

Serving the community with a left slant

Media Collective sparks own programmes

By IRA MICAY

Sparked by the political spirit of its members, and aided by a \$100 CYSF club grant, the York Media Collective is now preparing for its first full year of service.

Operating out of its office in Room 308 Bethune, the collective will function as a "media clearinghouse" for radical left wing political activity, according to Robert Kasher, one of its founders, and the co-ordinator of its current programmes.

The group has submitted a \$427 budget to CYSF to stock a reading room with books and periodicals of contemporary radical thought.

More important though, will be the Collective's role as the producer of its own programmes in the media of radio, television, and closed circuit videotape, and its functioning as the production studio for the research and assembly of the programmes of its individual members.

The Media Collective is also interested in contacting left wing interest groups in the community at large, that could benefit from access to the media, but lack the production skills necessary to prepare their own programmes.

Founded this past summer, the Collective is chartered as a club under CYSF. Specified in its charter is the group's specifically left wing stance. It is not interested in entertaining members from the radical right, or even political

moderates. For the present, a steering committee of its founding members including Kasher, Michael Hollet, Paul Stuart, and Mary Lockheed, is responsible for the direction and philosophy of the Collective. It is hoped, however, that once regular meetings get under way, the full membership will plan the group's activities.

Currently in production are two documentaries sold by the group to CBC Radio, for its "Ideas" and "Identities" series. The "Ideas" programme deals with the concept of government secrecy; the implicit secrecy of hiding or withholding certain information from the

public, and the analytic secrecy that obscures the import of facts readily available but perhaps scattered and misunderstood. Data concerning the state of the environment or the economy is often subject to this type of secrecy.

The "Identities" programme examines the Rastafarians, a religious group of strong political identity, with origins in Jamaica, that is well represented locally, and according to the Collective has previously received inaccurate coverage by the media.

Kasher also anticipates the production of two video tapes. One will focus on the issue of the food

catering problems at York, and could be viewed by students in Central Square. The other would be an orientation programme for high school students on current affairs in Ontario Universities, York in particular, and would tour the schools equipped to view it.

The first organizational meeting of the Media Collective will be held on Tuesday, September 30, at 4:00 P.M. in the Bethune office. Starting in October, a series of political films will be sponsored by the group. The flicks, shown bi-weekly, can be viewed in Curtis Lecture Hall at 8 P.M. for only 99c.



OCTOBER 6-11
THE GOOD BROS.

OCTOBER 20-25
WILLIE DIXON

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MAINLINE with Mike McKenna and Joe Mendleson

NOVEMBER 10-15
BUDDY GUY and JR. WELLS

NOVEMBER 17-22
JAMES COTTON

NOVEMBER 24-29
ROUGH TRADE

Native changes

The York University Art Gallery will show an exhibition aimed at shedding light on the changing ways of the Eskimo. This particular exhibit, starting this Saturday at 10 a.m., covers the changing ways of some of Inuit women. The York Art Gallery is located in N145 in the Ross Building, and the exhibit will be open until October 19, daily 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Sundays 2 to 5. All are welcome, and it's all free.

A perfect villain, shark in film shows up American hangups

By ALAN FILEWOD

Three men go fishing. They kill a fish, and in doing so, advance the cause of primal justice, reaffirm a sagging morality, strike a blow for the common man, put women in their place, defeat political corruption, pay the dues of folly, and win. And that's what Jaws is: a film of relentless winning. It's the perfect Bicentennial film.

In spite of the furor, the sen-

sationalism, the shock value, Jaws isn't a horror movie, not even in the comparatively sophisticated vein of The Exorcist. Nor is it a boiled down abstraction of major themes from American literature in spite of its Captain Ahab and glorious subjugation of a hostile environment. Rather, it's a carefully engineered fantasy of popular conservatism, in which might makes right because might takes skill and know how.

Here is a conversation from the novel. The protagonist, Police Chief Brody, is resisting his wife's plea to give up his suicidal mission to eliminate the hazard of a thirty-foot great white shark off the beaches of a Long Island summer resort:

"... But giving up isn't the answer. It doesn't put an end to anything."

"Why is an end so important?"
"Different reasons, I think. Quint feels that if he doesn't kill the fish, everything he believes in is wrong."

Right. Might also makes right because it's backed by faith. One more quote, lifted from the climax of the story, when the shark is pitted against the hunters:

"Fuck it," says Quint. "If it's a fight he wants, it's a fight he'll get." ... "Okay, shit-eater!" he calls. "Come and get it!"

So these are the tools of triumph: righteous wrath and vilification. Armed with determination of this magnitude, is there any doubt as to the outcome?

It's hard not to admire Jaws, if only for its technical efficiency. Resorting to a two-thousand year old dramatic structure, the producers have cunningly exploited the melodramatic fantasy of the year, and the film's box office success attests to their acumen. There's no problems of ethics, just as in a good morality play, all that's taken care of. The shark is the perfect villain, no casual seducer, he. It's the precise

monster. There is no problem of compassion involved, as there might be if the story revolved around voracious killer whales, or other intelligent mammalian friends. And we all have our primal fears. It's a workable common denominator.

Nobody comes out of Jaws quivering with terror. Frightened, sure. Apprehensive of that long-planned idle in Cape Cod, sure. But Jaws differs from, say The Exorcist, in that people get to see their terror justified. Catharsis, and relief. Just like Hamlet, which few producers would bother labeling as "A play of relentless pity and fear", is in spite of its bloody battles, ghosts, graveyards, brutal intrigues and vicious sexual politics.

If there's one basic premise behind Jaws it's balls, that mysterious quality that is supposed to make men and women happy. The protagonist is your basic North American male, a castrated, whimpering, defeatist who relies on the tension between his authority and his liberal sentiments to provide the sense of machismo he obviously lacks. And he needs it, you see, because all isn't well with the missus. He'd better get them balls before her eyes wander, in the specific direction of the young, hip, and very macho ithycologist who lends his fabulously wealthy resources to the hunt. And although the film eliminates the unnecessary sloppiness of sexual matters, the novel plunges right in, so that although the young man survives in the former, he pays the price in the latter, suffering retribution in the jaws of the shark.

And to balance the two, there is a third hunter, a brazen, rowdy, gambolin', caperin' son of a sea-dog, who pilots the three to victory, only to pay for his blasphemous over-confidence at the last moment.

Of course there is no question as to which of these three archetypal citizens actually strikes the death blow, is there? The fish is killed, and by indirect assumption, everything they believe in is right.

Jaws, I suspect, is an epochal film, signifying the end of the great disaster movies. No more defeat, no sir. That's the end of this hostile universe in which we are piteously trapped in burning high-rises, earthquakes, tidal-waves and the like. It's victory now, achieved by an ingenious combination of skill, brawn, dedication, and faith.

Jaws is breaking box-office records. The Atlantic Seaboard tourist trade is suffering. And millions of impotent, quivering, citizens are realizing the ideals of their myths by proxy. Comforting, isn't it?

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