

web.mit.edu/cms

CMS seeking corporate partners for its new convergence culture consortium

Comparative Media Studies has begun a search for corporate partners for its newly established Convergence Culture Consortium.

The founding members of the consortium are spending the term locating and enlisting “companies that have a keen interest in deciphering convergence culture and its implications for their brand decisions,” according to **Parmesh Shahani**, a CMS

graduate student involved in creating c3, which will be headed up by CMS Director **Henry Jenkins**. Jenkins is at work on a book about media convergence, a process that facilitates the flow of content across the entire media system.

Additional academic researchers who have already confirmed their participation in the consortium are **William Uricchio**, **Thomas DeFrantz**, **Jing Wang**, **Edward Barrett** and **Ian Condry** from MIT, **Robert Kozinets** from the University of Wisconsin at Madison and **Jason Mittell** at Middlebury College.

“In today’s rapidly changing media environment,” Jenkins said in explaining the impetus for the consortium, “advertisers are seeking new ways to engage consumers with their brands, embedding brand messages into entertainment content via product placements, extending the brand mes-

sage into new interactive spaces, and building brand cultures which reward the most active and hardcore consumers. At such transitional moments, established wisdom

becomes less valuable, requiring new research.

“Because these experiments occur across multiple brands, programs, media and audiences, we believe that dedicated research focusing on convergence is a sensible way to ap-

proach these challenges.”

The consortium will pursue a range of projects that include prototyping new approaches to viewer participation and affiliation, conducting focus group discussions with younger consumers about their responses to brands and product placements, and ongoing monitoring of Internet fan groups for television shows and other media products with a high degree of brand integration.

“Our hope,” Jenkins said, “is to create a context where leading thinkers from the consumer goods and entertainment industries can rub shoulders with academics working on brands and consumer cultures.”

Stories conference set for early may

“The Work of Stories” is the title of the fourth Media in Transition conference, to be held at MIT May 6-8, 2005. Scheduled every other year, the

Media in Transition conferences have become a signature event for CMS and the MIT Communications Forum.

Nearly 200 papers from American, Asian and European scholars will be delivered at this year’s conference, which aims to explore storytelling as a cultural practice, a social and political activity as well as an art form.

Nearly 40 percent of participants will be from abroad, making this the most international conference in the series. Approximately 70 separate panel discussions are planned, in addition to featured public events. One of these plenary sessions will focus on “Narratives of Science” and will feature talks by **Alan Lightman**, **Robert Kanigel** and **Thomas Levenson** of MIT’s graduate program in science writing.

A second public panel will consider stories as “migratory” systems that may occupy or colonize several media, cross cultural and national boundaries and even migrate across

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Alan Lightman

CMS Convergence Culture Consortium

online: web.mit.edu/cms/bcc
email: cms-c3@mit.edu

related event:

Branding the Urban Landscape

Jon Cropper, Young & Rubicam
Steve Klein, freelance brand strategist
Jesse Shapins, Counts Media, Yellow Arrow
Thursday, April 21, 2005
Building 6, Room 120, MIT

See pages 6-7 for a complete Communications Forum and CMS Colloquium schedule.

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directors' column

Jenkins, uricchio to see if two heads really are better

By Henry Jenkins and William Uricchio, CMS directors

There's an old saying: two heads are better than one. We are putting that saying to the test this term.

For the first time in two years, both William Uricchio and Henry Jenkins are on-ground at the same time and we have decided to become co-directors of Comparative Media Studies. William is going to manage much of the day-to-day administration of the program, while Henry is going to be focusing on development and outreach with primary responsibility for launching the Convergence Culture Consortium (see cover) and a new media literacy initiative, which we hope to announce soon. The history of two-headed beasts in literature and popular culture has been mixed. So far, however, we seem to be avoiding becoming a Push-Me/Pull-You.



Henry Jenkins

The news we convey in this issue is bittersweet. It is a time of beginnings and endings for our program.

'Central player' lost

We have all been shocked and pained by **Chris Pomiecko's** tragic death in early February. Chris was a central player in the development of the program. In the rocky first few years, we encountered many bumps and detours and Chris was the one who helped to smooth out the ride and make sure that no one got hurt.

We have been moved by all of the stories shared with us in recent days by faculty, students, and staffers who Chris helped through the years. And as we have dug deeper into the unfinished business created by his passing, we have come away with a deeper appreciation of his unassuming intelligence and back-breaking hard work. He made so many problems disappear that much of them fell below our radar.

Now, we have to confront them head on.

We are going to be focusing a lot this term on reorganizing the management and staffing of the program, something which had been planned upon William's return, but which now takes on new urgency. In the meantime, we hope you will help us remember Chris's legacy by contributing to his memorial fund.



William Uricchio

Tan exits

We will also soon be missing **Philip Tan**, who recently announced his plans to get married and move back to Singapore where he will work with the Media Development Authority of Singapore, Digital Media group. Philip has been part of the CMS community for eight years, starting as an undergraduate, then as a Master's student, and finally as the research manager of the Education Arcade.

Throughout that time, Philip has been the go-to guy — someone who always knew which cord to bring with him or which switch to pull when it looked like the entire technological infrastructure of the program was falling down around him, someone who commanded the respect of everyone who knew him because of his unique blend of cultural insight and technical skills.

