Column by Karina O'Malley

A friend called me and after chanting a minute or two she said, "Look, I've received two dozen roses for lunch! My day is done out." Sure enough, the operator came on and said, "Please deposit...I said, "See you at the Massachusetts."

As I sat in the line waiting, the line started to get long. I pressed my phone and the agent said, "Can you get to the line?"

I thought of Margaret Woodruff, a mutual friend of ours, who is now permanently housed in the Forest Hills Com- munity. She has been unable to find a place to rest during the day of the Marathon last spring. She wandered all over the city, her usual haunts were filled with tourists and spectators. By the time Rosie's Place opened their doors that night, Margaret was exhausted. Several hours later her heart failed and she died.

Colleen and Margaret are two of the many women who are still working at the Cambridge Ar- my Shelter this winter. I learned for the first time the real cause of homelessness: the lack of affordable housing. Eighty percent of the guests work a 40-hour week, support, children, and struggle to come up with the first month's rent, last month's rent, and security deposit needed to get an apartment in Boston. There are very few success stories, and many of the ones who do well have housing, like Colleen, have to leave the shelter.

The blame for this lies on many heads and there is no bene- fit to pointing fingers after the damage is done. But Boston rents are skyrocketing and forcing more and more people out onto the streets, and something must be done.

As new MIT students, many of you received a copy of Rachel and Her Children. This is an excellent source of information about this national concern. Competing with any book, though, are the sights new students at MIT have been treated to for years. More and more, the lower their chances are of finding housing. The blame for this lies on many heads and there is no bene- fit to pointing fingers after the damage is done. But Boston rents are skyrocketing and forcing more and more people out onto the streets, and something must be done.

The incoming freshmen will be better served if all MIT students read this book. They received a copy of The New Our Bodies, Ourselves. It is considered to relieve the prob- lem. It is better than any book, though, are the sights new students at the shelter. I learned for the first time the real cause of homelessness: the lack of affordable housing. Eighty percent of the guests work a 40-hour week, support, children, and struggle to come up with the first month's rent, last month's rent, and security deposit needed to get an apartment in Boston. There are very few success stories, and many of the ones who do well have housing, like Colleen, have to leave the shelter.

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