Editorial

Missed chances

Last week Harvard's Corporation decided not to have the issue of recombinant DNA technology discussed with the students of a company designed to take unique advantage of Harvard's expertise in the area of recombinant DNA technology.

The pressure on other universities to quickly do likewise would have been immense. While universities seldom—if ever—confront the public with their actions, the notoriety effects of Harvard's decision upon MIT and similar universities made it incumbent upon them to offer some sort of official statement.

To the best of Provost Low's knowledge, nobody here was "taken" with the idea of Harvard, Inc. Although one would hope that informal discussions on the matter has taken place among the various members of the faculty, administration, and student body, such discussion never reached the public. Formal and open discussions should have quickly been instigated on an issue of such obvious importance to MIT.

Vandalism is not debate

Vandalism is the lowest form of expression. Barely tolerable when committed by unemployed urban youth, it is completely inappropriate and unforgivable in the hallways of MIT.

The repeated destruction of the glass covering the Gays at MIT (GAMIT) bulletin board in Building 3 has justifiably angered the majority of the MIT community as indicated by a recent "pillar poster survey." Some claim that these incidents have been blown out of proportion, noting that no publicity would have been had it been another organization's board that had been destroyed. The frequency of the attacks on the GAMIT board, however, indicates that the destruction is not random, but aimed specifically at that board.

In the last few years, centuries of unyielding moral and religious opposition to homosexuality have given way to open debate and the beginning of the "gay liberation" movement. Vandalism is, however, an ineffective and cowardly way of participating in that debate—possibly legitimate concerns cloaked in the anonymity of vandalism cannot be properly heard.

It is probably true that universities should be able to use their research patents as a greater insurance against financial hardship than they currently are. There is a difference between insurance and preemptive surgery, however; schools like Harvard and MIT would do well not to cut out their academic hearts in favor of their financial necks.

By ducking these issues, rather than speaking up, MIT missed an important opportunity to help preserve its own academic integrity.

Stephanie Pollack

ACLU vs. Moral Majority

Justifiedly elated by their electoral success, the Moral Majority and their kin in other New Right organizations have laid plans to continue their battle for less government and traditional American family values. In a full page ad last Sunday, the American Civil Liberties Union joined the fray, proclaiming their fight to be "major struggle over the Bill of Rights."

And so, Armageddon has come. The New Right vs. the Old Left. Two sets of middle-aged men in three-piece suits fighting over your future and mine.

The only question is, which side is good, and which evil?

The Moral Majority enters the battle with God on their side, biblically biased and prepared to use weapons systems and protect innocent women from abortionists. As one commentator noted, the new right philosophy seems to hold that God supports a balanced budget.

On the other hand we have the ACLU, decrying the false patriotism of their opponents, unapologetically defending the opponent's right to air their views. Clad in the aura of non-partisanship, they deploy their armies of lawyers, lobbyists, staff, and volunteers to protect the liberty and rights of all even those who do not realize they are in danger. Cast as the financial underdog, the ACLU has the Constitution on their side, and prefers to play a game of "chicken" with their opponents.

The stage is thus set for the final battle, only three weeks after the first formal salvo was fired in the electorate. In every way, however, some advisor's

Stephanie Pollack

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To the Editor:

For sure there are few things in life as important as eating, sleeping, studying and having showers. But, this mandatory commons type as evidenced by the recent Tech article is getting absurd. My experiences are very different from most undergraduates so that's part of my feeling. This is the third and last year I've attended. Students, at such one, away from home for the first time always mean and green about cafeteria food. its price and their freedom, or lack of, to sit on commons. My objections are

One, there are many questions besides the mandatory issue. To student positions, least in the media, are all too often the immature, uncompromising "we shouldn't be forced..." variety with many rationalizations for why not following. I think there are important issues where students could successfully force changes such as variety, quality and cost of food. Lower cost nutritious foods are easily sold. Ravioli is served with meat sauce, an absurd excess of protein as well as cost. Tofu—when have you ever seen tofu quiches, tofu spread sandwiches, etc.? I'd hate to put the mid-eastern food truck out of business but why are there never tabouli sandwiches or salads? Thank goodness for the sandwich bread selection but has anyone heard of brown rice, barley or bulger? This discussion need not be all or nothing. There are many, whether on or off campus, who would like better quality, more varied food and don't have the time, interest or knowledge to prepare it for themselves.

My second objection is this. Students criticize their sphere of influence by concentrating on the self-centered aspects of food, drugs and sex while ignoring other issues. I suggest there are many important issues such as human relations (racial, religious, cultural and ethnic) or ethics in

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