

Advertorial

And You Think Your Family is Dysfunctional!

Roxanne Thornton

Can you imagine the results if Neil Simon had written *Macbeth*? Take that savage streak that the best of families reserve for their most heated battles and place it into a romantic comedy, with twists and turns, and changing alliances around every corner, and you will get Georgetown Little Theatre's *The Lion in Winter*.

It's Christmas, 1183. Henry II (Ken Smith) has released his wily wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine (Anthea Hoare) and has summoned his rebellious sons: the warring, eldest, Richard the Lionhearted (Ian O'Brien); the overlooked, scheming Geoffrey (Stuart Bell); and the spoiled youngest, John (Jeremy Lunn) to his castle at Chinon for the alleged purpose of cementing the succession. Place into the mix, Richard's betrothed, Henry's mistress, Princess Alais (Hannah Manierka) and her brother, the French King, Philip Capet (Nevin Ameli) and fireworks are soon to follow. Is this really historical Europe, or have we stumbled into a *Peyton Place*, or *Stepford Wives* sequel? One cannot help but to feel a guilty pleasure, like a voyeur, watching this royal family duke it out. Will there be a happily ever after?



Find out for yourself. *The Lion in Winter* opens 8 pm, Oct. 28 at the newly renovated Acton Town Hall Centre, 19 Willow St. North, Acton. It runs for three weekends with Sun. matinees at 2 pm, on Oct. 30 and Nov. 6. Due to the intimate size, seating will be limited, so don't wait, get your tickets right away. Don't miss this truly witty comedy, a masterpiece of design and manipulation!



GEORGETOWN LITTLE THEATRE PRODUCTIONS

General seating tickets are still
Thurs./ Sun. \$16.75
and Fri./Sat. \$19.75

or you may still purchase a subscription.

For tickets, phone the JET box office at
905-877-3700

online: <http://www.haltonhills.ca/theatre/>
pick-up also at **Acton Home Hardware** or
Halton Hills Furniture and Appliances

Science Matters

By David Suzuki



A 56-million-year-old lesson in climate change

Our planet is an ever-changing sphere of wonder and mystery. By studying sediments, ice-core samples, trees, and fossils, scientists have been able to piece together some of its phenomenal history and evolution. Humans have been here for a relatively short time, our survival and prosperity made possible by the unique conditions that unfolded to create the current balance.

Throughout human history, we have been subject to forces of nature, but overall, the Earth has been in a period that has allowed us to flourish. We can't take that for granted. When we look through a scientific lens, we see amazing hydrologic and carbon cycles, processes such as photosynthesis that allow us to breathe and eat, and so much more. We also see droughts, floods, insect infestations, and mass extinctions that can radically alter the balance of life.

A massive release of carbon into the atmosphere can trigger cataclysmic events. It's something we're facing now, as we burn fossil fuels as fast as we can dig and suck them out of the ground to keep our homes and cities warm and lighted, and to propel ourselves in machines weighing more than 10 times as much as the often-solo person they are transporting.

This is not the first time the Earth has changed in response to carbon overload. Scientists have found that the planet experienced rapid warming about 56 million years ago, long before humans arrived. According to an article in the October issue of *National Geographic*, a "massive and geologically sudden release of carbon" during the Paleocene-Eocene Thermal Maximum, or PETM, altered the planet's systems, making it possible for new life forms to appear and thrive, including, eventually, humans.

Evidence suggests that the carbon released then was equivalent to the amount that would enter the atmosphere if we burned all the Earth's reserves of coal, oil, and natural gas. The warming effects are believed to have lasted 150,000 years until the carbon was re-

absorbed.

The main difference between now and then is that we are fuelling the current change, whereas 56 million years ago, it was a natural phenomenon — although scientists are still not entirely sure what caused it. The Earth was experiencing massive tectonic upheavals at the time, which would have sparked volcanic activity, but that only accounts for a relatively minor release of carbon and subsequent small increase in global temperatures, even if a comet impact were added to the mix.

The most likely scenario is that the slight warming from those events, or from fluctuations in the Earth's orbit, caused methane hydrates to melt, releasing massive amounts of methane into the atmosphere. Methane hydrates are ice-like water molecules that form around a molecule of methane. In cold temperatures and under high pressure, they remain stable. Large deposits lie under the Arctic and the seafloor. Scientists believe the current warming could be enough to release these extremely potent greenhouse gases.

Swedish geologist Birger Schmitz, who has studied the PETM science, told *National Geographic* that we can either wait to see what the result of such a large release will be, or we can look at what happened 56 million years ago.

Why would we undertake such a drastic experiment that threatens the survival of the human species when we have pretty good evidence of what the outcome will be? The main reason is that many of us are not willing to give up our newly acquired luxuries and economic systems regardless of the effects on ourselves, our children, our grandchildren, and all other life on the planet. We don't seem to be willing to slow down the pace of fossil fuel extraction and use while we shift to cleaner energy sources and more rational ways of living within this finite biosphere.

Written with contributions from David Suzuki Foundation editorial and communications specialist Ian Hanington.



EAST COAST TUNES: Folk singer Eric Angus Whyte of Nova Scotia played a solo concert to a crowd at Roxy Café last Friday night to promote his latest CD, called *Luddite Sons*, featuring songs in his Folk/Celtic style. — Submitted photo

Avoid injury while exercising

One of the ways to get healthier is to exercise safely. Veteran athletes and seasoned professional trainers all note the importance of safety when it comes to exercise. Simply diving right into exercise can be a recipe for disaster, often leading to injury, especially for those people new to exercise or returning after a long layoff.

For those who have resolved to get in better shape this season, consider the following exercise safety tips.

- **Don't push it.** The body responds differently to exercise as it ages, and many people who were once exercise aficionados but stopped regularly exercising could likely make the mistake that they can still exercise as hard as they did in their youth. Stop exercising immediately if you begin to experience any of the following symptoms: dizziness, nausea, cold sweats, muscle cramps, pain or pressure in the chest, joint pain.

- **Maintain proper breathing** or cease exercising if you can't. Whenever exercising, you should be able to walk without gasp-

ing for breath. If you cannot breathe properly, stop exercising immediately. Once your system has rebounded and you begin to feel better, if you're going to return to your exercise regimen, simply tone it down, performing each exercise more slowly.

- **Stay hydrated.** Staying hydrated throughout an exercise routine will increase flexibility and replace the water you lose by sweating. While some might feel this will counteract any weight loss, losing water weight is not the type of weight loss you should be aiming for. Be sure to drink lots of water before, during and after workouts.

- **Stretch, stretch, stretch.** Professional athletes make their living with their bodies, and they stretch extensively before each and every game. Just because you don't earn a ballplayer's paycheck doesn't mean you can avoid stretching. Stretching helps prevent muscle pulls, strains and other injuries, so make sure an adequate stretching routine is a part of your workout.