

The big race at Mosport this weekend means - , - -

Most of the spectators watching the Trans Am race at Mosport this weekend will be kept safely behind fences. To Mosport's credit, no spectator has ever been killed there. However, does the only danger to those who attend take the form of an out of control racing car crashing through barriers into crowds of the eager but innocent? Racing promoters seem to have prevented the possibility of this sort of disaster, but they are exposing spectators to a more widespread danger.

What relevance has motor-racing to other problems of our society? Is it merely a pastime attracting and affecting only a small percentage of the population? Its appearance on the sport's pages is not nearly as common as those of the well-established sports of the western culture: baseball, football, and hockey. But L&M, a tobacco company which is a major sponsor of professional motorsport this year, states in a press release: "Five years ago, all the major sports were as familiar as they are to-day - except the sport using automobiles."

Most automobile journalists and race promoters tend to agree that auto racing is the fastest growing sport in North America.

THE AUTOMOBILE AS IDOL

The basis of this relevance is neatly implied by the wording of L&M's quote: "... the sport using automobiles." The automobile is not only the vehicle through which racing drivers derive their sporting pleasure, but it is also the vehicle through which industry, its advertising consultants, and, of course, the race promoters and organizers attract and exploit spectators. They are successful at this only because the automobile is established as an essential part of western culture.

The presence of the automobile in North American life has come to be taken for granted. As a saleable product it has gone beyond the point of merely filling the basic need for transportation. The automotive market has been shaped by social and economic factors used to full advantage by the marketing people of the industry to the extent that people believe that the automobile satisfies many additional but false "needs".

IMPOTENT MOBILITY

Although people have a realistic need for mobility, that which is afforded by the

automobile is very much a false mobility or freedom. People need relief from the alienation of industry and the uncomfortable social relations that they are forced into, or else they become incapable of production or consumption. The automobile is a channelled relief valve that does not help to solve the problems or even give real escape, because their freedom is restricted to highways and governed by gas stations. These places are just as much a part of the American culture as the situations left behind. However, temporary satisfaction may be obtained merely by the feeling of self-direction which a driver feels behind the wheel of a car.

Although everyone can own an automobile,

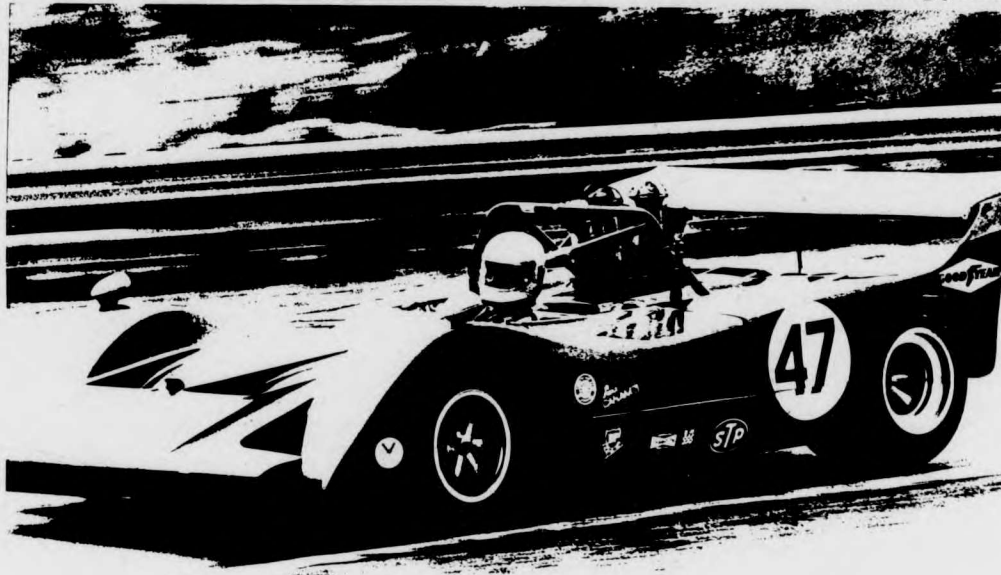


Photo by TIM CLARK

not everyone owns the same kind of automobile. Because of the various cost levels of cars and the extensive range of options that differentiate the values of cars, the automobile has become a symbol of the class system and the competitive nature of this society. Again, a false need for a "better" automobile can prevent a person from filling a real need.

by the pleasures derived from driving and owning a car, and the industry advertises this aspect to the fullest. This is the main form of exploitation by the industry and perhaps the most dangerous: it continues the sterilization of a person's real creative energies.

The automobile industry is so well integrated into the economic system that its demise would drastically affect the rest of the

- - - more than you think

THE PHALLUS OF NON-LOVE

In a society where there is little creative activity in jobs and the frustrations arising out of repressive family relationships and unreal love are aggravated and exploited by commercialism, there are vital vacuums formed in the personalities of consumers. A creative or sexual vacuum is seemingly filled

system. Because of this importance, the industry has often been politically supported, e.g. strike breaking, restrictions on foreign car importation, policies that favour private transportation.

Professional motorsport fits very well into this integration. In the way in which it is being promoted it reinforces all these false attributes of the automobile. This, in turn, intensifies all the problems.

The unity of the racing driver and the car he drives strengthens the private property aspect in the spectators' head: "Jackie Stewart in his own personal Lola", with his name on the side and his own colour scheme. People identify winning makes of racing cars with their own street automobiles.

A RACING DRIVER AS GOD

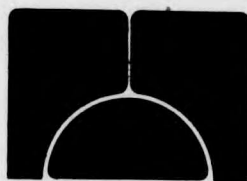
Hero-worshipping of the drivers in motorsport is probably more serious than in any other sport. The spectators identify with the drivers: here are their dreams manifested; their frustrations are vicariously relieved, but again, only in a false sense.

Automobile racing excites people. They are willing to pay large amounts of money not only just to see a race, but to reproduce the feelings of a race on their own.

But, actually, the nature of motorsport should cause the very opposite to happen: racing drivers are very safe drivers; they understand the cars they drive and know the limits within which they must drive. They have caused many positive engineering advances, but, unfortunately, these advances do very little to solve the problems of a private transportation oriented society. It is industry in its methods of promoting motorsport in order to perpetuate the system that continues the problems and hides the roots.

It is the spectators who are in the arena facing the lions.

From THE CHEVRON



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118 McLAUGHLIN COLLEGE - 635-3506

Friday, September 17

Crowbar, Mike Quatro and Dr. Music

The first of a series of major concerts for the York community produced by McLaughlin Social Affairs. (see ad on the right)

Wednesday, September 22

Stratford Festival '71

A trip to a performance of Shakespeare's

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, a delicate play about love. Bus leaves at 5 pm for 8:30 performance. \$5.50 reserved tickets include chartered bus. (McLaughlin students \$4.50). Tickets and further information are available at McLaughlin Social Affairs office and the Master's office, Room 226 McLaughlin College.

Friday, September 24

Saturday, September 25

The Earth Weekend Concerts

The first of a series of weekly folk concerts, in Argh! Coffee Shop, Room 051 McLaughlin College. Three shows each night beginning at 9 pm. This weekend featuring Keith McKie. Concerts are open.

Thursday, September 30

McLaughlin - Winters Afternoon Concerts

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Friday, October 1

Murray McLaughlin in concert

Watch next EXCALIBUR for further events.

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York University Orientation Concert

Crowbar

Dr. Music

Mike Quatro

Tomorrow, September 17, 9:00 pm

all live in concert in the

Tait McKenzie Gym

Advance tickets \$2.50

at the Bookstore from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm or at Tait McKenzie.

Tickets \$3.00 at the door



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