Coed living gains foothold

By Dick King

Coed living, an issue that raised a storm of discussion on campus last fall, has seconded a firm hold at MIT.

Half a dozen living groups now house both men and women — all have either the fact or fiction of a cosseted social setup. The Interfraternity Council, in particular, has witnessed an unprecedented amount of debate over coeducation since the spring. The previous number of coed houses at MIT had been three.

The fraternities are having trouble getting the national organizations to recognize the new coed members. Some of the houses have suspended pledging for more freshmen unless the women are allowed to pledge too. The idea is that the women should feel like guests, at the sufficiency of the rest of the house, but like owners of the rest of the house as much right to be there as anyone else.

Dormitories

Many dorms were trying to go coed in the fall of last year, and those that tried were kept off the books for quite a while as the Dean for Student Affairs office kept repeating that at least one dorm would go coed next year. When Senior House and Freshman House were finally given the nod, they responded by taking in sixteen and fifteen women, respectively.

McCormick is unlikely to coeducate in the near future because of: 1) a provision in Mrs. McCormick's will preventing this; and 2) the objections of a number of women there who wouldn't accept living in a coed house. MIT has decided that nobody should be forced to live in a coed house.

It is unlikely that any more houses will go coed unless more women are accepted by MIT. The housing shortage is bad enough without emptying McCormick by having women move out and not be replaced.

MIT began moving toward coed living groups when the Student House administration panel was set up this summer to review proposals from various parties (e.g., department, individual professors) for work-study positions. About a dozen ideas were received as there are jobs potentially available, the petition review panel was expected to announce which would be funded this week, according to Dean for Institute Relations Benson Snyder, who sits on the panel.

The Student Employment Office has already notified some applicants for work-study positions that they could start working.