Editorial:

Libby, Scheidler should not hold multiple posts

The newly elected leaders of the Undergraduate Association appear to be too dedicated to personal involvement in student activities for their own good, or for that of the students they represent. President David Libby is a co-chairman of the UA Nominations Committee and a member of the UA Finance Board in addition to his position as UA president. Vice President Stephanie Scheidler, automatically a member of the Finance Board, recently was elected secretary of The Association of Student Activities.

While Libby's and Scheidler's enthusiasm for student government is to be commended, they may be taking on more than they can or should handle. Doing a good job as UA leaders will require a lot of time and a lot of patience — much more than is currently available. While neither Libby nor Scheidler appear to be too dedicated to personal involvement in student government, it is not in the best interest of the students they represent for them to hold positions in student government other than those of UA president and vice president. Both Libby and Scheidler should resign from their extraneous positions and should devote their full attention to the offices of president and vice president.

Libby's and Scheidler's positions on the hands of a few will not necessarily cause a conflict of interest, but it fosters inbreeding and a narrow outlook. The UA president and vice president must not be biased by other commitments.

While Libby and Scheidler appear to be qualified for all of their positions, it is not in the best interest of the students they represent for them to hold positions in student government other than those of UA president and vice president.

A few days ago, I was walking across Massachusetts Avenue and I was almost run over by a woman wearing a T-shirt that said "walk" on the back. The driver of the Cadillac was yelling at her to get off the road. She had not noticed it.

Before I go any further, I should answer some questions that I have been asked on my recent column. Yes, the piece I wrote on Christmas and the Supreme Court was sarcastic. Yes, I do believe everything I write — if I didn't, I wouldn't write it. No, I do not think that the flow of ideas in my column is either ever (illegal); if you think it is, you probably are approaching what I have written on the wrong level.

Which brings me, of course, to the topic at hand: sex riot at MIT.

This weekend the Admissions Office is sponsoring a special program on campus for women only. Specifically, the program is only for the 599 women who have been accepted to the Class of 1988. The program is intended to let the women learn about the Institute first-hand, by talking with students, visiting the living groups, and using the facilities. Supposedly, the more these accepted women know about MIT, the more they can change the MIT sex riot this fall, since MIT really is the best school in the world once you get to know it.

Peter A. Richardson '84, director of admissions, thinks public perception of MIT is the main reason for the lack of women on the MIT campus. Richardson says that when people think of MIT students, people automatically think of male students. He believes more people in our society, including some people here at MIT, do not consider the fact that MIT has a proper school for a woman. A woman at MIT is a man's Institute of Technology; they think, and they ask the female students, "What in the world is MIT doing that will not consider sex an issue when they get out of the real world? A male engineer who trains with a female will be less likely to discriminate than a male engineer trained solely in the real world."

In trying to bring more women here, the Admissions Office faces a catch-22 situation: the MIT community is seen as sexist because we do not have enough women, and we cannot attract women because we are seen as sexist. If there were some way to attract more women here — just a few — then we would appear less sexist, which would bring in more women, which would make us seem even less sexist, and so on. We would end up with a balanced community.

One of the things that brought a few women here was the introduction of co-educational housing in 1979. Before then, there was an upper limit on the number of women students at the Institute. The capacity of McCormick Hall was the upper limit for co-ed housing. The proportion of female students here might have been steadily declining.

Many believe the Institute would benefit greatly from a more sexually balanced environment. I share this belief. Some people feel that, although the percentage of females at MIT is slowly increasing, positive steps should be taken to speed this process. The place to concentrate such efforts is obviously the Admissions Office, since the Admissions Office is responsible for recruiting MIT's image to prospective applicants and for admitting women to the Institute.

The Admissions Office is faced with a frightening dilemma. It wants to bring women to MIT and maintain the same standards of admission for women as for men. Admissions Office policy is not to bias selection of female students in favor of the female students in the favorite. The admissions process is truly sex-blind.

Peter Richardson believes that the recent wave of anti-sex rioting among MIT women is a sign of the importance of MIT to our society. He feels that the sex rioting process is too slow. When more women without biasing the admissions process is an issue, it is to reach out to each accepted female student and offer her more money. If more women are accepted, MIT really is and why she would be happy here. We want, MIT could increase the percentage of women accepted who matriculate without biasing against their male counterparts.

That is the purpose for this weekend to give interested women a chance to find out exactly what MIT is all about, what they make the decision about what they want to do in the world. There is something every visiting woman this weekend will get, something that those not here this weekend will be missed, something that can in anyway add to their understanding of MIT. Every woman accepted to the class of '88 will receive a complimentary MIT T-shirt.

I cannot see how giving out T-shirts can be anything but a publicity stunt — and neither can Peter Richardson. "You see, these women will wear these [T-shirts] all summer, whether they come to MIT or not," Richardson told me. He says these students will be proud to say "I got admitted to MIT." Other female high school students will see women wearing these shirts, and Richardson feels that this will make them feel less pretentious about MIT, more real world. The T-shirts are not for those that have actually attended; they are for those who may apply next year.

I said that I do not see how giving out T-shirts can be intended as anything but a publicity stunt, but I think that it can be perceived as much more.

Giving T-shirts to the accepted women only sends a very strong message: women are treated differently at MIT than men are. They may be discriminated against, or more for MIT. Women are just treated differently than MIT men.

What does this all have to do with Cadillacs running stop lights? Before I answer that, consider that the Admissions Office is using a discriminatory program in an effort to end discrimination at MIT. The Institute's cam- pus women's groups ever realized the potential of the student. The decision about whether or not to go, MIT. Every woman accepted to the class of '88 will receive a complimentary MIT T-shirt.

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