

LaMarsh Research Programme on Violence and Conflict Resolution

Discussion explores the violent imagery in ads

DAVID SPIRO

They discussed everything from sexual stereotyping to sado-masochism at Professor Judith Posner's presentation, "Violent Imagery in Advertising" on Tuesday at York. The LaMarsh Research Programme on Violence and Conflict Resolution sponsored the slide show and

discussion.

Posner believes that in the last few years advertising has moved from the familiar sort of sexual stereotyping, or the 'Mop'n'Glo' syndrome, into a more dangerous and insidious phase. This relatively recent phenomenon, which began in the mid '70's, is characterized by "the exploitation of sexual-

ity in advertising" where more and more frequently sex and violence are combined and sado-masochism, often in a subtle form, begins to appear in advertising art.

"I'm not suggesting it's a conspiracy" on the part of the admen, Posner states, but rather this new sort of advertising reflects a "repressed,

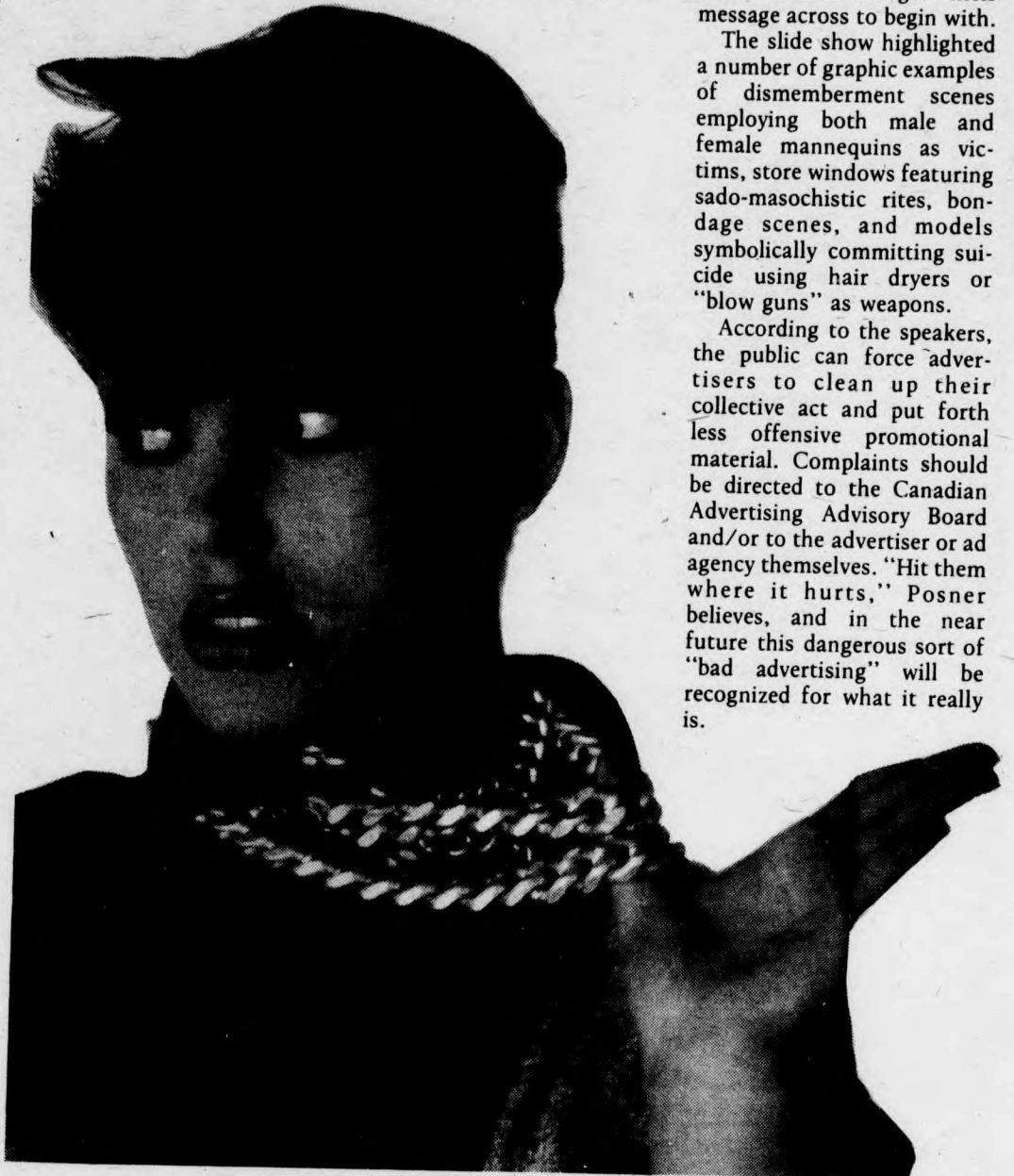
sexually confused" culture. As moral constraints loosen "what used to be in a brown paper bag is now at Mac's Milk". She has perceived "a dramatic change in what we consider to be acceptable." Desensitization has set in so

that a greater degree of shock is required for the potential consumer to notice the product and not blindly walk past the poster or display window. Often ad agencies deny responsibility for this sort of advertising and employ var-

ious excuses to justify their use of the objectionable graphics. "It isn't violent, it's just Punk (or Art-Deco, etc.)," they claim. But Posner questions why they felt obligated to choose that particular format to get their message across to begin with.

The slide show highlighted a number of graphic examples of dismemberment scenes employing both male and female mannequins as victims, store windows featuring sado-masochistic rites, bondage scenes, and models symbolically committing suicide using hair dryers or "blow guns" as weapons.

