MIT Class of 1966
50th Reunion

June 2-5, 2016

Classmate Speakers

Dr. Victor Fung
Mel Goldman
Dennis Overbye
Bob Poole
Dr. George Ricker
MIT Class of 1966 - 50th Reunion Committee

**Reunion Committee Members**

Jerry Abraham  
Michael Adler  
Tim Carney  
Muffet Chatterton  
Gerry Clarke  
John Dawson  
Bill Dietrich  
Mark Glickstein  
Richard Gray  
Ted Gull  
Tom Jones  
Joel Karlinsky  
Jeff Kenton  
Jim Kester  
Richard Levine  
Ray Pfau  
Bill Marlow  
Allen Post  
Joe Rife  
Linwood Robinson  
Paul Rudovsky  
Ralph Schmitt  
Joe Shaffery  
Stu Shapiro  
Tom Scott  
Stu Vidockler  
Sam Wagstaff  
Steve Weiss  
Loren Wood

**Reunion Committee Roles**

Ralph Schmitt, Chair  
Joe Rife, Deputy Chair  
Robert Dimmick, Alumni Association Liaison  
Gerry Clarke, Class Treasurer  
Steve Weiss, Class Webmaster  
Jeff Kenton, Class Secretary

**Alumnae Subcommittee**

Chair: Muffet Chatterton

**Attendance/Outreach Subcommittee**

Chair: Tom Jones  
Deputy Chairs: Gerry Clarke (IT), Joe Shaffery  
Members: All other Reunion Committee Members

**Classmate Speakers Subcommittee**

Chair: Ralph Schmitt  
Members: Richard Levine, Bill Marlow

**Memorial Service Subcommittee**

Chair: Muffet Chatterton  
Members: Gerry Clarke, Ray Pfau

**Missing Classmates Subcommittee**

Chair: Jim Kester  
Members: Mark Glickstein, Stu Shapiro

**Regalia and Souvenir Subcommittee**

Chair: Allen Post  
Members: Gerry Clarke, Bill Dietrich

**Resort Events Subcommittee**

Co-Chairs: Richard Gray, Linwood Robinson

**Reunion Book Subcommittee**

Chair & Co-Editor: Joel Karlinsky  
Co-Editor: Gerry Clarke  
Members: Muffet Chatterton, Richard Gray, Ted Gull, Stu Shapiro

**Reunion Row Subcommittee**

Co-Chairs: Ray Pfau, Tom Scott

**Venues and Menus Subcommittee**

Chair: Joe Rife  
Members: Gerry Clarke, Richard Gray, Richard Levine, Allen Post
NOTE: Feel free to change sessions during the breaks.

Session 1 - Influencing Global Changes  5:00 – 7:45 PM, Kirsch Auditorium, 32-123

5:00 – 5:45  China’s New Normal and the Role of Hong Kong
Dr. Victor Fung ’66

5:45 – 6:00  Break

6:00 – 6:45  Changing the World: My Career as a Think Tank Entrepreneur
Robert Poole ’66

6:45 – 7:00  Break

7:00 – 7:45  A Journey from MIT to the Peace Corps to a Winery
Melvin Goldman ’66

Session 2 - Earth & the Universe  5:00-6:45 PM, Room 32-141

5:00 – 5:45  In Search of New Worlds:
MIT's Quest for New Earths and Super-Earths with the TESS Satellite
Dr. George Ricker ’66

5:45 – 6:00  Break

6:00 – 6:45  The Adventures of a Cosmic Affairs Correspondent
Dennis Overbye ’66
PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Session 1 - Influencing Global Changes  5:00 – 7:45 PM, Kirsch Auditorium, 32-123

China’s New Normal and the Role of Hong Kong, Dr. Victor Fung:  I will try to give a picture of China’s emergence since its economic opening in 1979 through the present “New Normal” with a feel for how the future will unfold over the next five years with the implementation of the 13th Five Year Plan 2016-2020. Against this background, I will describe the role that Hong Kong has played through Reunification on July 1, 1997 and how it will evolve in the future. At the same time, I will try to provide a perspective from the point of view of a business operating in this region, including our family company Li & Fung.

