High-tech alternative to MIT's keys

(Continued from page 5) The average MIT student carries two cards with him, as well. Some labs in which students work issue additional cards that activate computer-controlled door locks. If the MIT library's computerized circulation system ever gets working, faculty and students will use optical bar codes which will be stuck to the back of their IDs to check out books.

There are a growing number of computer terminal rooms around campus which have electronic combination locks. Their combinations are changed regularly, because they quickly become common knowledge, rendering the locks useless.

Wouldn't it make sense if instead of the keys, the cards and the normalized combinations, MIT affiliates had simply one card? The "MIT Card" could be as simple as just an MIT ID with a magnetic strip or bar-code strip on the back. This strip would contain two numbers, the MIT ID number and a key number. Although student ID numbers could be public knowledge, the key number would be known to no one, including the student.

Rather than giving out literally thousands of keys to large Institute offices, and requiring people to memorize many constantly changing combinations, students would simply be authorized to use particular doors. The central computer would be told that a particular student ID card was allowed to open a particular door. It could also be set up so that, for example, any MIT female had access to the Cherry Room.

The use of such cards would eliminate the problem of lost keys or disclosed combinations allowing unauthorized access to secure areas, since lost cards would be deactivated and new cards issued. The cards also would eliminate the problem of seniors giving their keys to underclassmen when they leave the Institute.

The overhead involved in issuing the cards and maintaining the equipment is a major cost for any group at the Institute who wish to install computer-controlled locks. But if the cards were instead and authorized centrally, and if physical plant was trained in the installation and servicing of the locks, costs would be minimized.

Students would still have keys for their individual dorm rooms, and the right keys would have keys to their offices, since it is not likely that it would be cost effective for the Institute to install computer-controlled locks on doors which only one or two people should have access to. But presumably, such a system would reduce the number of keys that I carry from fifteen to two. At a cost to MIT of approximately three dollars per key, the Institute would save $39 or no alone.

After the initial cost of the computer, new locks can be installed for less than $150 each. If twenty new people have access to a given door each year, that lock would pay for itself within three years. At the current time, I know of two or three such installations of key-card systems. They have proven to be more cost effective and more secure than conventional locks and keys.

Unfortunately, it is doubtful that MIT will install such a campus-wide key-card system. It is too bold a move for an Institute too ingrained in tradition. Such a system could be developed here, but never installed. It would make too much sense.

MIT atmosphere unique

(Continued from page 4) which has been described as "a big black scrap heap," "helicopters and junk," and "a dog and a cat," is one of the MIT campus which have electronic books.

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You may not write home. But we will.

(The we've been doing it for over a century)

P. O. Box 29
MIT Tech
Cambridge, Mass 02139

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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Name:
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After MIT, you become a "real person," and go out into the "real world" to make your fortune. You might not want to, though, and if you work it right, you won't have to. Presumably, you can get a job or start a business of your own for a couple of years in the Media Technology building as "a Bookstore." Books. When I was a freshman, everyone had Godel, Escher, Bach, mostly unread, propped up next to a Rubik's Cube, unused. I don't know what people are reading now, apart from science fiction. Considering that half of Hackers is set at MIT, it's amazing that almost no one seems to have read it.

Let me quote Bridgette Rezvani again: "You'll find you spend half your second year shaking off the undesirable friends you made in your first. In fact, you'll spend most of your college career undoing your mistakes. And then you'll get the urge to tell people what you've learned, and, despite your best resolutions, you'll end up giving advice to freshmen.

opinion

Be yourself during R/O

(Continued from page 5) st, take an art course, join a student activity group (raumor has it that they are looking for someone to restart the Society of Midwestern Consumers...). MIT may be an engineering school in some eyes, but to many it is much, much more.

Unfortunately there is no way you can see and explore everything yourself, but, as a group, the MIT students constitute a veritable encyclopedia of information. So, please, talk to each other! Ask questions and share what you know. You will find that this socializing pays off in friends for study groups and study breaks, but for now follow new students can help you make your way through R/O. Friendships made during this time can last for four years or even a lifetime.

Keep a journal or diary. Suzanne still fondly looks back at what she wrote during her R/O week. A journal can also help you organize your thoughts and feelings, so you can make better decisions. Journals later shared with the R/O Committee serve as extremely helpful aids in improving the program each year. At the end of R/O, feel free to bring it to the UASO and talk over your R/O experiences.

Last, remember that you can change your mind. Most decisions especially about living groups and classes) are not irreversible. Do not be timid because you are afraid to fail; the opportunities here are unlimited and you may never again have the chance to take advantage of them. Freshman year (and staying) gives ample opportunity for exploring different activities or academic departments, but you have time, and all the help you need yourself. There are plenty of people here to help and encourage you; the initiative, however, belongs to you.

We hope this advice is useful during R/O. R/O Week is a busy and often stressful time for everyone. There are parties to enjoy, decisions to be made, and people to meet. By working together and trying to understand different points of view, we can make it a better experience for everyone.

(Editors note: Suzanne Horie and Win Treme are co-coordinators of the Institute R/O Committee.)

Computers. You don't need to buy a personal computer, because all undergraduates get accounts on Project Athena, the new computer facility.

The Project Athena administration is breaking away your typewriter" and "Never use graph paper again to advertise their courses on how to use the system. But if you already type like a blotter, it's too ingrained in tradition. Such a advertisement would be a little too absurd. I don't know if you've read Escher, Bach, unsolved. I don't know if you've read Godel, Escher, Bach. I don't know if you've read Godel, Escher, Bach. I don't know if you've read Godel, Escher, Bach. I don't know if you've read Godel, Escher, Bach. I don't know if you've read Godel, Escher, Bach. I don't know if you've read Godel, Escher, Bach.

Godel, Escher, Bach is cool because it's a 306-90 triangle (principle of abstraction) and besides, you can play war games in it (principle of utility). Everyone claims to be the first to have designed his own Media Technology building as "a Bookstore." Books. When I was a freshman, everyone had Godel, Escher, Bach, mostly unread, propped up next to a Rubik's Cube, unused. I don't know what people are reading now, apart from science fiction. Considering that half of Hackers is set at MIT, it's amazing that almost no one seems to have read it.