for speakers, guests and CMS graduate students after most Forums give students access to leaders in many fields.

## Tang Joins Forum Board

**M**ichael Tang, president of Kainan University, Taiwan, has joined the governing board of the MIT Communications Forum.

Tang, 45, is the first university president to serve on the board. An active scholar, Tang also serves as Dean of Academic Affairs at Kainan where he teaches communications policy. He has published widely in scholarly journals and has been a visiting scholar at UCLA, Stanford and Harvard, and a visiting professor at several Asian universities.

## Kainan University from page 1

CMS program will form the core of the students' curriculum, though they will also be eligible to enroll in other MIT subjects appropriate to their interests. The Kainan faculty visitors will participate in the visiting scholars' program; some will speak at CMS colloquiums and appear as guests in classes.

The collaboration will be supervised by a governing board consisting of Thorburn, Tang, Henry Jenkins, director of CMS, and **Jing Wang**, head of Foreign Languages and Literatures at MIT.

**Emma Teng**, associate professor of FL&L, will serve as faculty advisor to the Kainan students. Teng is the author of *Taiwan's Imagined Geography: Chinese Colonial Travel Writing and Pictures, 1683-1895*, and teaches the popular CMS course 21F. 030, East Asian Cultures: From Zen to Pop. Teng's father is a native of Taiwan.

The collaboration also supports an annual conference in Taiwan where MIT scholars will be featured.

## Education Arcade Is Creating a *Revolution* in the Gaming Industry

by **Brett Camper**, Education Arcade project manager

The Education Arcade continued its leadership in researching and developing educational games with its second annual Games in Education conference, held in Los Angeles in conjunction with the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3), the primary trade show of the video game industry.

The event was an all-out success, with more than 250 researchers, game designers, policy makers, educators, and students participating in two days of discussions about and demonstrations of games in teaching.

Participants explored a wide variety of topics including game design; teacher support and curricular development; student assessment; public funding and policy; and business issues.

Beyond organizing the event, CMS students and affiliated researchers presented at the conference. Second-year graduate student **Ravi Purushotma** showed how commercial games like *The Sims 2* can be modified to support language learning, and visiting scholar **Russell Francis** reported on his experiences testing the Education Arcade's American history game *Revolution* with middle and high school students in the Boston area. Video archives

from the conference have been made available on [educationarcade.org](http://educationarcade.org), and we were recently accorded the high honor of being *Slashdotted*.

More importantly, it's clear that the Education Arcade's efforts are having an effect on the way the wider commercial game industry views the potential for socially conscious uses of gaming.

### 'Public service gaming'

Douglas Lowenstein, president of the Entertainment Software Association – a co-sponsor of our Games in Education conference – explored the industry to follow this path in his annual address at E3. "We need more games that are socially and polit-

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**"There is no reason why we cannot have the equivalent of public service gaming."**

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ically relevant," he said. "If we can make games about terrorism, why can't we make compelling games about politics or global warming? Why can't there be games which force players to struggle with weighty moral and ethical issues within compelling game worlds?"



**Colonial slaves on the run in the Education Arcade's video game *Revolution*.**

At the Edinburgh Interactive Entertainment Festival, keynote speaker Adam Singer echoed Lowenstein's views, citing *Revolution* as an example of new ways in which gaming can be integrated into the wider tradition of public media: "Games can be the equivalent of documentaries on television. You can have games doing current affairs, you can have a game showing what it is like to be an oppressed minority, or how Enron-like corporations can stray into corruption. You can have games that deal with difficult issues like AIDs, or where you learn compassion by suffering loss. There is no reason why we cannot have the equivalent of public service gaming."

### New Media Literacy from page 1

administrators, students and education professionals to solicit their input on the current state of the new media literacy debate.

The team has refined its guidelines for new media curricular development over the summer, and plans to begin classroom prototype testing and observation this fall.

### Fall website launch

The NML project website at [www.projectnml.org](http://www.projectnml.org) is expected to be formally launched by October.

NML's summer research staff has done an "exemplary job coding and producing the website," according to project manager Weigel, "providing substantive blog content and researching materials for our comprehensive online database." Also in production this summer were two 5-minute videos chronicling student-producers in area after-school programs.

CMS graduate project researchers include **Vanessa Bertozzi 06**, **Veronica Bollow 06**, **Amanda Finkelberg 07**, **Orit Kuritsky 07**, **Ravi Purushotma 06**, **Karen Lori Schrier 05** and **Kestrell Verlanger 06**

ably assisted by CMS undergraduate researcher **Victor Castanon 06**.



**"Kids Collaborating" from the New Media Literacies website, which is currently in development.**

## CMS Hosts Annual Talk Honoring Comics Editor Julius Schwartz

CMS has been chosen as the host of an annual lecture series to celebrate the work and life of comics editor Julius “Julie” Schwartz.

**Henry Jenkins** is working with DC Comics President Paul Levitz, *Sandman* author Neil Gaiman, and science fiction writer Harlan Ellison to organize a new annual lecture series in honor of long-time DC comics editor Julius Schwartz, who died last year.

Schwartz worked as an agent and editor in science fiction before helping to spark the so-called “Silver Age of Comics” in the 1950s. Schwartz was associated with the creation of *The*

*Martian Manhunter* and the *Justice League*, as well as the reinvention and revitalization of *The Green Lantern*, *The Flash*, *Hawkman*, *The Atom*, and to some degree, *Batman* and *Superman*.

As Gaiman envisions the series in his blog, it will feature an “annual talk by an eminent (possibly even preeminent) guest speaker about things that Julie influenced — in particular the worlds of pop culture, comics, science fiction, fandom and the intersection between ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture.”

Comparative Media Studies won out as host for this lecture series over a



Superman as he appeared on the cover of *Whatever Happened to the Man of Tomorrow* (Action Comics #583), edited by Julius Schwartz.

range of other universities.

Details are still being worked out but the plan is to have the first event in Spring 2006.

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