Report on privacy: it cuts both ways

By Lee Giguere

The recent controversy over the Fact-Profile of MIT compiled at the request of the MIT Commission suggests that the issue involved in the above quotation from the report of the Committee of Inquiry are far from academic.

The publication of such a report (which will, in fact, occur next fall) could be an important step in the decision to consider the future of the MIT community in a "free and open" fashion. Up till now, many of the decisions that have puzzled or appalled some attendant errors of the administration have been based on the major segments of the community. For the most part, this was not a matter of community members being aware of the above administration (though some of it might have been), but simply the fact of the results it is almost impossible for a relatively uninformed student to find his way to a knowledge of the data or decisions generated.

The profile offers to students and faculty members a chance to hide errors from the administration, and the hope to hide errors from the community. It can be argued that the profile is completely open to inspection, and that the data within it is freely available to the community.

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