Guest Column/Adam Kao

Coop will have to earn its business

The letter seemed innocent enough. It was short and to the point, but it was written with a certain kind of confidence. It made sense to have a cooperative store in an area with so many college students.

Collectively, these students would have quite a bit of buying power, and a cooperative store would be able to pass on volume discounts and stuff. The profits could be passed on down to all the members.

Look here, just last members got back almost ten percent of the money they spent!

Yeah, it sounded like a pretty good deal. So I, way out there in the money they spent! Profits could be passed on down volume discounts and stuff. The college students.

What a local monopoly means is like the summer for $13.03 per year. Third Class by Non-Profit

I'll bet there are other people who feel the same way. I'll bet there are people, already smarting from the point of view the Institute has taken, who aren't too keen on losing a few more ounces, who are probably really counting the pennies now. I wonder if they are a significant percentage of the student body. Collectedly those students would have quite a bit of buying power.

They'll tell me the Coop is moving. I say I'm glad. Maybe after it moves it will face greater competition, or do better, or whatever else. Maybe I'll still buy and sell textbooks at reasonable prices. Maybe it'll expand and carry wider variety of goods. Maybe then I'll buy stuff from The Coop. The Coop got my first buck, but it's going to have to earn the rest.

So here's the deal. You're a freshman, an upperclassman, or even a graduate student. You've settled into your term's activities, and you're beginning to think about your social life. And, although it may be hard for you to deal with, you've got problems with friends, nor with your living group.

Which will ROTC think? In terms of friends, if someone is gay -- most people tend to think of him being there. I've met a lot of people who are surrounded, and so many questions on their mind that they don't know where to start. So, as a community service, I'll answer some of the most asked questions: Am I gay? Well, if you've committed up the nerve to call GAMIT, there must be some question in your mind. No one is 100 percent gay or 100 percent straight. Everyone lies somewhere between the two. Most people seem to be divided toward one side, however, and if you've been having feelings about being gay for a long time, you're probably leaning to the gay side.

What will my friends/parent's/ living group think if I find out? In terms of friends, if someone is truly a friend, they shouldn't care. Living groups and parents are sometimes a different matter. Personally, I have been very lucky. I have never had any bad problems with friends, nor with my living group.

Your parents' reaction depends a lot on their background. I had very few problems with my parents, yet I have a friend whose parents sent him away to a religious 'cure center' to remove this "mark of Satan" from him. Since you probably know your parents better than anyone else, you probably have the best idea of how they will react.

What will ROTC think? Well, I was in ROTC freshman year, and I was in ROTC when I was a cadet, there are any people in ROTC now, and there will continue to be gay people in ROTC in the future. All of them are forced to remain closeted to retain their scholarships.

What about religion? I had to be religious and education, and never went to church as a child. There are people in GAMIT from every major religion, and many still practice actively. If you want to talk to someone about dealing with homosexuality from a religious point of view, the GAMIT contact line can put you in contact with someone.

Love? Love and sex is not something to be discussed in the pages of The Tech, but it still remains one of the overriding factors which bring people out of the closet. I never understood much about love until I came out, when I suddenly was aware of what I had been missing.

One thing that often happens to people who come out later in life is that they go through all the typical adolescent love problems, like a crush on someone, wanting to go steady, etc. This is fine when you are 15 or 16 years old, but when you're 23 and a graduate student, it can be hard to deal with.

Why did I bother writing this column? To bring people out. There are always new people at MIT. Some freshmen show up on the second day of rush week -- some people wait until three days before their graduation. Those people are who are new, but while they were at MIT, they show up after they've been on for a couple years. Waiting does nothing, except make your life more miserable. I've observed this happening for nearly two years now, and people are much happier after they come out. If you think you're gay, come out. If you know you're gay, don't be afraid to feel free to call.

"And so you want to talk to someone, the GAMIT contact line is available, 24 hours a day, at 215-3540. Nightline is also a good resource, at 215-3561."