Is MIT Safe?

Raustein Murder, Other Crimes Increase Safety Concern at MIT

By Eva Moy

DURING the past year, crimes against mem-
bers of the MIT community were a con-
stant reminder that MIT is an urban cam-
pus, subject to the problems of the city
that surrounds it.

The murder of Yngve K. Raustein '94 galva-
nized the community into discussion and imple-
mentation of improvements in security and raised
the level of safety awareness on campus.

"It's unfortunate that it takes a tragedy like this
to get people to talk about the concerns they might
have otherwise kept to themselves," said Nancy J.
Schondorf '93.

And although these solutions brought the Insti-
tute a step closer to a safe community, many on
campus continued to feel impeded — not by a lack
of funding or concern, but by lines of police juris-
diction drawn to exclude certain sidewalks, streets,
and living groups.

The Harvard Bridge, a daily part of many stu-
dents' lives, "is not an area that we patrolled, because
it's a little far-flung from our legal jurisdiction," said Anne P. Glavin, chief of Campus Police.

Memorial Drive, where Raustein was mur-
ced, is also not patrolled by Campus Police.

Memorial Drive "traditionally has had its problems
after dark," Glavin said at a Baker House meeting
after Raustein's death. "You could walk down
there 10 times and never have a problem, but the
eleventh time you might... The bottom line is
that this tragic incident points out very graphically
the risks of criminalization in an urban area."

Murder acted as catalyst

The combination of Raustein's murder and the
wave of crimes which followed helped speed
action on many proposals, which had been dis-
cussed for some time but not carried out.

The community's response to the murder
addressed a broad range of safety concerns, from
the expansion of the Safe Ride shuttle to increased
student participation in promoting crime aware-
ness. Community members are taking a more
active role in protecting their own security —
from participating in Project Awareness and Grad-
uate Student Council safety efforts to improving
their personal safety through self-defense classes.

A Safe Ride doubles efforts

The Safe Ride program expanded to four vans
- two on each of the Boston and Cambridge
routes — in late December, in response intense
student pressure following Raustein's murder. The
two new vans are fully accessible to the handi-
capped, as required by the Americans with Dis-

Growing demand also hastened the expansion.
In its first year of operation, A Safe Ride provided
about 25,000 rides. Glavin estimated that total rid-
ership for 1992 would exceed 50,000.

"It's been a big success, but the present Safe
Ride system is a victim of its own success," Glavin said.

Before the expansion, students complained that
did not come often enough or stop long enough.

Glavin predicted that the average wait should now
be about 15 minutes, although she speculated that
it could increase as the service's popularity
increases.

The GSC is currently working with Campus
Police to try to develop a set time schedule,
"something similar to a bus schedule," Glavin said
in December. After that, the GSC may look into
other issues, including the addition of more stops,