Philip is someone who knows game design inside and out. From his work as an undergraduate member of the MIT Assassin's Guild, he developed a grounded understanding of rule systems and play mechanics, a topic he explored in his CMS Master's thesis. He knows more computer and video games than anyone

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IN MEMORIAM

CMS creates award to honor chris pomiecko

Sadly, CMS Program Administrator **Christopher Pomiecko** was killed in an automobile accident on February 6. He was 48.

"One of his major contributions to CMS culture was the CMS Media Extravaganza," recalled CMS Co-Director Henry Jenkins, "an event each year that brought together filmmakers, videomakers, and other media makers across campus to share their works."



To honor Pomiecko's efforts, CMS has established the Chris Pomiecko Award for Outstanding Undergraduate Media Production.

"Our hope is to give a prize to a student media maker each year and at the same time, use this money to focus energy and attention on the undergraduate side of our efforts, something Chris cared about deeply," said CMS Co-Director William Uricchio. "We hope that members of the CMS community and beyond will be generous in contributing to this memorial fund."

In addition, a plaque dedicated to Pomiecko will be placed in the Humanities Film Office, which he helped to establish a decade ago.

Anyone interested in contributing to the memorial fund should contact the CMS Office at cms@mit.edu or 617.253.3599.

people, places, things

Conferences call, books beckon cms faculty, students

Faculty

Pablo J. Boczkowski (management) was co-winner of the 2004 Outstanding Book Award, Organizational Communication Division, National Communication Association, for *Digitizing the News: Innovation in Online Newspapers* (MIT Press, 2004). He published, "Multiple Media, Convergent Processes and Divergent Products," in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* and will organize two panels—with Eric Klinenberg (NYU) on news production, and with Nadia Caidi (Toronto) on digital libraries—for the annual meeting of the International Communication Association in May.

Ed Barrett (writing and humanistic studies) will deliver the keynote address at an international conference on Designing Information Technology in Tokyo, February 27-March 3. His talk, titled "Sociomedia and the Poetics of Information Technology," celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Tokyo-based company Sociomedia, founded after Barrett's 1991 MIT Press volume, *Sociomedia and the Social Construction of Knowledge*. On March 3 also in Tokyo, Barrett will talk at Pangaea, an organization devoted to researching how children may use technology for peaceful aims and formed by Japanese researchers who studied at MIT.

Ian Condry (foreign languages & literature, fl&l) published an article in the Tokyo-based magazine "Toyo Keizai" (*Eastern Economics*, 1/8/05), which asks if fighting music piracy worse than letting it be? That seems to be the conclusion of Japan's two largest record companies (Avex and Sony), Condry says, which last year ceased production of copy-control CDs (CCCD) as the iPod surged in popularity.

Thomas DeFrantz (music and theater arts, mta) will perform "Monk's Mood: A Performance Meditation on the Life and Music of Thelonious Monk" at MIT in the Kresge Little Theater March 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, and 19, and then at the Carriage House in Providence, RI, April 15 and 16. This

work marries digital technologies with tap dance to tell the story of Monk's life and times. DeFrantz' movement-theater work, *Ennobling Nonna*, will be performed at the Performance Studies International conference at Brown University, April 2. His essay "African American Dance - Philosophy, Aesthetics, and 'Beauty'" will be published in the journal *TOPOI* this year. DeFrantz recently contributed biographical entries to *Notable American Women* (Thelma Hill) and the *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance* (Asadata Dafora, "Snakehips" Tucker).

Kurt Fendt (fl&l) is organizing the first German/ European Short Film Festival at MIT. The April festival features recent short films from German and European film and art schools as well as film festivals. The MIT festival is co-sponsored and organized in collaboration with the Goethe-Institute in Boston. Fendt received an invitation as visiting professor to the Institute for Media and Communication at the University of Klagenfurt in Austria.

Gilberte Furstenberg (fl&l) presented her *Cultura* project and spoke about the use of the Internet to foster cross-cultural understanding at a January conference at the University of Louvain-la-Neuve in Belgium. The *Cultura* project was featured in an article in the February issue of *Le Monde l'Education*.

Diana Henderson (literature) is team teaching a new version of Studies in Drama with **Janet Sonenberg** (music and theater arts). Theater and Science in a Time of War explores seventeenth-century revolutions in English politics and religious thought, challenges to authority and old forms of knowledge, and the rise of experimental science, and the fate of theater and dramatic writing. One aim of the course is to generate material for a contemporary performance to be drafted by playwright Adriano Shaplin and produced by the Royal Shakespeare Company and MIT.

Henry Jenkins (cms) completed the first draft of his new book, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Intersect* and sent it off to his publisher. He

spent two weeks in January giving lectures in four Nordic countries. He also spent Christmas with his family in Williamsburg, often with an uncanny sense of having stepped inside the world of *Revolution*, the game being developed by the Education Arcade.

Wyn Kelley (literature) will publish an essay, "'Lying in Various Attitudes': Staging Pip in Multimedia," in a collection called *Ungraspable Phantom: Essays on Moby-Dick*, edited by Mary K. Bercau Edwards, John Bryant, and Timothy Marr and published by Kent State University Press. The essay is based on Kelley's "Midnight, Forecastle" project and her Metamedia work.

Anthony Lioi (writing and humanistic studies) published "The Great Work Begins: Theater as Theurgy in *Angels in America*" in the journal *CrossCurrents*, and presented a paper, "Saint Francis the Robot: Reconciliations of Nature and Technoculture in the Work of Hayao Miyazaki," at a meeting of the Modern Language Association in Philadelphia.

