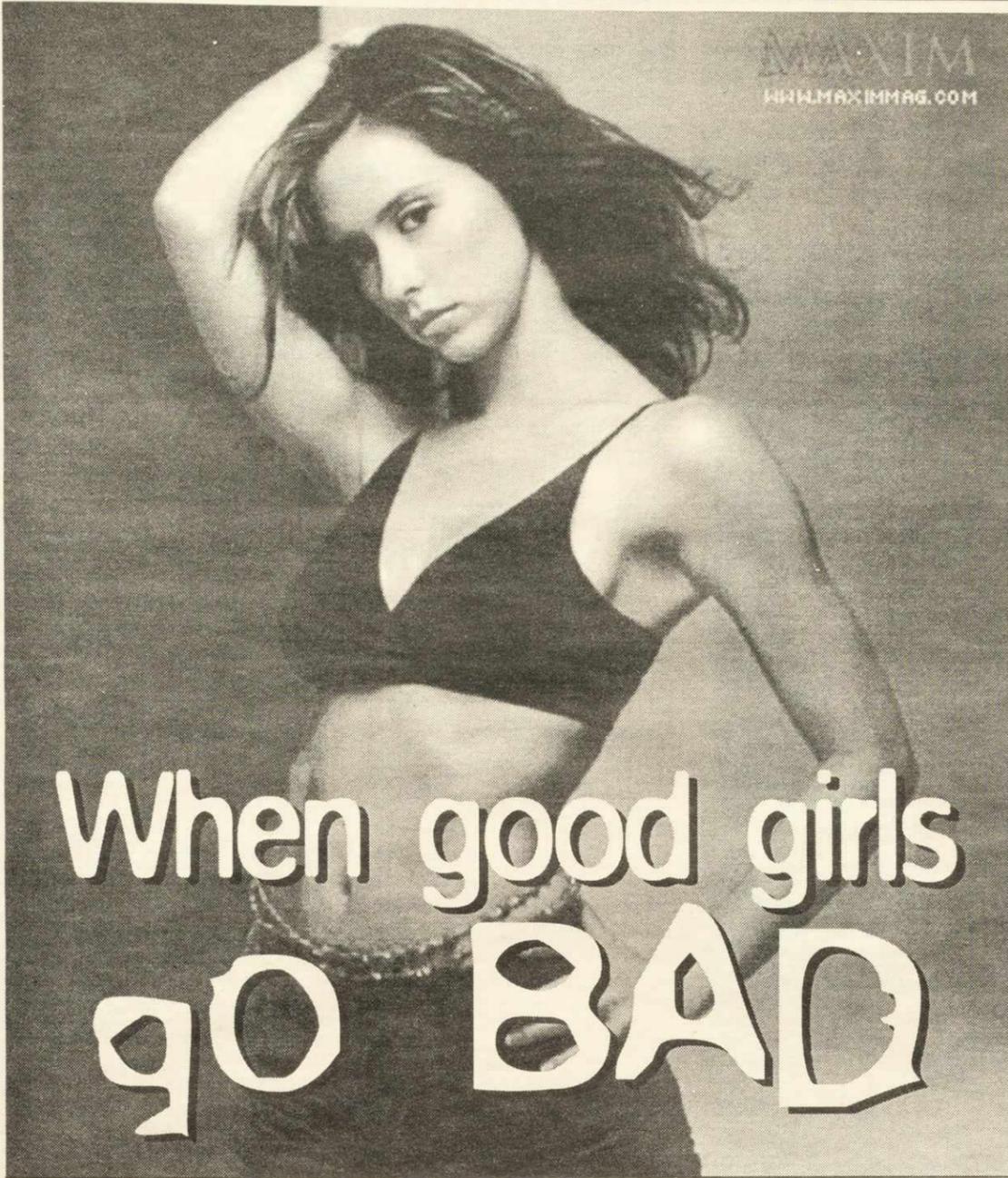


FOCUS



When good girls go BAD

BY DENISE ING, ALLEN MIRAKIAN & JESS MERBER

TORONTO (CUP) — The story goes this way: A young girl dreams of stardom in Hollywood. She makes her way there, and through girl-next-door good looks and sweet demeanour, she gets the pivotal screen test that takes her to a good teen sitcom or drama.

