

SPECIAL SEMINAR

Reconstructing the History of Incompatible Computing

Lars Brinkhoff and Oscar Vermeulen
ITS Reconstruction Project

Electronic computing has been part of MIT since its invention in the 1940s, starting with the Whirlwind computer and going from there. By the late 1960's, radical new approaches to computing were deeply entrenched with the MIT Artificial Intelligence Lab, centered around an emerging hacker culture and their counter-cultural Incompatible Timesharing System (ITS). While most computing at the time was focused on business and military applications, ITS was designed by hackers for hackers, to explore a new world of intellectual creativity enabled by giving motivated students access to state-of-the-art Digital Equipment Corp computers such as the PDP-6 and PDP-10.

While ITS was soon replaced by more mainstream operating systems, a dedicated group of enthusiasts has restored ITS and its LISP programming environment to operation using real ITS code running on simulated PDP-6 and PDP-10 machines.

Brinkhoff and Vermeulen describe the [recovery project](#) and demonstrate an operating system and programming environment completely unlike any you've likely seen before. The demonstration will be done on the [PiDP-10](#), a desktop replica of the PDP-10 computer designed to encapsulate the recovery project in a physical form.



MIT Museum Collections Workshop (3rd floor)
(MIT Museum, 314 Main St, Gambrill Center, Cambridge, MA)

April 1, 2024
2:30-4:30 pm

*NOTE: The seminar is free and open to all but an MIT ID
(or an admission ticket) is required for entry to the museum.*

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