Martin Marks (mta) has launched a new project to develop a digital archive of silent film scores. *More Treasures from American Film Archives*, the DVD collection for which Marks served as music curator, received the 2004 Film Heritage Award from the National Society of Film Critics. In January, two films from the DVD collection were added to the Library of Congress's National Film Registry: *Clash of the Wolves* (the Rin Tin Tin feature), and *A Bronx Morning* (an avant-garde short by Jay Leyda). Marks presented some of his work on *More Treasures* in Minneapolis to the Association of Moving Image Archivists.

Jeff Ravel (history) began a two-year stint as editor of *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, a publication of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies.

Irving Singer (philosophy) recently finished an advanced draft of his chapter "Jean Cocteau and the Poetry of Film," in-

continued on next page

people, places from page 3

tended to be a major part of his book-in-progress on film as mythmaking. He has also been writing a book on the nature of creativity. His book *Sex: A Philosophical Primer, Expanded Edition* with New Material on Same-Sex Marriage appeared in late 2004.

Susan Slyomovics (anthropology) will publish *The Performance of Human Rights in Morocco* (University of Pennsylvania Press) this spring.

David Thorburn (literature) will be a featured speaker at an international conference at Kainan University, Taiwan, in March. The conference aims to develop policies that would make the Taiwanese National Communications Commission, the government agency responsible for communications regulation, a model for the digital age. Thorburn's presentations will examine the promise and dangers for democracy in emerging technologies and will place current debates about the Internet into historical perspective.

Edward Baron Turk (fl&l) stepped down as film editor for *The French Review* (the journal of the American Association of Teachers of French) after ten years, and will become the journal's designated author for its yearly round-up of news and views regarding current French theater.

William Uricchio (cms), just back from a Guggenheim-funded research leave in the Netherlands, edited two books (one on post-9/11 media culture from German and American perspectives, and one on media and identities in post-war Europe) and completed a draft of a book on "televisuality," from the 19th century to the 21st century. As a lecturer, he recently appeared at universities ranging from Ulster and Nottingham, to Frankfurt and Berlin, with additional stops in Amsterdam, Utrecht, and most recently, Harvard. He has been appointed by the Royal Dutch Academy of Science to help define media studies as an academic research area in the Netherlands.

Chris Walley (anthropology) is currently on leave and working on a new book about gender in Tanzania that focuses in part on media portrayals of development. She spent time this past fall traveling to film

festivals with a documentary film she co-produced, *Containment: Life After Three Mile Island*. The video documentary has now screened at over 30 film festivals and numerous colleges and has won several awards. She and Chris Boebel are currently co-directing a new documentary entitled *Exit Zero* about changes in a former steel mill neighborhood in South Chicago. Chris's book *Rough Waters: Nature and Development in an East African Marine Park* (Princeton University Press, 2004) also appeared in print this past year.

Jing Wang (fl&l) wrote "The Politics and Production of Scales: How Does Geography Matter to Studies of Local, Popular Culture?" the introductory chapter to *Locating China: Space, Place, and Popular Culture*, a book she edited and forthcoming from Routledge. Wang also authored two forthcoming articles: "Youth Culture, Music, and Cell phone Branding in China" in *Global Media and Communication*, and "Bourgeois Bohemians in China? Neo-Tribes and the Urban Imaginary" in *China Quarterly*.

Graduate students

During Independent Activities Period (IAP), **Vanessa Bertozzi** ('06) took part in the MIT Alumni Association's externship program by working at Small Design Firm Inc., a company that creates interactive exhibits that was founded by Media Lab alum David Small. Bertozzi redesigned the company Web site, sketched out some ideas for interactivity at the new Boston ICA building, and took a "peek," she says, "into the creative process of groundbreaking media artists."

Veronica Bollo ('06) has been in Panama working on a project with support from MIT's Public Service Center and co-sponsored by the Contemporary Art Museum, Panama. The project was a digital storytelling/ media literacy workshop for 20 indigenous inner-city youth in which a 20-minute film based on a traditional Kuna indigenous tale was produced.

Amulya Gopalakrishnan ('06) is researching how online poetry forums help create a digital middlebrow, talk back to the canon, and spark previously impossible forms of affiliation around literature. She continues helping **Pablo Boczkowski** with

his work on DSpace and digital institutional repositories.

Brian Jacobson ('05) spent the majority of the break relaxing under the blue skies of North Carolina and Georgia, completing Ph.D. applications, and catching up on reading. During IAP, he was most often found watching films from the Film Office of working on his thesis, which focuses on the transnational flow of American cultural icons in relation to the brokering of French national identity in the theoretical discourses and films of the Nouvelle Vague. On April 28, Jacobson will present his research on cinema, architecture and space as part of the "Filmic Others" session of the "Research in Progress" spring seminar series sponsored by History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture and Art at MIT.

Andrea McCarty ('05) and **Rekha Murthy** ('05) sent off the second version of *Flaneurs Savants* with the January Scholars in France 2005. *Flaneurs Savants* is a walking tour of the Marais neighborhood in Paris for handheld devices. The January Scholars — seven undergraduate students in the MIT French Department — used the tour, loaded onto HP iPAQ devices, and are in the process of assembling user feedback. They will present the tour at conferences at MIT and Brown this spring.