The young starlet is satisfied with the adoration of teenage boys until she realizes that there is more to life than being a starlet: like being sexy.

More and more wholesome starlets are exposing their nubile bodies for the titillation of young boys and older ones alike.

In the early years of cinema, the girl-next-door was fundamental. Leaving the stereotype behind was

difficult, if not impossible. Recall, if you will, the case of Mary Pickford, an actress who was never able to shake her girl-next-door image. Even into her forties, Pickford was playing the kind of sweet ingenue who saved her family from ruin just by being really sweet.

The trend continued until relatively recently. The case of Molly Ringwald is another fine example. The favourite of eighties teen flicks and John Hughes, she tried to make a comeback as a mature actress by downplaying the red in her hair. Needless to say, she failed. If only she knew that all it took to make the transition to grownup bombshell was to show her assets on a men's magazine.

Surprisingly, *Maxim* cover girls like Jennifer Love Hewitt and

Melissa Joan Hart are all talk and no action. They pose with just a hint of breast and a taste of ass while having a "Bambi caught in the headlights" look on their faces. *Maxim* and similar magazines seem to go out of their way to find covers whose images fly in the face of their sexualized pose.

Hence the inclusion of "Posh Spice," Victoria Adams, whose image is a lot more reserved than her more-willing-to-bare-all counterpart Geri Halliwell, who has never done such a cover. *Maxim* has yet to showcase a woman like L'il Kim or Madonna, that is, a woman who brazenly bares all without that guilty pleasure aspect for the viewer.

So what's the difference? Madonna and L'il Kim are very different creatures from the teen-identified set. There's abso-

lutely no fun in deconstructing their image because, frankly, after Madonna's sex book and any one of L'il Kim's songs, there's no sweet, girlish image to deconstruct. These two are examples of women who are in control of their sexy perception and image. There are many of these types of women out there in the world. Ask around. You may find yourself with one's pager number.

Whether we want to admit it or not, the *Maxim* cover influences the way we see young starlets. Since her cover, who has been able to see Sabrina the Teenage Witch as the wide-eyed innocent who has regular problems with her teenage boyfriend Harvey?

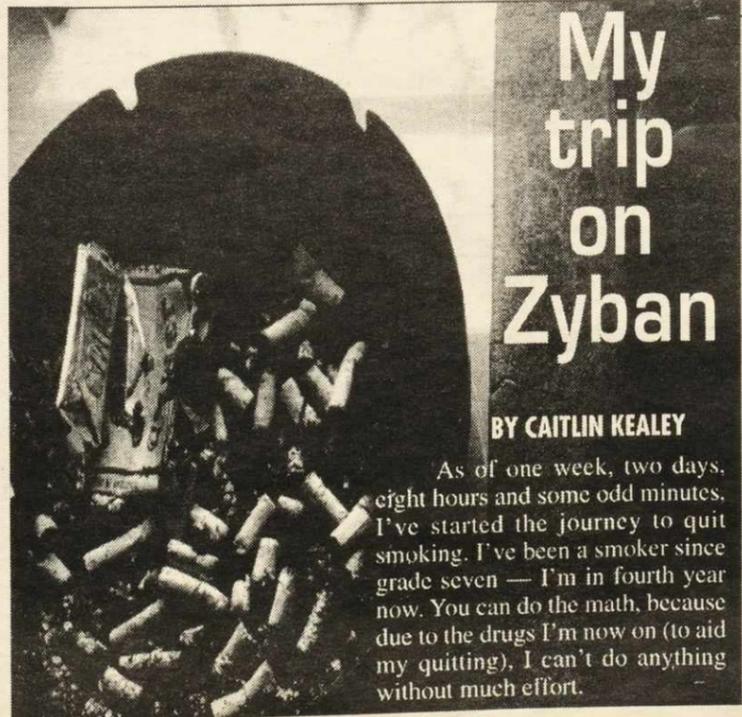
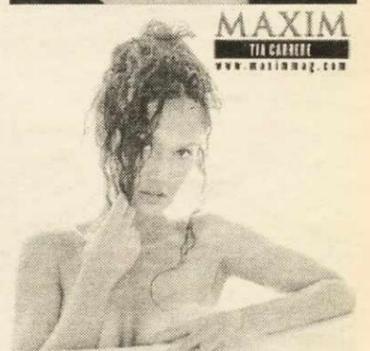
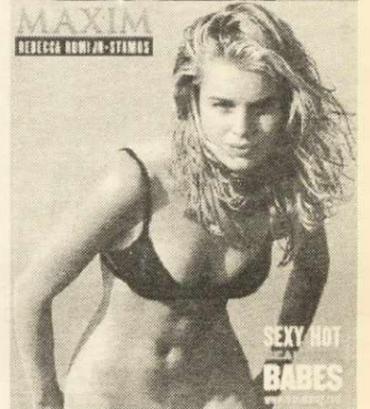
Not only has it encoded the dialogue of the show, it has influenced the way we interpret the actor. It no longer gives the reader/viewer a consistent view of the actor. Instead, it demonstrates the marketing campaign behind what *Maxim* (and, in part, by *Maxim*'s readers) think is sexy. Instead of breaking a stereotype, these cover subjects are included in another.

