Robert E. Malchman

Showing movie at MIT is both legal and appropriate

"What kind of university would we be if we did not allow students to express their opinions?"

— Paul E. Gray '54

Let's get down to the issue. If the lecture series committee decides to show a film, it will be legal.

The issue of whether to show pornographic material on the campus of MIT in particular, is based upon two questions. The first: is it legal to show the film? The second: is exhibiting it appropriate?

The legal question was apparently solved last week. Middletown County First Assistant District Attorney Tom Reilly said his office would take no action if the lecture series committee decided to show the film. This means it is legal to show the film, right?

Wrong, Reilly said. "I have no comment."

Lecture series committee worker, "something is definitely missing here." Then the showing is not illegal?

"I'm not going to give an opinion." Super inquisitor is of no help to one with problems to his side, you will not ask him?

"We'd have to deal with it after it happens." Supposing I'm the lecture series committee. I do not want to break the law, I promise."

Social science research then the showing is not illegal? ("There's the nigger serenader and the perhaps more significantly by silent protesters—and not only must we listen to each other, but we must hear— and when we hear, we must react.

"I'm going to show a movie. What should I do?"

Just want to show a movie. What should I do?

"I cannot give you any guidelines on legality."

You cannot make any statement?? "All I can say we won't interfere with [MIT's] internal matters." If you are a crime was occurred and failed to act on it, you would be delinquent in your duty.

Wading through this mound of lawyer-speak can be tough going. The conclusion seems inescapable, however. Intuition suggests Reilly would, indeed, be delinquent in his duties were he not to "interfere" with a crime, therefore showing Deep Throat must not be a crime.

The question, then, becomes one of propriety. People object to "Deep Throat" on several grounds:

1. It degrades women. Certainly it does. It degrades men as well. Pornography may not be inherently obscene, but it is not neutral to the social environment.

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There is a place in our community for sex which will alienate and offended by the showing and spotlighting of pornographic material—this is a question of some community standards.

"I've Got a Little List" in The Mikado, and Don Rickles for degrading everybody.

What many viewers don't realize is the view of those who don't approve that even those who don't approve pornography are represented by this tradition. Pornography is damaging. It portrays men and women in stereotypical and sex-ist roles. Being a woman at MIT is still considered non-traditional. The images of women in these movies undermines the efforts of men and women here working together towards equal education and opportunity, and has negative effects on the social environment.

Pornography may not be inherently bad, but is it appropriate on the Massaachusetts Institute of Technology campus?

How can there be such differences in opinion in so small a community? MIT might well be a model for social responsibility. Through programs like Science, Technology, and Society, and speaking out on issues through lectures and discussions, however, the tide is turning. We, as individuals and as a community, have the opportunity to take the initiative in recognizing and accommodating our differences.

The need for continuing dialogue has been recognised by the community, specifically including the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs, the lecture series committee, The Tech, the Association for Women Students, and several living groups. This is vital in any community wishing to develop. The controversy over "Deep Throat" has shown us that we are a community— one of many viewpoints— and not only must we listen to each other, but we must hear— and when we hear, we must react.

"In the words of an undergraduate, "As a woman student at MIT, every registration day you are reminded that this is not a place for women."