This past fall, **James Nadeau** ('06) helped produce and curate the Boston Cinema Census at the Brattle Theatre as a board member of the non-profit film organization Central Productions. Currently, he is in the programming stages of the Boston Gay and Lesbian Film Festival to be held at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) in May, and is organizing the Virtual University conference slated for MIT in April. His research involves creating an interactive database for the Shanghai Project with former CMS visiting scholar **Andrew Jakubowicz** of the University of Technology in Sydney, Australia.

Ravi Purushotma ('06) is developing an educational modification to *The Sims 2* that allows players to simultaneously learn German and enjoy playing the game, which he will present at a May conference in Umea, Sweden.

CMS faculty and students urged to blog on media and technology

By Henry Jenkins

CMS faculty member **Anthony Lioi** (Writing and Humanistic Studies) and graduate student **Alicia “Kestrell” Verlanger** are heading up a new outreach effort. The CMS program was asked by Brad King, the new online editor of *Technology Review*, to be one of four or five innovative programs to have special blogs featured on the *Technology Review* Web site.

Lioi and Verlanger have identified an initial team of faculty and

students — from CMS, Science Writing, the Media Lab, and Science, Technology, and Society — who have committed to posting regular commentary on technology, science, media, entertainment, and education. Participants include faculty members Leo Marx, Aden Evens, Mya Poe, Kim Devries and Tom Levenson, as well as students **Ilya Vedrashko**, **Amulya Gopalakrishnan**, **Ravi Purushotma**, **Rekha Murthy**, **James Nadeau**, **Kelly Norton**, and **Vanessa Bertozzi**.

In the short term, their posts are integrated into the regular *Technology Review* blog (www.technologyreview.com/blogs), but as soon as we reach a critical mass of participation, the CMS contributions will achieve an autonomous status.

Please support these efforts by reading the blog, suggesting potential content, and offering your writing services. This is a great opportunity for faculty and students to participate in a larger public conversation about media change.

Parmesh Shahani ('05) spent last term working with **Henry Jenkins** conceptualizing the CMS Convergence Culture Consortium at MIT. He also wrote some chapters of his thesis, submitted a chapter to a forthcoming book on Bollywood cinema, and spent his spare time being a culture vulture in Boston (Blue Man Group, Marcel Marceau, Groucho - A Life in Revue, the MFA) and New York (The London Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall, MoMA, Harlem).

Alicia Verlanger ('05) a.k.a. Kestrell is currently working on a number of projects including how digital-rights management affects students with disabilities, and how people with disabilities adopt and adapt technology in order to produce new images of disability. Kestrell will be presenting a paper on “Mythologizing Blindness: Blind Archetypes in Story” at the Media In Transition conference in May.

CMS Thesis Presentation Schedule

Presentations are open to the CMS community as well as the general public.

Tuesday, April 19, 2005

Room 4-231

9:30 am-10:00	Coffee
10:00-10:40	Parmesh Shahani , <i>Straight Expectations: Globalization, Community and Identity in Gay Bombay</i>
10:40-11:20	Andrea McCarty , <i>Toying with Obsolescence: The Fisher Price PXL 2000 Camera</i>
11:20-11:35	Coffee
11:35-12:15 pm	Karen Schrier , <i>Revolutionizing History Education: Using Augmented Reality Games to Teach History</i>
12:15-1:00	Lunch
1:00-1:40	Brett Camper , <i>The Game Boy Advance Homebrew Scene: Negotiating Technology, Culture, and Law in an Amateur Development Community</i>
1:40-2:20	Joellen Easton , <i>Radio Show/Radio Public: How Media Communities Interactively Define Acceptable Discourse</i>
2:20-2:35	Coffee
2:35-3:15	Brian Jacobson , <i>Cinema/ Identity/ Space: Representations of the (Trans)National Home</i>
3:15-3:55	Rekha Murthy , <i>Street Media: Ambient Messages in an Urban Space</i>
4:00	Reception



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Communications Forum and CMS Colloquium Schedule

- Thursday, Feb. 3**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium: *The Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) Movement***
- Stefano Mazzocchi, director, Apache Software Foundation; MIT Digital Library Research Group
- Over the last three decades, the FOSS movement has radically changed not only the way people produce and consume software, but also the perception of quality associated with distributed and volunteer authoring. Started in software, these collaborative developments and their innovative licensing models are now spreading to many other domains. In this talk, we'll introduce the philosophical principles that drive the FOSS movement, we'll outline the differences between the various strands of the movement, and shed some light on the socio-economical dynamics they have generated.
- Thursday, Feb. 10**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium: *The Boston Cyberarts Festival and Interactivity in the Arts***
- George Fifield, founder and director, Boston Cyberarts Inc.
- The Boston Cyberarts Festival is the largest festival for artists working in new media in the country. There will be a brief overview of the origins and history of the Festival and a sneak preview of some of the events planned for this Spring's Festival.
- Thursday, Feb. 17**
5-7 p.m.
Bartos Theater
- Forum: *Election 2004 and Beyond: Did the Media Fail?***
- Terence Smith, head of the media unit, *NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*; Cathy Young, *Boston Globe* columnist and contributing editor for *Reason* magazine
- 
- A report card on both new and old media's coverage of the election and its aftermath. Was the print media more accurate and nuanced than the electronic media in reporting on the candidates and framing the central questions facing the country? What was the impact of the Internet and the emerging blogosphere? Has media coverage of the president and his foreign and domestic policies changed since his re-election? Are American news sources, particularly TV networks, fulfilling the role envisioned in the Constitution for media in a democracy? Co-sponsor: The Technology and Culture Forum at MIT.
- Thursday, February 24**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium: *CMS Town Meeting***
- Restricted to CMS faculty and students.
- Thursday, March 3**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium: *Pixelvision and PXL THIS screening***
- Gerry Fialka is an artist, filmmaker, and festival organizer who has worked in experimental film with the Ann Arbor Film Festival, and curates the PXL THIS Film Festival, now in its fourteenth year.
- The Pixelvision camera, which records video images and sound onto regular cassette tapes, was released by Fisher Price as a toy video camera in the late 1980s. Since then, it has been used by a range of media artists and amateurs to create low-res, grainy and dream-like images in shorts, documentaries and even a few feature films. Gerry Fialka, the curator of PXL THIS, a festival devoted to Pixelvision shorts, discusses the Pixelvision phenomenon and the camera's future in the digital age. Colloquium will be followed by a screening of PXL THIS at 8pm.
- Thursday, March 10**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium: *Comics Journalism***
- Joe Sacco is a Maltese citizen currently residing in the US where he makes his living as a cartoonist and journalist. He is the author of *Palestine* and *Safe Area Gorazde*.
- 
- Using slides from his books and magazine articles about the Middle East and Bosnia, Joe Sacco will be discussing the advantages (and disadvantages) of using comics as a medium for journalism.