Changing the World: My Career as a Think Tank Entrepreneur, Robert Poole:  How did an introverted MIT nerd end up founding and managing for two decades a successful public policy think tank? That’s the story I will relate at our 50th reunion. After researching and writing my first-ever magazine article (calling for airline deregulation, in 1969) in a start-up magazine called Reason, I started to see writing as a powerful tool for changing hearts and minds. A year later, several friends and I acquired the magazine and ran it as a hobby business for seven years. At that point, it was either turn it into a real business or shut down, so we created Reason Foundation as a nonprofit think tank. From three people and a budget of $200,000, we grew it into a bi-coastal think tank (Los Angeles and DC) with 65 people and a $10 million budget. The magazine has won national awards, our Reason TV is very popular, and our public policy research has had considerable impact—such as inventing and popularizing express toll lanes on freeways, helping mayors and governors privatize public services, popularizing charter schools and other school-choice policies, and championing the “corporatization” of the U.S. air traffic control system. Reason has advised congressional committees, several White House administrations, and many federal and state agencies on implementing new policy ideas. Along the way, I have met legendary people such as Robert Heinlein, Milton Friedman, Margaret Thatcher, Burt Rutan, Herb Kelleher, John Stossel, Drew Carey, and many others, including fellow MIT alums Charles and David Koch. I overcame my nerdly introversion, teaching myself public speaking and fund-raising—it was either that or see my creation die. But I also figured out after 20 years as CEO, that fund-raising and management were not my strong suits—policy research is. My successor CEO has doubled the size of the organization since 2001, and I have gone on to do the best policy work of my career.

A Journey from MIT to the Peace Corps to a Winery, Mel Goldman:  Mel will relate his unusual trajectory from MIT to Peace Corps (in Nepal where he met his wife) through his entrepreneurial ventures and education and his tussles with bureaucracies. He will talk about his work in exciting countries like Colombia and India and unique experiences including helping develop the young venture capital industry in India, helping structure one of the first watershed management projects anywhere and interacting with phenomenal people in so many parts of the world. He will then relate how he completely changed course and became a farmer and a teacher
and built a winery over the past 18 years. There will be threads of MIT that will tie it all together of course.

One thread relates to MIT’s encouragement of entrepreneurship. His first such endeavor was a high school math program in Nepal, followed by the first private consulting company in Nepal.

Education forms another thread. Mel has been lucky to be involved with a variety of educational institutions spread out over his career since MIT. First, he went to grad school, Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School, 7 years after graduating college. After another 15 years, he took a “sabbatical” as a Visiting Fellow at University of Sussex, Science Policy Research Unit in the UK. And finally, for the past 13 years, he has been lucky enough to serve as a part-time teacher at Cornell.

His temporary sojourn after grad school to the World Bank ended up lasting 22 years. Despite his allergy to bureaucracy he managed to do some interesting and useful things.

Highlights included eight years working on Colombia and becoming the Bank’s Representative in Colombia and helping untangle some important projects in various sectors including petroleum, electricity and rural development. (The MIT connection in Colombia was wonderful and invaluable.) And then (in part because of the MIT credential) he became the Senior Technology Development Officer for Asia working extensively on various countries, most particularly India where he was involved in helping initiate the VC industry and in reforming the approaches of many research institutes in India. He had a love affair with India and his life was saved there as well.

The story will highlight how an MIT grad became a farmer and started up a winery in “old age” and is keeping at it crazily. The challenge has at times been overwhelming but the winery has managed to garner two prizes in France and is considered on one list the 65th best winery in the US (among tens of thousands.)

**Session 2 – Earth & the Universe**

**5:00-6:45 PM, Room 32-141**

**In Search of New Worlds: MIT’s Quest for New Earths and Super-Earths with the TESS Satellite, Dr. George Ricker:** Are we alone in the Universe? Is there life on planets orbiting other stars in our Galaxy? These questions have been repeatedly asked by philosophers and scientists since ancient times. Answers—at least for the second question— may well be known during the lifetime of members of the Class of ’66! Recent discoveries by the Kepler mission of several thousand “exoplanets” orbiting distant stars have provided a sound new basis for a path to the answers. Just next year, the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS)—an MIT-led initiative funded by NASA—should begin pinpointing potentially habitable planets orbiting the brightest stars that are nearest to Earth. In its two year mission, TESS will search the entire sky for planets comparable in size to Earth, as well as rocky planets that are slightly larger (so-called “Super-Earths”). Such planets, which are not detectable in ground-based searches, could prove to be favorable sites for the development of life. TESS’s new planets will be subject to intense scrutiny with NASA’s upcoming James Webb Space
Telescope (JWST) beginning in 2019, as that powerful new instrument searches for evidence of biogenic spectral signatures in the atmospheres of those new planets. The results of those searches by JWST should be known to us before the next reunion of the Class of ’66. When future generations dispatch an interstellar probe to one of these New Worlds (...or even set out to colonize it), a planet in a TESS-discovered star system could well be their chosen destination.

