The Big Screw contest began in 1967, when MIT's Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity decided to "go out on a limb" and replace their Spring Carnival Quota Council with one to award a four-foot, left-handed wood screw to the most deserving faculty member.

After the numbers of the APO chapter approved the idea, they met with one of their advisors, President Howard Johnson. "He thought the idea was great as long as it was kept tongue-in-cheek," according to the Alpha Phi Omega record.

"We are not a vixen organization," said Laura Daly '86, chairman of Big Screw '84, who plans to preserve the tongue-in-cheek spirit of the contest. "If there is too much backbiting, it becomes difficult for us to justify running it," Daly said.

5000 votes were cast for over 100 men and women in the first contest, including over 15,000 for the 61 instructors in the Department of Mathematics, over 10,000 for the 86 physics instructors, and over 5000, mostly from women, for the Dean of Women Students.

"From everywhere on campus, people will converge on Rockwell Place to place their Spring Carnival prescriptions. There is no other event at MIT that draws so many participants," Daly said. "It's like a cross between Carnival and an election." Daly said.

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"On Tuesday March 19, 1974, a notable instance of lack of system comes from the Freshman Class, which seems to have several mutually exclusive committees for each piece of work. Our web to the actions of the other, which immediately takes great pains to reciprocate. Something of this nature took place with regard to the baseball management, and now a similar situation arises in the announce- ments concerning the "Prom" or "Glee" (according to which Commit- tee is speaking) which the class is planning. They take turns contradicting each other's state- ments and blaming The Tech for having printed all information given us by sworn statements from all the class officers.

From The Tech, Tuesday, March 17, 1959:

Eam Campusites bid before the formal announcement of two members of the Stratton and Rue households in a pitched bat- tle last week.

Misses Mary Rule, 13, and Laurie Stratton, 12, found the MIT men inviting targets to their plentiful supply of ammunition. According to Mary Rule, daughter of Dean J. E. Rule, "We wait- ed till some boys came along to throw at us, and then we threw back."

"I am sure that they were having a good time," adding that no official action would be tak- en.

(Note: Julius Adams Stratton '21 was then President of MIT and living in the President's House.)