- Thursday, March 17**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium: *Space Time Play: Applying Pervasive Game Design for Location-Based Learning***
- Steffen P. Walz** is a fellow in the Advanced Communication Technologies Lab at the University of Texas at Austin, and a doctoral candidate in computer-aided architectural design at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology.
- Walz will explore how people can take advantage of pervasive computing.
- Thursday, March 31**
5-7 p.m.
Bartos Theater
- Forum: *What's New at the Media Lab?***
- Chris Csikszentmihlyi** is director of the lab's Computing Culture group and specializes in cultural applications of new technologies; **Mitchel Resnick**, the LEGO Papert Professor of Learning Research and the author of *Turtles*, *Termites*, and *Traffic Jams*, studies the impact of new technologies on learning and cognition.
- Two of the Media Lab's leading researchers report on their recent work.
- Thursday, April 7**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium**
- To be announced.
- Wednesday, April 13**
begins 7 p.m.
10-250
- Colloquium: *Race, Comics, and Popular Cinema: A Conversation with Reggie Hudlin***
- Reginald Hudlin** is the director of *House Party* (1990), *Boomerang* (1992) and *The Bernie Mac Show* (2001-present). His first book is the graphic novel *Birth of A Nation: A Comic Novel*, which he co-wrote with cartoonist Aaron McGruder and illustrator Kyle Baker. A lifelong comics fan, Hudlin writes two ongoing series for Marvel Comics. Co-sponsors: Office of the Arts, the DeFlorez Fund and the Chancellor's Office. **Note:** This colloquium takes place on Wednesday, April 13, beginning at 7 p.m. in 10-250.
- 
- Thursday, April 21**
5-7 p.m.
6-120
- Forum: *Branding the Urban Landscape***
- Jon Cropper** is creative content channel strategist at Young & Rubicam Brands; **Steven Klein** is a freelance brand strategist; **Jesse Shapins** is creative development manager at Counts Media and a lead creative collaborator at Yellow Arrow.
- As brands compete for attention in an environment saturated with advertising, some companies are taking to the streets, placing ads in unlikely and attention-grabbing locations, deploying mobile technologies to annotate the urban landscape, aiming to create marketing that doesn't look or feel like advertising. At the same time, activist groups are exploiting the same technologies to deliver their own messages about city life. How effective are these alternative approaches to branding? How are city-dwellers responding to the transformation of their neighborhoods into branded environments? What forms of branding and marketing will shape urban life in the future?
- Thursday, April 28**
begins 5 p.m.
2-105
- Colloquium: *Underground Life and Quotidian Times of Brooklyn Comicbook Artists***
- A roundtable discussion with comic artists **Nick Bertozzi** (www.nickbertozzi.com), **Paul Pope** (www.paulpope.com), **Matt Madden** (www.mattmadden.com), **Jessica Abel** (www.artbabe.com), and **Dean Haspiel** (www.deanhaspiel.com). The roundtable will be moderated by **Henry Jenkins**.
- May 6-8**
MIT
- Conference: *MIT4: the work of stories***
- See web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4.

CMS teams with terrascope program to develop radio course

By Ari Epstein, MIT Terrascope Program

This academic year, CMS has teamed up with MIT's Earth System Initiative (ESI) to develop a new subject, Terrascope Radio (SP.360).

The subject, open to freshmen in ESI's Terrascope Program, is an exploration of radio as a medium of communication and expression. Class time will emphasize directed listening to, and analysis of, radio pieces in a wide variety of genres and styles. Individual sessions will highlight such topics as: evocative uses of sound; interviewing, theory and practice; writing for radio; voicing; and putting it all together.

A series of writing assignments will give students the chance to reflect and build on their classroom experiences. In the lab, the students will produce, assemble, record, narrate and broadcast/ webcast/ podcast their own radio program on topics related to the complex environmental problems they are studying in Terrascope.

Terrascope is a unique learning community in which freshmen explore complex environmental questions that require integrated, multidisciplinary solutions. The program emphasizes active learning in group settings, with the direction of the work strongly driven by the students' own interests and inquiry. Each year is devoted to a par-

ticular question or issue. This year's Terrascope topic concerns environmental preservation, monitoring, tourism, fishing and sustainable development in the Galapagos Archipelago.

