feed-back

The fraternity system needs renovations

To the Editor:

I was rather taken aback by the article "Lower class size forces a more competitive rush," September 9.

I was surprised by Mark Ertel's statement, "I am very happy with the outcome of rush," as I had heard of a number of rush violations. I had also heard of a number of independent living groups which had not housed the members they had hoped for. I had heard from Clemmings that through Sunday a large percentage of freshman had neither gone to any house nor even to their temporary dorm assignments.

I felt the statement about a reduced crowding problem to be misleading. With an entering class of 500 versus a graduating class of over 1000, this result has little or nothing to do with the performance of the Interfraternity Conference or the fraternity system.

I was appalled by Daniel T. Dismukes' statement, "Discriminatory should be a death choic-e." A more crude statement would have been hard to imagine, as it smacks of an antago-nism which has no place at MIT. Many fraternities are more distinctive than houses I could name.

Lastly, I recalled the actual pre-rush event. After being released from Kresge, the freshmen and women buddled together in the oval leaving a 15-foot "no man's land" between them and a semi-circle of screaming fraterni-ties and sororities. If this was de-signed to lessen the tens of rushes, it should be solely examined for the opposite.

If nothing else, this year's rush was an indication of the cut-throat nature of the "down-house" fraternity system. It is a dinosaur, which could use some serious renovation rather than a blithe "Hey, everything here is great" from the IFC. I hope this year's Greek Week can prove me wrong.

Julio Friedmann '88

opinion

Night lights on the Charles

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very little opportunity, aside from working with each other on class projects and problem sets, to talk to their classmates and get to know them. They can learn so much from each other, yet they don't have the time.

Burdened by the workload and degree requirements, only the brave and the foolhardy dare to investigate areas that have lit-tle to do with their majors. Some students are deadset on their careers and want to focus in one area, and that's fine. But others are less certain about what they want to do, and, unfortunately, the university doesn't offer them the time to broaden their education. Extracurricular activities and student involvement in campus issues, for example, all suffer from a lack of recognition.

In his four years at MIT, he has seen countless young, promi-nant Corridor, and some of them are only trying to sur-vive in a place which is costing them $15,000 a year. They are only trying to get into graduate schools and companies which base their decisions solely on grade point averages.

Toward the end of the term, he felt like a zombie. He watched students walking down the foot-path, and some of them looked like zombies, too. Under the weight of days, they had grown numb and lost the light within themselves. They didn't care about what was going on around them.

He wanted to tell his friends that, in high school, he was so sure of himself, so confident that he could do whatever he set his mind to. Academics were every-thing, and getting to know people was not so important. But that was before the four grinding years at the Institute. He was now unsure, indecisive, with-drawn. Because he was unable to accept the fact that he was only human, he had become a zombie, grooping for those who seemed to have the answers.

The beauty of MIT is that there are unlimited opportunities and challenges for the students. But this beauty can hypnotize and then disillusion, because in a harsh way the Institute, like a be-guiling lover, shows your limita-tions right in your face.

In gazing at the reflection of Boston, he realized that MIT re-sembled that upside-down city where people had to hang on for dear life,ailing everything they owned to the ground, afraid of letting go and flying; where doing things differently and rebelling against the Institute merely be-came a joke, a parody of itself. But he didn't tell his friend any of this. He实地 his face, fresh and full of opinion, and won-dered whether she would become a zombie, too, and whether or not he should warn her. Instead, he recalled how he had first mo-ment the city lights, like colorful poppies blossoming at night, as he walked toward MIT across the same bridge during Rush Week as a freshman.

Four years ago, he had pointed at those lights in the water, exci-ted about all the possibilities the future held in store for him. Now, he pointed at those very same lights, hoping they wouldn't dim, and thinking of himself as his friend told him how beau-tiful the Charles River was at night.

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