opinion

feedback

X-rated films add to women's fears

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The Tech and East Campus administrators are related. To make this clear, I need to go back to a meeting last Feb-

ruary that Profernina members held with Dershowitz and resi-
dents of East Campus who had viewed Deep Throat.

At that meeting, several Profer-

mina members agreed that the administra-
tion's Policy on Sexual-

ly Explicit Films was not effective or reasonable. However, we did disagree with showing the sexual-

ly explicit film in the living room of a dormitory where some resi-
dents may have felt threatened, or at least made unwelcome, in their own homes.

Also, if protection of First Amendment rights is the goal, then such public showings should be published with sufficient ad-

vance notice for students with other opinions to have an oppor-
tunity to make them known to the audience.

Several students last Feb-

ruary's meeting had viewed Deep Throat on Registration Day but did not know of Linda Mar-

chino's claim that she had been,

repeatedly raped and forced to

film Deep Throat by her husband of that time, Chuck Trauzon. Dershowitz was aware of Linda Mar-

chino's story.

Finally, Profernina members felt that the selection of the film Deep Throat, with the sexual abuse associated with its filming,

may send a hostile mes-

sage to women students, condon-
ing sexual abuse. It is not neces-
sary to show films which degrade

women in order to act against op-

pression.

This Registration Day, Little Shop of Whores was shown, again in the East Campus Talbot

Lounge, and again without ad-

vance notice to the MIT commu-

nity. Somehow, I just cannot see

those showings as victories for free speech. Instead, I see them as yet another reason for women who live at East Campus to re-

main silent if they are raped or sexually assaulted.

Suppose that I lived in a dor-

mitory where a majority of the residents supported showing a film in which the hero across claims he was forced to make the film. If I were raped, I cer-

tainly wouldn't want the rape re-

ported, nor would I feel that I
could get support from my fellow

students. It's the free speech of a minority at East Campus and at MIT that I'm worried about: the women who have either been sex-

ually assaulted or who know that

they may be assaulted in their

lifetime with one in three odds. I'm not arguing that support of

these films is the only or pri-

mary reason that women do not feel support from the MIT commu-

nity when they are raped. The endorsement of these films is just a symptom. The Tech needs to think much more carefully about the message it is sending to women on the campus by endorsing the showing of these films.

As an undergraduate at Welles-

ley College, I saw, several times each year, composite drawings

posted all over the campus of a rapist or a sexual assailant with a brief description of what had oc-

curred. Campus-wide concern for the rape victim was evident as well as a high awareness of the potential danger women are ex-

posed to in our society. We were

all women students there, of course, but I look forward to the day when men and women on our campuses like MIT are equally concerned for women's safety and well-being.

Michele M. Sprengnether G