During the fall semester, students develop their own solutions to a set of complex problems related to the year's topic area; they then present and defend their solutions before an international panel of experts flown in for the purpose. In the spring, they develop and build interactive museum exhibits to teach the general public about the issue they have been studying. Terrascope Radio will complement the exhibit-building class, as students explore a variety of ways to communicate with public audiences on complex environmental issues.

CMS graduate students **Joellen Easton** and **Rekha Murthy** spent the fall semester working closely with Ari Epstein of the Terrascope Program, along with **Henry Jenkins** of CMS and Terrascope faculty members Penny Chisholm, Kip Hodges and Rafael Bras, to develop the class and gain Institute approval.

Easton and Murthy each have several years of experience as public radio producers. Easton worked most recently with the BBC/PRI/WGBH coproduction *The World*, and Murthy worked for NPR's *All Things Considered*.

Education arcade readies for second e3 games gathering

The Second Games-in-Education Conference at the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) will take place at the Los Angeles Convention Center from May 15 through 17.

Run by CMS's Education Arcade, this year's conference seeks to gather a wide range of education theorists and practitioners investigating the role of games in educational contexts.

The conference keynote will be presented by Peter Molyneux, the designer responsible for such innovative games as *Black & White* and *Fable*.

Other participants include James Gee (University of Wisconsin), Barry Joseph (Global Kidz), Idit Caperton (MaMaMedia), Yasmin Kafai (UCLA), and Jen Sun (Whyville).

The Education Arcade has posted registration and additional conference information to its Web site at www.educationarcade.org.

Course looks at 'art, science and business' of games

This spring, **Christopher Weaver** is teaching a new course in Media Industries and Systems called Making Games (CMS.922, undergraduate CMS.610), which deals with the fastest growing area of media consumption—videogames.

Last year, the sale of videogames exceeded the domestic box office for Hollywood movies, Weaver said. The industry is growing at double digit rates, while the consumption of the most common form of media entertainment, namely television, is going down. This is especially true among the videogame generation of 12-40 year olds.

The course is a critical examination of the videogame industry and its history, seminal programs, and people, according to Weaver. It also

looks at the mix of art, science and business necessary to make commercially successful games. A number of industry luminaries have agreed to guest lecture to Weaver's students this term. The students will also have an opportunity to interact with the speakers afterwards.

Weaver, who has been a visiting scholar and fellow of the CMS program since its inception, is a 30-year industry veteran, having founded Bethesda Softworks, a company responsible for creating programs such as the original John Madden Football for Electronic Arts and the award-winning Elder Scrolls role-playing series whose most recent chapter, *Morrowind*, was #4 on the *New York Times* Best Sellers list and #1 on the X-Box.

Know media? Do you blog? You should. See page 5, top.

Jenkins, uricchio from page 2

we have ever met, as is clear to anyone who has ever watched him lecture and play a game one-handed behind his back.

His insights into game design and game culture have been key to the success we have enjoyed throughout our educational games research. In recent years, it has been fun to watch Philip develop as a classroom teacher, a team leader, and as an advocate for games in education. We wish Philip luck for the next stages of his life.

New arrival

Alongside these departures, there are arrivals. We welcome into our midst **Beth Coleman** (see story, this page), who has been hired by Writing and Humanistic Studies with the expectation that the majority of her time and energy will be devoted to CMS.

Coleman first came to our attention through her contributions to the Race in Digital Spaces conference we co-hosted with the USC. She is a promising young scholar, a gifted artist, and a mean DJ.

In the past few years, Writing and Humanistic Studies has made a series of hires to enhance digital studies at MIT. We are now in conversations with Writing to develop new subjects that will enhance the production aspects of the program.

Dower kudos

We have become accustomed to our faculty and student accomplishing great things and winning recognition for their contributions. But, we were especially proud to learn that **John Dower** (see story, this page), a CMS-affiliated faculty member, received a Mellon Distinguished Achievement Award to support his work with CMS steering committee member **Shigeru Miyagawa**.

John, you make us proud!

Coleman joins cms and writing faculties

Beth Coleman has joined MIT as a co-appointment in CMS and the Program in Writing and Humanistic Studies. Her research interests include new media, contemporary aesthetics, electronic music, critical theory and literature, and race theory.

Her first course at MIT is *Eternal War* (CMS.876), under the new rubric History of Media and Technology.

Coleman is a 2003-4 Rockefeller New Media Fellow and a 2004 Ford Foundation fellow. Under the name M. Singe, she is co-founder of the SoundLab Cultural Alchemy project, established in 1995.



Coleman's visual work has been exhibited at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Venice Biennale 2004,

ARC/Muse d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris, and the List Visual Arts Gallery at MIT, among other venues.

She has been performing internationally as a sound artist since 1997, and her music has appeared on such labels as Mille Plateaux, FOR 4 EARS, Law and Auder, Intakt, and SoundLab Records.

Coleman's written work has appeared in numerous journals, and she is working on a book, *Difference Engines: Thinking Race and Technology*.

Dower recognized with mellon achievement award

John W. Dower, Ford International Professor of History whose specialty is Japanese history, has been awarded a Mellon Distinguished Achievement Award in recognition of scholarship that has contributed decisively to the study of history and promises to influence teaching and learning in the humanities at large. The prestigious humanities award provides funds of up to \$1.5 million over a three-year period.

