To the Editor:

Joe Kilian's article "ODSA knew of planned explicit movie screening," Feb. 4 gives an interesting perspective on the motivations behind some of the people involved in the recent pornography "debate."

It's very interesting to note the difference in treatment between a movie that is intended to be shown as a movie (The Opening of Misty Beethoven) and one that is intended to be shown as propaganda (Not A Love Story). The conclusion could be drawn that Not a Love Story is considered automatically acceptable because it is against pornography.

Ruth Perry's claim that the Dean's Office had known about the activity for months sounds very bad in light of the events of the past several months. The Dean's Office made no effort to ensure that the movie would be screened six weeks in advance (not that it would even be announced six weeks beforehand) so other groups could plan alternative activities.

Suppose some group wanted to present an activity that would counter the barefaced propaganda of the activity involving that film?

Her claim that "the Dean's Office showed this film two years ago... if that doesn't constitute approval, I don't know what does," is a most revealing one. It sounds very much like she thinks that the Dean's Office approves the showing of films, not the Ad Hoc Committee, as the Dean's Office's own rules provide for!

I suppose she has a point, considering Dean McBry's actions with regard to The Opening of Mary Beethoven. In that case, the Dean's Office did effectively, through use of strictly administrative power, shut down the movie, at least temporarily. So it's acceptable if the Dean's Office violates its own rules, but not if the student body, or a group thereof, wishes to abide by them? I suppose the end justifies the means, as long as it is the Dean's Office that wants to do something.

Perry's further comments that Gordon Strong '85's complaint that the film violated the ODSA rules seems "like retaliation harassment directed at the young women who are already upset and threatened by the showing of pornography films on campus" is most unfortunate. Had I protested (as I was considering) and received a public reply of that nature, I would consider it slander.

These sort of intimidation tactics, threatening people who dare to disagree with the party line, have no place in a democracy. If the Dean's Office enforces its policies selectively, it is wrong. And I wonder whether such a policy is consistent with the First Amendment - the freedom of speech. There are a few organizations on campus that feel threatened by the showing of pornographic films.

Does that give me the right to have them shut down? No.

Let me state here that I have seen two pornographic movies (one of them a Registration Day movie). I found them both to be frankly sickening and demeaning to men as well as women. But what I think about pornographic movies is irrelevant. If there's a market for them (filling Kresge for four showings would seem to qualify), then clearly there are enough people who do in fact have some reason for watching the movie.

The argument that showing pornography violates women's civil rights is ridiculous. There are doubtless people who would be influenced to commit violence against women (or perhaps against men?) by seeing such a film. But these people are doubtless in an extreme minority, and (Please turn to page 8)

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