

# 'Anti-porn' film under attack

**Writer says film ignores the relationship between sexual repression and class domination.**

Zenon Kulchycky  
Barb Taylor, in her article on the Women's Awareness Programme seems to wonder why some men laughed during the screening of *Not A Love Story*. Well, it is simply the same reason people laugh at "schlock"—it was a bad movie. If its purpose was to raise consciousness, it was not only a failure (except for those people who have never ventured beyond the borders of stodgy Ontario), it was a step backwards. Not only men feel threatened by what the film implies (politically and socially), but everyone with a stake in the liberation of personkind from physical and moral oppression can't help but be put off by this unrestrained display of self-righteous idealism.

Basically, what is wrong with the film is the fact that it virtually ignores the issue of the relationship between sexual repression and class domination. At no point do the makers of the film ask what "needs" pornography and prostitution fulfill, or how and why the full gratification of these needs is prohibited in our society. Instead of building on the penetrating analyses of Herbert Marcuse and Antonio Gramsci or Simone de Beauvoir and Juliet Mitchell, we get the mindless spiritualism of Kate Millet et. al. There are some brief allusions to the connection between capitalism and sex-for-sale, such as the statistics which reflect the enormous success of the sex industry. And, this is all explained by the simple axiom, "men exploit women"—this is about as

enlightening as the Christian explanation: "the devil makes them do it."

Is "prostitution" a female preserve? Doesn't the wage or salaried worker prostitute him/herself: he or she sells his or her body for a specified amount of time for a specified price (determined by the market) to carry out a certain task? And, doesn't the buyer of this

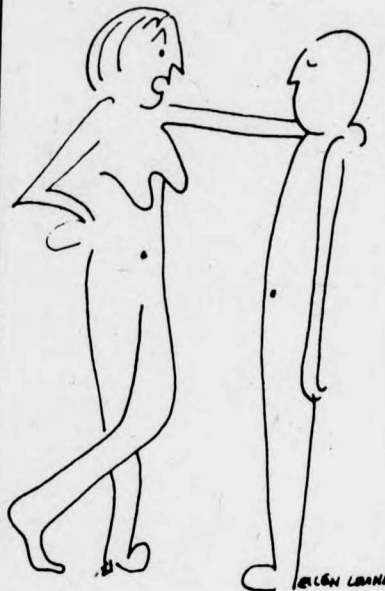
phenomena? Also, the mainstream of hard-core pornography involves both sexes (Harry Rheems and John Holmes are just as exploited as Linda Lovelace and Seka) because of our censorship board, many Ontarians think that pornography is equivalent to "girly" books when, actually, Playboy (and Playgirl) and Penthouse are advertising orgies more than they are porno. What about the therapeutic benefits of pornography and prostitution; the vast bulk of this product is consumed by "happily-married" couples and not by sleazy beer-guzzlers as the film portrays. The film completely ignores these questions because, like any piece of propaganda, it too sells and promotes a one-sided perspective of the subject.

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commodity (labour-power) profit at the expense of his "free" wage-labourers? What about the advertising and the whole fashion and film industry; just because these models and actors do not take off all their clothes and the rest of it does not mean that they are not prostitutes. But the film avoids these connections.

Of course, men exploit women; but men exploit other men (capitalist / wage labourer etc.), women exploit men (female capitalist / male wage-labourer; the debutante who withholds sex in order to extract a marriage proposal from her courter), and women exploit other women (female capitalist / female wage labourer; the madame and her ladies; "reputation" and scandal mongering). Furthermore, there are male sexual prostitutes and there is gay pornography—how do these feminists explain these

The reason some men (and women) laugh at the movie is the same reason we laugh at born-again Christians or at Mary Brown legitimizing the existence of the censorship board. Many who were liberated by the sexual revolution of the Sixties (though "revolution" is far too strong a term) can't help but be amused at the "sex is dirty" attitude the film, perhaps unwittingly, elicits. We get the impression that these feminists have more in common with the Moral Majority (is there a Canadian equivalent?) than with their oppressed male counterparts. This is a strange alliance, and quite unlikely given the "right's" position on equal-status for women and abortion, but it is one the film promotes—shades of prohibition.



I SOMETIMES WONDER  
IF YOU'RE THE RIGHT ONE  
FOR ME TO BE SUBMISSIVE TO

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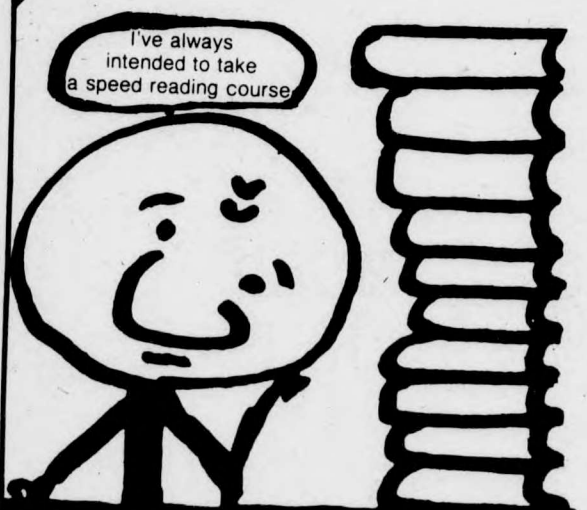
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