The prize comes at a time when "we can take off with a project to wed humanities at MIT with new technological opportunities and change the way we talk about and teach historical materials," Dower said in a prepared statement.

Dower said that the Visualizing Cultures project, which he has developed with MIT Professor of Linguistics and Japanese **Shigeru Miyagawa**, "will be the model for this new way of using technology to

present complex academic material. I'd like to see this work made accessible in the public realm; I'd like it to become a new way of doing public education.

"This work is expensive. We'd like to develop a new database for visual materials; we need software designers and research assistants; and we'll be working in two languages at least. It's exciting to be able to take this to the next level," Dower said.

Dower's history courses at MIT cover the full range of Japanese history from ancient to modern times, and his expertise in visual representation is reflected in course names such as "World War II in Asia: Film, Fantasy, Fact" and "Japan in the Age of the Samurai: History and Film."

Dower is author of *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*, winner of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award.



CMS to host virtual university's education conference in april

During the weekend of April 15th and 16th, MIT and CMS will be hosting the Virtual University conference tentatively titled, "Building Virtual U: Lessons Learned and Future Possibilities for Education."

In the 10 years since its inception, VU has been recognized as a pioneer in the use game technologies as learning tools.

The conference brings together Virtual University users and stakeholders as well as educational and gaming experts to generate two days of critical discussions around



the future of education.

Confirmed speakers are William F. Massey of the Jackson Hole Higher Education Group, Ben Sawyer, co-founder of Digitalmill, the co-presenter of the conference; Doug Toma of the University of Georgia; **Henry Jenkins** of MIT; and more. A full schedule will be released shortly. Information will also be posted on

the Education Arcade site, www.educationarcade.org, and at www.virtual-u.org, the Virtual University Web site.

Stories conference from cover



Maria Tatar

historical eras. Speakers at this session will include Maria Tatar of Harvard, author of influential studies of folk tales and of a recent translation of *Grimm's Tales*; Janet Staiger of the University of Texas, widely known for her historical and interpretive studies of American film; and R.P. Howells of the University of Leeds, England, author of a ground-breaking study of the stories and myths about heroism, gender and social class generated by the sinking of the Titanic.

A third public event will showcase new media projects created by students and faculty in CMS and in the MIT Media Lab. Participants include Walter Bender, Hiroshi Ishii, Chris Csikszentmihályi and Judith Donath of the Media Lab and **Beth Coleman**, **Thomas Defrantz** and **Eric Klopfer** of CMS. **Henry Jenkins** will moderate the session.

Political or ideological themes define many of the papers to be delivered, some of which focus on the ways in which narratives shape national identity, frame cultural values, constrain or define specific journalistic and national perspectives on war, race, gender and social class.

Another significant group of papers considers stories and storytelling as instruments for community activism and the assertion or preservation of ethnic and minority subcultures. Other papers deal with a range of expressive media, including novels, television and movies as well as such emerging media as the Internet and the mobile telephone.

David Thorburn, director of the Communications Forum, and **Henry Jenkins** and **William Uricchio**, directors of CMS, are the conference organizers. More information, including registration instructions and abstracts of papers, is available on the conference web site at web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4.

Several past and present CMS graduate students as well as faculty members will be presenting papers at MiT4:

"Run, Lola, Run: Film as a Narrative Database," **Jim Bizzocchi** (CMS '01), now Simon Fraser University

"Comics Journalism: Truth and Subjectivity in the Work of Joe Sacco," **Joellen Easton** ('05), CMS

"Just Men in Tights?: What Genre Theory Can Teach Us About the Persistence of Superhero Comics," **Henry Jenkins**, CMS

"David Lynch and Robert Wilson: Contemporary Surrealist Storytellers," **Kurt Lancaster** (CMS '01), now Fort Lewis College

"The End of the World as We Know It: Narratives of Environmental Apocalypse in Contemporary Literature and Other Media," **Anthony Lioi**, MIT Writing and Humanistic Studies

"Flâneurs Savants: A Stroll Through the Marais Neighborhood of Paris," **Rekha Murthy** ('05) and **Andrea McCarty** ('05), CMS

"Rahman Online: Notes on Film Music and Fan Collectives in an Age of Convergence," **Aswin Punathambekar** (CMS '03), now University of Wisconsin, Madison

"Mythologizing Blindness: Archetypes of Blindness in Media," **Alicia Verlager** ('06), CMS

For a full listing of papers, registration and the conference agenda, see the MiT4 Web site at web.mit.edu/comm-forum/mit4.

Game design and theory students engage in ‘food fight’

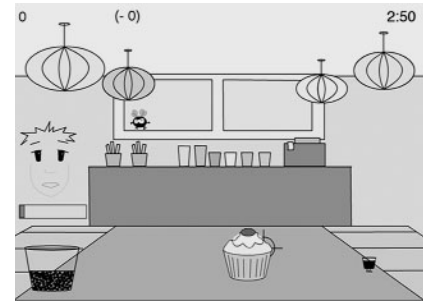
Game Design and Theory (CMS.600) was taught by **Henry Jenkins, Philip Tan** and **Brett Camper** during the fall term.

The class discussed issues surrounding game and rules design, requiring groups of students to work together to design and produce card games and small digital games.

A public showing of student-designed games at the Stratton Student Center game room was entitled “Food

Fight” to reflect the food theme of the games. Designed, coded and tested within seven weeks, students produced games about hunting, cooking and feeding all sorts of hungry creatures.

