

EDITORIAL

If you've been reading the letters section of this publication on a regular basis you may have noticed a favourite recurring argument that's been popping up every now and again since late last semester, the fearsome debate on whether or not the film *Cannibal Women in the Avacado Jungle of Death* should be shown at this univer-

sity. It all began last year, when there was a bitter debate between feminist and non-feminist camps provoked (seemingly) by a series of articles for the "politically incorrect" called the "Backlash" (a name that will live in infamy). Tempers flared, fingers pointed, snowballs were thrown, and towards the end of the ridiculous rigma-rol some folks in the Sociology/Anthropology department decided to try and give people a chance to cool down and laugh at the whole business by screening the aforementioned movie for students. It seemed harmless enough, but feminist factions jumped on the subversive video faster than Elvis on a porkchop, and the next thing you know there was a new debate and a movement underway to ban the showing of the film. The film was shown only recently (despite the efforts of protestors), and the lingering debate on the matter persists as a sort of absurd microcosm of last year's arguments. So, after watching the two sides take shot after shot at each other in our lettercolumn, we at the X-Press decided to play the film for our staff and provide impartial, journalistic appraisals of this controversial work, beginning with this editorial.

The feminists and the other anti-Cannibals are right on one count: the film has all the educational value of a hubcap. To call a spade a spade, it's a bad, silly movie. Brief synopsis: a tribe of super-radical feminist savages who keep their men as docile slaves and eventually eat them are hiding out in the Avacado Jungle. Previous attempts by anthropologist to contact and civilize them have resulted in snack food for the cannibal women. Our heroine, a super-feminist professor of anthropology, played by Shannon Tweed, is sent to make contact with the savages accompanied only by Bunny, a dipsy, man-hungry "traditional" female stu-

dent of the professor, and their guide, an Indiana Jones wannabe who sees feminism as a corrupt conspiracy to enslave men and seduce women away from their "rightful" place as homemakers. They go into the jungle to seek out the Piranha Women (the tribe to which the Cannibal Women belong) and it only gets

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sillier from there.

The film's silliness is about as far as the validity of the anti-Cannibal Women arguments go. We had heard shocking reports of the film's nudity, but the women in this movie are usually far more modestly attired than any natives you'll find in *National Geographic*. One letter writer referred to a gang-rape scene, which is suggested in the film but nipped in the bud before it even starts. There's no real steamy sex scenes, and no seriously gory violence. Everything's played pretty much for laughs, not shock value, and the film doesn't even have so much as a Restricted rating (it's actually rated Adult, like most movies these days). It may not be something you'd show at a Girl Guides meeting, but it hardly seems worth all the effort certain parties at U.P.E.I. have spent trying to bury the thing. Various classes here have shown far more graphic films as subject matter, and if you find the *Cannibal Women* too horrifying to bear you probably can't bring yourself to look at half the other movies on the market. The new CBC "Adult Primetime" alone would probably be enough to give you cardiac arrest.

That's not to say that the *Cannibal Women* and worse displays are things we should be watch-

ing. This publication's editor is a viewer of fairly conservative tastes himself; however the *Cannibal Women* are a fairly mild example of the kind of schlock you can find in the film industry, and no one's forcing anyone to watch it anyway. Therein lies one of the huge weaknesses of the anti-Cannibal arguments

however worried they may be about the alleged corruptive properties of this film, no one has to watch the thing and protestors don't have the authority or the right to tell students what they can or can't watch anyway, even if the film is brainless tripe.

Finally, there's the argument that the movie is degrading to feminism. Well, it is; but it's equally degrading to pompous scientists, "real women" who live to be boytoys (i.e. Bunny), "real men" who see feminism as hogwash, "sensitive new-

age guys" who stay at home, and the list goes on and on. The film makes fun of every side of the ongoing male-female debate, and no one is singled out for special abuse, nor are the women the only ones in the film who are scantily clad what with some of the sparsely clad guys walking around the jungle. The only thing about this film that singles out feminism for ridicule is the feminist reaction to it, which unfortunately makes feminists in general look like a neurotic, paranoid gang of reactionaries.

Not all feminists are extremists, of course, nor are the *Cannibal Women* film and its viewers beyond reproach; however, this whole debate is pretty silly. If the Soc/Anth crowd and other interested parties want to veg out on *Cannibal Women*, that's their business. If certain parties want no part of the movie, that's fine. The whole controversy is completely pointless and ludicrously trivial, and now that the film's been shown, maybe all those involved will settle down and perhaps find more meaningful things to devote their time to. A mind is a terrible thing to waste, and *Cannibal Women* are a terrible thing to waste it on.

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