If we look around, however, there are a few of the younger Hollywood set who have managed to escape the cover girl curse. Natalie "Queen Amidala" Portman, from the newest *Star Wars* film, has yet to do one of these shoots. For the movie *Anywhere but Here*, she was required to do a nude scene, but refused, stating that she was not ready to drop her drawers. The covers that she has been on are the covers of *Mademoiselle* and *Vanity Fair*.

On the other hand, Portman is not identified with the teen celebrity machine. While she does get the odd write-up for wearing something fabulous to an opening, her reputation is built on her work, rather than the efforts of her marketing gurus. Not only has she turned in consistently intelligent performances since her screen debut in *The Professional*, but she has also never appeared in lesser fare, preferring to save her talents for films worthy of her name.

And she's not alone. Even Claire Danes' loopy public image has never led her to pose in big hair and a thong.

Are they better off than the starlet squad? We don't know for sure. One thing we can say is that if starlets like Noxzema girl Rebecca Gayheart and *She's All That* actor Rachel Leigh Cook want to exude real sexiness, they should try showing off a better film portfolio as opposed to their physical prowess.



My trip on Zyban

BY CAITLIN KEALEY

As of one week, two days, eight hours and some odd minutes, I've started the journey to quit smoking. I've been a smoker since grade seven — I'm in fourth year now. You can do the math, because due to the drugs I'm now on (to aid my quitting), I can't do anything without much effort.

Zyban was used as an antidepressant but was found to suppress the want to smoke. It may do that, but it is the side effects that are the killer. Not only am I now supposed to stop smoking, but they expect me to stop drinking completely, for you run the risk if you mix the two of having an epileptic seizure. Yes, a seizure. I joked to a friend a few weeks ago while I watched her in envy as she was chugging a beer: "If I buy and drink a beer will you hold my tongue for me after?"

Not only can I now not drink and not smoke, but now I can barely sleep as well. So I now have more time to reflect on how I wish I could smoke, drink, and sleep. Think that's bad? There's more. Due to the fact that it is also used as an antidepressant I find myself more jittery and happy than usual, which is fol-

lowed by a crash and bad mood. Perhaps it isn't due to the drugs but I have a sneaking suspicion that it is. So as I bounce around campus on my jittery euphoric trip somewhat resembling strange highs I have seen other people experience, I wonder if it is worth it.

Then I think that it is. Quitting has many benefits that most people are familiar with that I won't delve into. You can turn to any anti-smoking commercial to get the list of reasons. I'm supposed to take Zyban for about 7 weeks. I don't think I can or want to. I will lose the small part of sanity I have remaining.

It is helping though. For all of its negative side effects it is cutting down on my cravings. I started taking it after hearing so many success stories from people I knew that

had taken in. One was a woman who had smoked for 40 years who took it and quit in just over two weeks. So it can't be all bad. After a week or two of taking it you are supposed to set a quit day. I set mine but I have already cheated on it. But today is the day. I swear, no more smoking. Then I can hurry up and get back to my drinking, but in a smoke free world. That way I can afford to drink more! Just kidding...maybe. But in all seriousness, I'll let you know if this works and then everyone can quit smoking! Then the Man will stop sucking money from us poor addicted folk, and you'll have more money to waste on other less life threatening things. Oh dear I've become one of those preachy "I've quit so you can too" folk, and I haven't even quit yet. Either way, wish me luck!