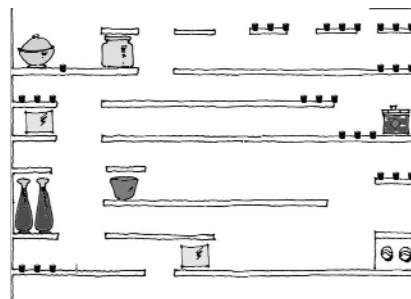
Tan will be leaving his position as technologist-in-residence of CMS to work for the Media Development Authority of Singapore’s Digital Media group.



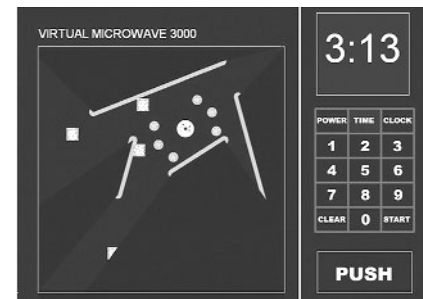
Boba Commando was created by Annie Ding, Xia Liu, Brian Wu, Emily Yan and Xiao Yu.



Hungry-Man was created by students Tom Hoover, Drew Houston, David Proudfoot and Zach Traina.



Inkus Maximus was created by Chris Casiano, Xiaohua Sun, Michael Thilmont and Sean Whaley.



Virtual Microwave 3000 was created by Tyler Callahan, Nicholas Hunter, Craig Morales, Matthew Webber and Nicholas Williams.

Metamedia expanding its archives with several new projects

By **Kurt Fendt, Metamedia Project Manager**

The Metamedia Research Group has embarked on the development of several, exciting new faculty projects:

Jews of Shanghai – A historical archive project documenting the multinational Jewish community in Shanghai from 1930-1950. Materials include biographies, video interviews and photo albums, associated with seven Jewish families in Shanghai from Europe and Asia. This project is being developed in collaboration with the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

Eurasian History and Memory Visual Archive – This project provides access to rich visual materials (photographs, newspaper cartoons and illustrations, paintings, and film) as well as historical texts related to Eurasian cultural history in China, Hong Kong, and the U.S. This project is being developed in collaboration with **Emma Teng**, Chinese Studies.

MIT Alumnae Oral History Project – This project, under development in collaboration with Margery Resnick, Foreign Languages and Literatures, and the MIT Alumni Association offers insights into the study and career paths of well-known female MIT Graduates. Core

materials for this project include student-led interviews with alumnae, contemporary scientific and personal documents, and materials from the MIT Archives.

Digital Dürrenmatt – An interactive archive for literary scholars, theater producers, and educators. The initial phase of this project, under development in collaboration with the Swiss Literary Archive at the Swiss National Library in Bern, features original manuscripts, films versions, stage adaptations, and rich contextual materials related to Friedrich Dürrenmatt’s famous play *Der Besuch der alten Dame* (“The Visit of the Old Lady”).

In December, the Metamedia Research group organized a design workshop to discuss the requirements and features of a new open-source version of the Metamedia framework. The more than 20 participants included members of MIT’s Architecture Department, MIT Libraries, Publishing Services Bureau and Academic Computing.

In the meantime, the Metamedia group has collaborated with Information Services and Technology (IS&T) to develop a new version of its framework based on the Open Knowledge Initiative (OKI), which will go online late in the spring semester.

CMS, academic computing to develop virtual mit

By **Brett Camper**, CMS graduate student

When new MIT freshmen are admitted each year, they often must choose where they want to live before they have the opportunity to visit campus.

Students from all over the world arrive with a limited sense of the MIT lifestyle and experience — until they suddenly find themselves in the thick of it.

The dorms and living groups, which consider themselves to be distinctive cultural communities, are struggling to construct representations of their lifestyles through print and short movies featured on CD-Roms. Yet, cultures are hard to describe in words and much easier to experience through practices. What if roommates could get to know each other online before they arrived on campus? What if we could provide students with a more immediate experience of what the departments and lab cultures are like?

The Virtual MIT project is a new initiative between CMS and the Academic Computing group in Information Services & Technology. The vision for Virtual MIT is to take the idea of an open university to the next level, creating an online representation of MIT and its various cultural communities, which would operate much like current online massively multiplayer role playing games and would make MIT cultures more widely accessible, especially to incoming students.

As the initiative moves forward, MIT will provide core models of each of the dorms, but the students could use modeling tools to adapt those representations to reflect the real or imagined experience of life in that dorm. Academic departments could similarly host events for prospective international students. Imagine players worldwide navigating the infinite corridor, admiring innovative new buildings such as the Stata Center, visiting labs, playing games in the steam tunnels, hanging out with students from various dorms, attending Steer Roast, and yes, even putting digital police cars on top of a simulation of the great dome.

Virtual MIT kicks off this spring semester with a planning phase and prototype that will help us to imagine what such an online participatory space might look and feel like, seeking inspiration from games such as *The Sims Online*, *Second Life*, and *Habbo Hotel* that have shown real strength in capturing the essence of community and cultural identities in a stylized yet compelling manner. **Henry Jenkins**, **Philip Tan**, and **Brett Camper** in CMS will work with Vijay Kumar, Phillip Long, and Oliver Thomas in IS&T to solicit student and faculty input and map out a long-term vision for the project. A team of undergraduate researchers (UROPs) will assist in prototype development and make student perspectives and experiences integral to the project.

CMS

Comparative Media Studies

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