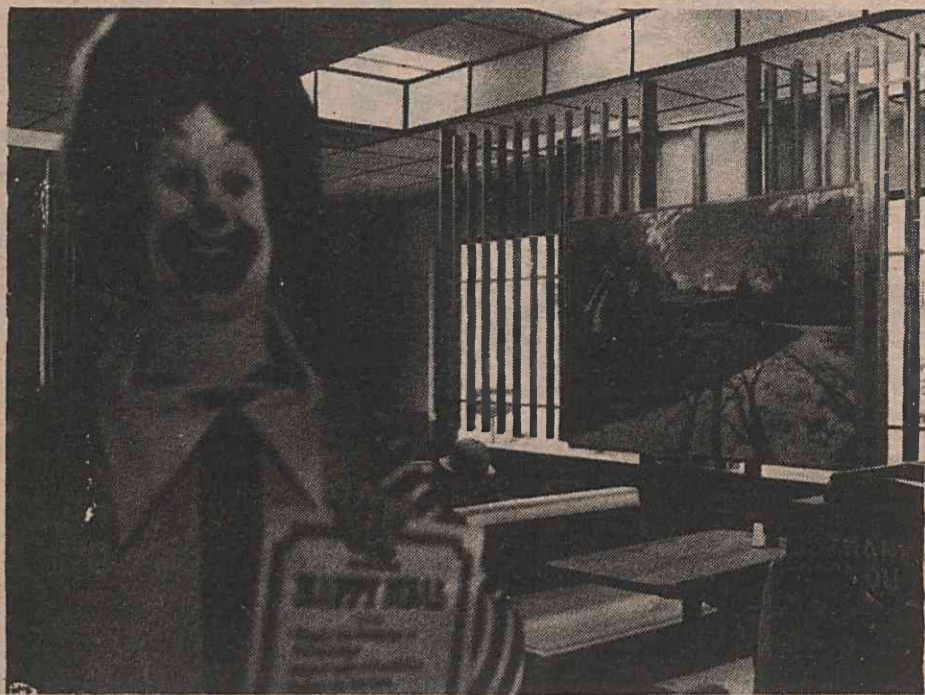


McMedici's



Deanne Morio

The quattrocento banking empire of the de Medici family spawned the most spectacular collection of art in modern history. To perceive them in a modern sense though, they were initially a shade mafiosi and acquired and commissioned work from such notable high Renaissance artists as Michelangelo, Da Vinci, Donatello, Raphael and Botticelli in order to legitimize their crassly capitalistic fortune. Well, their hearts were in the right place, though with the exception of Lorenzo the Magnificent and Cosimo III most of them couldn't tell egg-tempera from a chicken. However, they filled their houses, chapels, and libraries with the most exquisite sculpture, painting, and architecture available, in a boundless nouveau riche fervor.

While neither Asheville's Merrimon Avenue McDonald's can be compared to the cavalier business practices of the de Medici, nor the artwork housed

in the store's gallery to Florentine Renaissance art, the union of art and commerce is familiar. Clearly, one would have no reason until now to associate McDonald's with tastefulness. It is a frankly huge, commercial franchise corporation based solely on the expedient sale of prefabricated hamburgers, except for this most commendable Asheville store.

The store has its origins in a stroke of true wit and Humanism. The location now occupied by McDonald's had been the sight of the UNC-A Art Annex. By the time McDonald's bought the property and started making plans to build, the new Art and Management building which is to house the annex was barely underway. In a brilliant stroke of collective bargaining, Ms. Elma Johnson of the UNC-A art department and the president of McDonald's corporation agreed upon the highly original concept of merging the restaurant and art annex. The result of this union is, if not sometimes disconcerting, absolutely delightful.

McDonald's departed from its usual plastic and stainless-steel fantasy world decor and built a sensitive and restrained restaurant to house the annex gallery and work space. Located immediately north of the Grace Post Office, the edifice is a kind of California-chic woodsy design. Inside, the always spotless and frighteningly efficient counter is gracefully separated from the seating space and gallery cases. The exhibits include wall hangings, pottery, hard and soft sculpture, and paintings which go far to create a perfect atmosphere for the hurried Asheville munching down the all-American burgerfest. Here, art is brought into the come and go of life to serve the best aesthetic and financial interests of viewer and artist. Faculty, students, and community members who exhibit their work in this unusual gallery have met with much success in the sale of their work.

This happy coincidence is a lesson and reminder to all of us. Art has always flourished as a result of a healthy economy, and in this case, both fields have profited. McDonald's has expanded its concept of service, and artists have benefited from one of the most efficient machines of marketing genius in the country. As for my part, frankly I find nothing quite so delicious as a quarter-pounder and water-color to go.



Women Take Back the Night

by V.K. Duckett

"Women take back the night" was the theme of a march and rally held in the Asheville City-County Plaza Saturday night. The event was sponsored jointly by the Asheville-Buncombe Women's Center, the Rape Crisis Center and the newly formed Asheville chapter of Women Against Violence Against Women (WAVAW). This group joins the hundreds of other chapters nationwide which are working to stop the gratuitous use of images of physical and sexual violence against women in the mass media and the real world violence against women it promotes through public education, consciousness raising, and mass consumer action.

WAVAW was born out of the outrage of feminist and other groups at the sex-violent, racist film *SNUFF* which appeared in March, 1976. As an ad hoc coalition, WAVAW protested both the film itself and the advertisements for it, which claimed that the murder and mutilation of a woman was entertaining. Their action resulted in the film being withdrawn from Southern California one week after it opened. WAVAW actions also resulted in the removal of the Rolling Stones' "Black and Blue" billboard from Sunset Strip and curtailment of that ad campaign.

The formation of the local chapter of WAVAW has come at a time when local daily news is full of stories about violence against women in Asheville and surrounding areas—from the rape-murders of at least two women by Danny Parton to the as yet unsolved stabbing of a young Asheville woman last month.

The enthusiasm of the more than ninety participants in Saturday night's rally and march attests that not only are women tired of the silence surrounding their role as victims of so much of society's violence, but that they are willing to actively combat the actual occurrence of violence against women and to publicly denounce those forms of media which use such images of women for promotional reasons. As Jane Kennedy, a spokeswoman for WAVAW said, "Media violence against women perpetuates the myth that women are victims, naturally and happily masochistic. It contributes to an atmosphere which trivializes, condones, and encourages acts of violence (such as rape and battering) against women. It breeds discrimination, dehumanization and the abuse of women. In these and other ways it interferes with the rights and safety of women."

Other women spoke about specific areas of violence against women such as rape and battering. Heddy Fisher, of the Asheville Rape Crisis Center, spoke about the incidence of rape in the Asheville area, saying that there has been an 80% increase in the last year. Domestic violence, the battering of women by their spouses, is the most prevalent kind of

crime in America and the least reported. Veronica Fisher, who is with the Asheville Task Force on Battered Women, estimates that a woman is beaten and abused less than every three minutes in this country.

Although these sobering reports were the focus of the rally speakers, the act of publically confronting these issues in a united way kept the energy level high and productive. The rousing grand finale, a group singing of Holly Nears' "Fight Back," is still echoing in the streets of Asheville.

ENROLLMENT

Like many other universities, UNC-A recently began an advertising campaign geared toward attracting more students of all ages. You may have noticed a few billboards around town, as well as several ads in the paper offering "sign up by mail" services. Has this paid off? According to Tom Cochran, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, there has been approximately a five to ten per cent enrollment increase during the past year, with roughly 1,097 students considered full-time, and 860 part-time.