According to the speakers, the public can force advertisers to clean up their collective act and put forth less offensive promotional material. Complaints should be directed to the Canadian Advertising Advisory Board and/or to the advertiser or ad agency themselves. "Hit them where it hurts," Posner believes, and in the near future this dangerous sort of "bad advertising" will be recognized for what it really is.



Women often portrayed in submissive and violent roles.

More from the Substance and Symbolism Conference:

Forum examines university's role

DAVID SPIRO

The role of the university and its function within the community were the focal points of last Wednesday's discussion group, part of the Substance and Symbolism symposium held here between March 14-16.

Professor Kenneth Golby of the Linguistics Department began the session by paraphrasing Northrop Frye's dictum that the purpose of the university should be to "disorient students to their own society." He suggested that the curriculum should include matters "other than questions of control and hierarchical structures." Instead, "one of the things the university could be best at is to teach imagination." He concluded by stating that "We don't have freedom unless we can think in many different ways."

Commenting on the current discussions about the possible consequences of the new technological age, Professor George Fallis of Urban Studies and Economics felt that "we can tremendously overdo the sense of change and turbulence" surrounding the advent of a high technology society. The age-old problems will undoubtedly persist -- most notably the fact that "knowledge is immensely difficult and time-consuming to acquire. The micro-computer is not going to change that very much."

The role of the university within the community was dealt with by Professor Paul Antze of Social Science. In his opinion, the university must perform a dual role. On one hand, it "serves the needs of society" the providing trained experts and professionals who fill vocational needs. In this sense any post-secondary institution may be viewed as "a handmaiden of industry."

However it "might make more sense," according to Antze, to use the institution "to probe underneath the surface of things and to raise problems." Universities must not forget their role as "places for teaching people how to think."

Professor Janice Newson of the Sociology Department provided perhaps the most radical critique of the present direction of university education. She worries that educators too often forget that "we do have a vision" with a vital part of that vision is "our mission to be subversive." In this context, being subversive would include re-evaluating the role of the professor and closely examining how knowledge is applied within the institution itself. This sort of subversion would force educators to admit that "we don't know it

all" and to realize that "knowledge of different kinds is acquired in different places." She lamented the fact that "students don't know how to tie in what they've learned with what's out there" once they are thrust into the real world after graduation. An important

part of the university's mission is to force people to "understand that knowledge is not just something you carry around in your head" and to "encourage people to think, reflect and integrate what they are doing" - in Professor Golby's words, to educate "the whole person."

New Canadian drug may cure herpes

HUGH WESTRUP
(Canadian Science News)

A new Canadian drug therapy, still being tested, may be used to treat *herpes simplex* infections, including genital herpes--now the commonest venereal disease.

The new treatment, developed by Dr. Sagar Gupta, a pharmacologist at the University of Saskatchewan, has killed the herpes virus in infected laboratory animals. Rarely have doctors defeated the virus once it infects an organism.

Dr. Gupta's treatment is the first to employ a combination of drugs, including one, called MMUDR, that he developed himself. Previous attempts to treat herpes have all been single-drug applications, which Dr. Gupta says have yielded "rather disappointing results".

"A single drug may wipe out 90 per cent of the virus particles but it won't destroy the other 10 per cent that are somehow resistant to the drug," he says.

Dr. Gupta's combination of drugs appears powerful enough to knock out the virus

completely without harming the patient.

Dr. Gupta advocates the drug therapy for treating several strains of the virus, including genital herpes and keratitis, a herpes infection that can lead to blindness. Genital herpes, recently dubbed "the new scarlet letter", not only is the most widespread venereal disease, but is also thought to lead to cervical cancer in some women.

The virus survives so well because it invades the nervous system and lives there permanently like a hibernating beast. Periodically, the virus may break out and infect the body with sores and blisters. These periodic outbreaks of "secondary infections" can happen as often as every two weeks or as rarely as every couple of years.

Dr. Gupta infected his test animals with massive doses of herpes three hours before giving them the drugs. The treatment prevented the animals from developing herpes symptoms; it also killed the virus before it infested their nervous systems.

Beer and cigs boycott

The York University Graduate Students' Association has decided to join the international boycott of Carling-O'Keefe and Rothman's products in protest of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

A group of concerned graduate students approached the pub's management board on February 25th suggesting that such a move would demonstrate solidarity with the people struggling against racism.

The Grad Lounge, located on the seventh floor of the Ross Building, agreed and will no longer sell Carlsberg, Old Vienna, O'Keefe or Toby beer or Rothman, Craven 'A' or Dunhill cigarettes.

A bulletin describing the reasons for the boycott has been prepared for the Graduate Students' Association by the York Inter-Disciplinary Study Group on

Inter-disciplinary Study Group on Development and Underdevelopment and is currently being circulated on the campus.

For more information call Dave Moore (667-6270), Scott Sinclair (667-2527) or Dan Shea (667-2527).

Mac finally elects Prez

After several dissolutions and resignations throughout the fall, the McLaughlin College Council has just had a final, full council election. The election occurred March 14th. The new President is Randy Dobson, a former CYSF representative.

EXCALIBUR'S REFERENDUM

Most students at York think Excalibur is funded by the university.

WE'RE NOT.

Some college and campus organizations *do* contribute to Excalibur, and we greatly appreciate their efforts to keep us going.

Unfortunately, the amount of grant money that Excalibur receives has diminished every year. Today we receive a great deal less than we did even six years ago.

Excalibur's major financial support is from advertising. Often, we have to cut articles and limit the number of pages due to lack of revenue.

Our referendum asks you to contribute only \$1.00 towards Excalibur, *your* community newspaper.

Please support us in the coming referendum. And please vote.