Leading the discussion were Columbia’s Todd Gitlin, professor of journalism and sociology; and Jonathan Cole, John Mitchell Mason Professor of the University, along with Steven Levy, senior editor and chief technology writer for *Newsweek*. The freel-wheeling exchange of thoughts and ideas surrounded what Levy characterized as “this wonderful and now treacherous landscape that we’re all traversing.”

When Levy visited MIT 20 years ago to research his book, *Hacking*, he learned of Silicon Valley’s “hacking” the railway of wires and telephone switching devices under the tracks in Building 20. With the arrival of a computer, the young hackers began transforming the “joy they had working underneath the model railroad table to the computer. They started a new style of interactive computing dealing with information. It was totally open; they shared everything, a philosophy that keeps going to this day.”

Levy believes that digitization has brought about a new world, one that is new crossroads. Cheap data storage and search engines such as Google “will let you search and save every scrap of information that comes your way. You’ll be able to TiVo your whole life,” he said.

Levy acknowledged the private issues involved in Internet use, but he championed the free flow of information that brought “joy to those hackers in Building 20. Maybe it’s time to refer to the idea that all information—will lift humanity, just as history has lifted us.”

Gitlin contended that the joy experienced by the young MIT hackers was not incidental to the digital age. “What they were after was joy,” he said. “I think we mistreated this idea of display and transfer and exchange information more efficiently and at a faster rate.

Gitlin suggested that people seek transcendence through technology; we collectively “masquerading what we really like and want by talking about something that sounds like scientific information. We hunger for an experience of mastery, of surpassing every everyday event, driving which has driven the human, diffusion, search and promulgation of new technologies.”

Levy and Gitlin jump-started a thoughtful examination of issues accompanying information abundance, the Internet’s impact on the gathering and retrieval of information, on political systems, on journalism, and on the “digital divide.” Credit the Marconi Foundation with its appreciation of “something broader than simply observing and looking at transformations in technology and scientific knowledge.” Jonathan Cole acknowledged the foundation’s efforts to consider the impact and value of these changes on society.

When asked what most people do on the Internet, Gitlin mentioned pornography, gambling and “forms of entertainment that are intrinsically interactive but maximally promiscuous of direct pleasure.”


The Guglielmo Marconi International Fellowship Foundation at Columbia is dedicated to nurturing and celebrating people whose application of communications technology has had a positive and lasting impact. Established in 1974 through an endowment by Gioia Marconi Braga, the foundation is best known for the Marconi International Fellowship, which is awarded annually. For more information, visit www.marconi-foundation.org.

### Pool, P&S Pioneer in Treatment of Cerebral Aneurysms, Dies at 97

J ohn Lawrence Pool, a pioneer in the research and treatment of cerebral aneurysms, passed away May 4 at the age of 97 at his home in New Canaan, Connecticut. He was a professor emeritus of neurological surgery at Columbia’s College of Physicians & Surgeons and former chief of neurosurgery at the Neurological Institute of New York at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center, where he served from 1949 to 1972.

Born in 1906 in New York City, Pool was named for his ancestor James Lawrence, a U.S. Navy captain in the War of 1812, whose dying words to his men were “Don’t give up the ship.”

He attended Columbia medical school and practiced neurological surgery in New York until the start of World War II. At that time, he joined the 9th Evacuation Hospital of the U.S. Army and performed surgery in North Africa, Italy and France. He returned to New York in 1946 and in 1949 was named chief of surgery at the Neurological Institute.

He eventually was elected as a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of many honors he received during his lifetime.

John Lawrence Pool

Pool’s talents were not limited to the operating room. He was the national squash racquets champion in both 1929 and in 1931. Pool also played tennis and golf and had a passion for fly-fishing.

He authored several books on the brain, for both academic and lay audiences, in addition to smaller works on such topics as Revolutionary War history.

### From left: Jonathan Cole, John Mitchell Mason Professor of the University; Todd Gitlin, professor of journalism and sociology; and Steven Levy, senior editor for *Newsweek*, at the symposium.

### Lions Excel On and Off the Mat

The Columbia wrestling team flourished on and off the mat this year, finishing third in the Ivy League, first in the league’s academic record and sending two wrestlers to the NCAA Tournament. The Lions placed third on the National Wrestling Coaches Association, All-Academic Team with a team GPA of 3.25. Columbia earned its third consecutive nationally ranked recruiting class, according to two publications: *Win Magazine* ranked the incoming freshmen class No. 21 in the U.S. *Intermatwrestle.com* ranked the Lions No. 25 in the U.S. as well as No. 2 in the Ivy League and No. 2 in the EIWA Conference. The previous two years, Columbia placed 7th and 10th, respectively.

Columbia wrestler Devin Mensano in action.

“Year this was one of the proudest of my tenure,” said head coach Brendan Buckley. “We had the highest of aspirations with three wrestlers nationally ranked —Matt Palmer, Erik Norgaard, and Kirk Davis. However, soon after the season began, we encountered a few season-ending injuries that were certain to have a profound impact on our young team. Our team dug deep and told themselves that you would not deter them from pushing the top teams in the Ivy League and the EIWA conference. As a result, we finished third in the Ivy League as we defeated Harvard for the first time in eight years and sent two individuals (Steve Sutton and Jeff Sato) to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in 31 years.”