Columns by Marc Carlin

An opinion poll entitled "What is Truth?" conducted on Registration Day, Jan. 28, by Christian Impact affirms the increasingly prevalent view that the concept of universal "morality" is anarchistic and irrational. Less than one-third of the student body said that there is absolute truth, despite the fact that over two-thirds of MIT students believe in God.

Our society has been steadily moving towards a state of moral relativism, where each individual is granted the freedom to make his own choice about what is right and wrong. This is, above all, a comfortable position to take—we "live and let live," and are not required to adhere to anyone else's moral system. People who claim to believe in a universal God grant the freedom to do whatever we want because others are "tolerated" enough times to realize this. Why then, do most of us fail to apply a set of rights and wrongs to human behavior? Many simply claim that there are not, and should not be, any universal rights and wrongs—"but stop and think for a second. If I asked you to see your most difficult problem set a half hour before it was due, and burned it up, or would you be ready to forgive me if I said, "Hey, by my standards I didn't do anything wrong," or would you be ready to range my face because what I did was wrong—by your standards?"

This idea of absolute truth is also the basis for the establishment of civil rights. Jefferson's Declaration of Independence that said: "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights." More recent laws about child labor, segregation, and sexual abuse hold that certain actions are wrong, regardless of the personal morality of the parties involved. Here on campus, we've heard the phrase, "Sexual harassment is wrong, and will not be tolerated" enough times to realize this. With this said, it is all the more surprising that most MIT students reject absolute truth in particular in the issue of abortion. 58 percent of respondents said that the decision of personal morality by the parties involved. We cannot declare simultaneously that discrimination, for example, is absolutely wrong? Reasoning that, like a rotten apple, appears genuine on the surface but its core is flawed. Abortion, then, is either right—"for the good of the mother and the fetus, or it is wrong—murder and a violation of the rights of the fetus. Let's stop kidding ourselves—we all believe in some sort of absolute truth, whether it be the Law of Universal Gravitation, Ten Commandments, dialectical materialism, or whatever. We cannot declare simultaneously that some things are wrong and will not be tolerated, while other things are a matter of personal choice. Let's stop hiding behind the facade of moral relativism, stand up for what is right, and not be afraid to say it.

---

**Student-Endorsed Relativism Inconsistent with Morality**

If you want to change the world, start by making a difference on campus...

Run for Office.

UA President/Vice-President
Members of the UA Finance Board (4)
Class Officers:
President, Vice-President, Secretary,
Treasurer, Social Chair(s), Publicity Chair

Packets available at the UA Office (Student Center 401).
Call Rohit Sharma at x3-2696 for more info.