

opinion

Column/Eric Berman

ODSA should allow porn movies at MIT

In case you haven't noticed, the MIT Lecture Series Committee had planned to show a pornographic movie on Friday, Dec. 14, but their decision was vetoed by the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs. I would like to express the opinion, which I feel is the opinion of a majority of the student body, that this type of movie should be allowed to be shown.

Let me first say that I do not attend pornographic movies regularly, though I have seen some. I will not make any sort of claims to the effect that they can be therapeutic or good for lonely people. I merely feel that it would be repressive to forbid the showing of any movie, pornographic or not.

In this country we are very proud to have a constitutional amendment specifying that human beings have a right to say whatever they want as long as it does not infringe on the rights of others. Granted, pornographic movies do not really say very much of anything, but they are nonetheless protected by the constitution.

There are those who claim that these movies are disgusting and insulting. This is a perfectly valid argument for not going to see one, but in the case of an LSC movie, no one is forcing anyone

else to attend, so no one who does not want to be insulted or disgusted need be.

Perhaps there is a sense of moral integrity that Dean Shirley M. McBay is trying to uphold at MIT. I, however, believe it is wrong for people, even those with whom I share moral beliefs, to impose their will on others. If I want to be a moral person, no one has any right to interfere with my pursuit of integrity in any way (assuming that pursuit does not infringe on others).

Similarly, I think it reprehensible for some authority to decide what people can and cannot do. There is nothing wrong with trying to change an opinion through editorials, protests, and other forms of objection, but it is wrong to forcibly impose morals upon a third party.

It is not as though there were nothing else to do on Friday evenings in the Boston area. It is ridiculous to suggest that LSC was prohibited from showing the movie because a movie is one of the few activities available on weekends.

Though it is illegal for people under the age of eighteen to be admitted to pornographic movies, our government has deemed it perfectly acceptable for people who have reached maturity to attend them. The percentage of MIT students under the age of 18

(Please turn to page 6)



"WHEN YOU GET TO ETHIOPIA, WOULD YOU GIVE THIS FOOD TO A HUNGRY PERSON?"

feedback

Dormline is still functional

To the Editor:

If I may, I would like to respond to the recent column ["This is MIT. Collect and third number calls..." by Adam B. Rosen, Nov. 16] on the Dorm Line telephone system.

Rosen was partially correct when he said that "The switchboards in my dorm are over 50 years old." A small part of the East Campus, where I believe he is a resident, are served by switches located in the Walker Dorm Line exchange that are older than 50 years. Nevertheless, they are still operational as are the other switches in the Walker and Ashdown exchanges, which are at the outside about 30 years old. Nor is that arguably an issue. As stated, they are operational and contribute to the low cost students pay as Dorm Line users. On that last point, as an example, Dorm Line users incur a fee of approximately \$45.00 per school year, whereas (for purposes of comparison) users of Boston University's Student Centrex service incur a fee of \$10.60 or \$16.15 per month depending on the service arrangement the user opts for. Granted the services are not the same in the

mentioned comparison, nor are the costs; and, Dorm Line, one can argue, is a better buy when you do look at the services provided and the attendant cost. Be that as it may, this doesn't mean that we are committed to continuing Dorm Line as it is now constituted. More on that below.

Aside from the above, i.e. age of system, there are four issues raised in your article. They are:

- busy signals on the direct inward dialed (DID) trunks (225-xxxx),
- "got stupid message, but phone never rang",
- an eight-day wait for phone repair, and
- persons billed for unanswered calls over DID trunk lines.

Insofar as busies on DID trunks, it is expected that we would incur some as we do not engineer traffic to a standard that would preclude busies. To do so would be unreasonable and too costly. Dorm Line DID trunks are engineered to provide no more than ten busies in 100 call attempts. This is a reasonable standard that is cost justifiable, and one often used by many cor-

porations in engineering comparable trunk arrangements.

It may have been the case that someone received our disclaimer message, "but the phone never rang." But I don't believe that this is a common occurrence, and is something that can be checked. We will do so.

Eight days to repair a Dorm Line phone is within the guidelines that we established with our client, Campus Housing, in October 1983. Those guidelines called for Dorm Line personnel picking up repair slips twice weekly. Therefore, it can be three to four days before the repair slip is picked up. The goal is no more than one week for a repair. There are about seven part-time Dorm Line employees, all of whom are MIT students. Unfortunately, they may not always meet the aforementioned goal, because of a number of reasons, one being that it may take longer than a week to effect a repair.

Callers to 225-xxxx are not to be billed by the telecommunications common carriers unless the called party answers. The receipt of the disclaimer message does

(Please turn to page 5)

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