The Adventures of a Cosmic Affairs Correspondent, Dennis Overbye: I spend my time watching the Rickers and the Einsteins of the world from the bleachers. This is how I came to stop fearing quantum field theory and came to love the Higgs boson.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Dr. Victor Fung: After completing Course VI 2A SB in June and SM in September 1966, I went to Harvard University for a PhD in Business Economics, finishing in 1970 to work for two years in New York City at Citibank. Returned to Harvard Business School in 1972 as Assistant Professor until 1976 when I joined the family business Li & Fung in Hong Kong. The company was founded in 1906 in Southern China as a trading company dealing with exports of Chinese products. Today it is a major consumer products sourcing, wholesaling and retailing company headquartered in Hong Kong and operating in 60 countries with $25 billion in sales and 40,000 employees. The last twenty five years was focused on the development and orchestration of global supply chains and more recently on omni-channel retailing.

In 2011, I stepped down as Li & Fung public company chairman in favor of my brother William and became Chairman of our privately held family holding company and the Fung Foundation, which focuses philanthropic educational and think tank activities. Current interest in Water Conservation and providing Asian perspectives on global issues like sustainable and inclusive economic development and Innovation and Technology.

Happily married to Julia Shen since 1969 with three children and six grandchildren.

Academic:
SB, Electrical Engineering, MIT, 1966
SM, Electrical Engineering, MIT, 1966
PhD, Business Economics, Harvard University, 1970
Melvin Goldman: Melvin’s biography is part of his program description.

Academic:
SB, Humanities and Mathematics, MIT, 1966
MPA, Economic Development, Princeton University, Woodrow Wilson School. 1975
Visiting Fellow, University of Sussex, Science Policy Research Unit, 1990-91
Visiting Lecturer, Johnson School, Cornell University, 2002-2016

Dennis Overbye: After graduating from MIT in 1966 I worked for Boeing and EG&G and spent a year in graduate school at UCLA ostensibly studying astronomy, interspersed with long periods of unemployment and other existential woolgathering, and then decided I was the next great American novelist.

I entered the realm of journalism in 1976 when I got a job at Sky & Telescope magazine as an assistant typesetter and proofreader. I joined Time Inc in 1980 when Discover magazine was founded, and left it in 1985 to write books. I've been at The New York Times since 1998. I'm now a science reporter for the Times who has been covering the universe for more than 30 years. Among other things, I'm currently writing about "proliferation of planets beyond our own solar system and the mysterious dark energy that seems to be souping up the expansion of the universe."

My wife Nancy Wartik, also works for the Times and our daughter Mira will be 14 by the time you read this. We live in Manhattan.

Academic:
SB, Physics, MIT, 1966
Robert Poole: After two years at Sikorsky Aircraft, I moved to Santa Barbara and spent five years working for General Research Corp., a government policy think tank. In 1978 I co-founded Reason Foundation, a free-market-oriented public policy think tank. I served as CEO and President until 2001, when I stepped down to devote the rest of my career to policy work as Reason’s Director of Transportation Policy. I’m the author of two books (one on outsourcing municipal services, the other on rethinking highway policy) and editor of four others. I married my second wife, Lou Villadsen, in 1983, and we moved (along with Reason) to Los Angeles in 1986. Lou and I relocated to South Florida in 2003, and I am now a full-time telecommuter. I serve on standing and special committees of the Transportation Research Board, and have been appointed by several governors to serve on one-time study committees. I’m a life-long science fiction reader, a life-long rail fan, and a life-long model railroader, currently building my dream layout in a 1500 sq. ft. room in our house.

Academic:
SB, mechanical engineering, MIT, 1966
SM, mechanical engineering, MIT, 1967
Graduate work in operations research and management science, NYU, 1969

Dr. George Ricker: Dr. Ricker is the Director of MIT’s Detector Laboratory within the Kavli Institute for Astrophysics and Space Research. He also serves as Senior Research Scientist at the Kavli Institute. His work in space astronomy has involved devising a series of spaceborne telescopes and cameras, first flown from high altitude balloons for his MIT dissertation, then subsequently from satellites during his postgraduate career. He served as the Principal Investigator (PI) for the Solid State Imaging Spectrometer on the Japanese-US ASCA mission (1992), Deputy-PI for the Advanced CCD Imaging Spectrometer on NASA’s Chandra X-ray Observatory (1999), and US PI for the X-ray Imaging Spectrometer on the Japanese-US Astro-E mission (2000). Dr. Ricker was the mission PI for the international High Energy Transient Explorer (HETE) – a small scientific satellite incorporating instruments from France, Japan, and the United States – which was launched in 2000 and operated in orbit for six years. Built and integrated at MIT, HETE was the first satellite entirely devoted to the study of cosmic gamma-ray bursts. Most recently, Dr. Ricker serves as Mission PI for the Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS), scheduled for launch by NASA on a SpaceX Falcon rocket in 2017.

Academic:
SB, Physics, MIT, 1966
MS, Astronomy, Yale, 1967
PhD, Physics, MIT, 1971