Unfair Punishment of Pi Lambda Dens tradition of freedom

(Edited note: The Tech received a copy of the following letter addressed to Student Affairs from Jamie R. Tevesh.)

Dear Sir, 

I was appalled to read of your decision to suspend the fraternities of Pi Lambda Phi for the coming fall. ["ODSA revokes Fall rush rights of Pi Lambda Phi," May 27].

As time has passed, we have created laws as if the house governing body has discretion in the confines of his own accord, is absurd. You are not so naive as to believe that the ODSA has not made intelligent decisions. These decisions are based on the tenet that an individual does not only not upon the current members but also upon the future thoughts of Pi Lambda Phi freshmen. 

I am sure you need little re- 

mendation that fraternities rarely gain by each year, even with the help of the men who are by MIT already demands a mind- 

boggling amount of money and effort from its students to pur- 

ish current as well as future members of the house with sub- 

stantially higher does it is surely a more human crime than the ini- 

tial allegations themselves.

The members of the house as a whole for the alleged actions of a few individual members, ac- 

cepting apparently voluntarily and of their own accord, is absurd. You are unethically attempting to trans- 

fer the house into punishing its own members for alleged crimes as if the house governing body were a police organization. Our society is based, in part, upon the reason that an individual has the freedom to do whatever he pleases in the confines of his own residence, as long as it does not endanger the lives of others. As time has passed, we have found exceptions to this philoso- 

phy, and we have criminally ac- 

cordingly. 

You feel it is necessary to pun- 

ish a fraternity when individual's who illegally using marijuana, al-

cohol and corporated law, real 

estate, and we have created laws ac-

ceptable. 

rived, or nitrous oxide, a deci-

tion which I find wholly inappro- 

priate and outside your jurisdiction. 

Why not, then, also punish them for the illegal sale that oc-

curs between unmarried couple? Why not punish them for illegal gambling during late-night poker games? Why not punish them for illegal 

transporting minors across state borders? Indeed, why not punish them for not doing their homework?

Certainly, if you are going to punish fraternities, then should not dormitories come under the same judgment? Surely you are not so naivete as to believe that the fraternity students, a minority among MIT undergraduates, are exclusive in their alleged illegal 

use of drugs?

When I arrived at MIT in 1986, it was my initial impression that the ODSA was not the ad- 

ministration sanctioned police force. I was under the impression that the Criminal Police force. Were the CPs not actively seck out and punish students for the alleged il- 

legal use of drugs. Quite to the contrary, I was told many times by many students that the CPs were good people who defended the students and took care of them in emergencies. As a conse-

quences, the CPs have gained my con-

fiding respect; I regret that the ODSA has not. 

During my stay at MIT, the ODSA has been sending out a single abhorrent message; al-

though the students here are was-

thy of attending a world-class educational institution, they are not only intelligent nor mature enough to be responsible for their own actions. Consequently, 

Engineers need interaction skills 

(Continued from page 4) 

and social sciences. Scientists generally spend more of their time looking for the right answer. Those who study human behavior know that there are many answers at a trivial level; there are enormous numbers of facts in the study of history, but it is the ability to discern trends, elaborate theories of causality, and so on that is the key.

I find the most interesting and 

critical parts of science are the theories and concepts that are under study. Designing hypoth-

eses and ways to test them is a dif-

icult problem. Yet very rarely is this issue dealt with at any level other than the trivial "experiment-

al" level.

Those who study human 

behavior know that there are 

time-consuming questions. 

These exercises are largely not 

quantitative and often lack con-

structive feedback — unlike your av-

erage problem set which is usually an opportunity to discuss with positive and nega-

tive feedback — unlike your average problem set which is mostly an opportunity to talk to yourself about how to obtain the right answer.

Clearly, an enormous amount of this kind of conceptual discus-

sion occurs at MIT. It is funda-

mental to truly innovative sci-

entific research, of which so much is occurring here. But such dis-

cussion is far more difficult to 

teach than quantitative problem solving skills. To my mind it rep-

resents the greatest challenge that MIT faces in improving the quality of undergraduate and gradu-

ate education. 

It will require teachers and stu-

dents learning much more active 
roles in the educational process. However, it has the potential for developing far stronger personal skills and much superior leader-

ship qualities among future gen-

erations of engineers and sci-

entists.

We live in a world where hu-

man technical abilities are far more influence than such natural phenomena as disease, the weather, daytime and night-

time, or long distances, all of which profoundly influenced ev-

eyday life throughout much of history. 

We need leaders who are versed in technology. If technolo-

gists do not include in their train-

ing at least rudimentary skills in interpersonal and organizational management, then those who train as MBAs, JDs, and so on will learn rudimentary techno-

ological skills and continue in the influential leaders of modern so-

cietry under whom work the tech-

nicians trained. It is in this arena that MIT must decide its role.

Hugh A. Barton G

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