

Huronian Week

Wednesday, July 26, 1978

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Studio Night

Players perform a bonus

by Shirley Whittington
Three one-act plays were presented Saturday night at Sacred Heart School, as a bonus evening of entertainment for Huronia Players subscribers.

As well, Studio Night provides a showcase for new talent, and give established actors and directors a chance to try one another's hats.

"Not Enough Rope", by Elaine May, was directed by John Hudson who put Charlann Widmeyer, Ed Guthrie and Lynn Gorell through this absurd little piece and about life (and the possibility of death) in a rooming house.

Mary Horzempa directed "Echo" a dramatic piece about the guilt experienced by parents whose son has committed suicide. John Scott and Dorothy McCallion played the distraught parents, and Janice Darby was their daughter. Victor Horzempa made a ghostly appearance as their dead son.

"George" was a bit of high society fluff directed by Pat Griffin in which Stephen Hartnell and Chipper Thompson traded barbs as a couple of bon vivants, and Nancy Penny and Sandy Camin provided the feminine interest.

All three plays were

well staged, although one wondered why characters in "Not Enough Rope" didn't simply knock on the door frames when they wished entry into one of the rooms suggested onstage. Pantomiming a knock with someone off stage making the actual sound seemed unnecessarily distracting. Ed Guthrie revealed himself as a

good stone faced comic in this play, and here's hoping he'll read for some of next year's longer productions.

"Echo" was a lugubrious and static play. The two principals delivered most of their lines from a sitting position which was a fault attributable to the script probably, not the director. John Scott is

one of the Players' most accomplished actors, and his anguished final moments as the guilt ridden father earned him prolonged applause.

In "George" Chipper Thompson and Stephen Hartnell bounced lines off one another with obvious glee and perfect timing. It was a period piece with Nancy Penny

portraying the dizzy scatterbrain and Sandy Camin providing a nice acid foil. Of the three plays, "George" was the best received.

Huronian Players seems to be overflowing with talent. The next season, headed by new president Raymond Holt, should provide lots of good stage entertainment for Midland audiences.



Chipper Thompson, Steven Hartnell in 'George'

'Voices' is illuminating reading

by Shirley Whittington
"Go Ask Alice" the diary of a 16-year-old girl edited by Beatrice Sparks was widely read by young people and their elders, and now Sparks has a new book called "Voices", based on extensive interviews with young people across the United States.

Names and family circumstances have been disguised, and Mary, Mark, Millie, and Jane tell their stories in their own words.

Mary fell prey to a quasi-religious cult in her second year of high school. ("School...was a drag, a big boring, nothing, gray plastic drag"). Hers is the most interesting story in the book. For the first time, I was able to understand why such cults are able to capture and exploit young people. Mary was starved, deprived of sleep and made to work 12-hour days in the fields of the farm where the cult flourished.

Book review

When she was discovered some months later and de-programmed, she found that Sky, her leader, was living an affluent life on the proceeds of the farm where he fed his workers on gruel. The donations which the kids pulled in off the streets also went into Sky's pocket.

Mary describes the de-programming.

"I was exhausted confused and frightened." She finally broke, and went on to become a social worker, working full time de-programming other youngsters. In an epilogue, Mary reveals some of the master-minding behind cults like Hare Krishna, the Unification Church, and the Brotherhood of the Sun. According to her

research, between two and three million people in the US belong to cults, mostly "impressionable kids eighteen to twenty-four."

Mark writes about the constant temptation of suicide. His mother had a nervous breakdown, and later his parents were divorced. Lonely and alienated, Mark turned to drugs to relieve his depression.

"I'm just a suicidal been-nowhere, going-nowhere crazy that ought to be locked up."

As Mark's chapter closes, he seems happier. "Things are going better and I'm going to try harder to conform and be likeable."

The epilogue reveals that Mark's story had a tragic ending. He killed himself, and left a note headed "Dear

Anybody", which begged for help and understanding.

Millie is also a child of divorced parents. Her mother's boyfriends were brutal to her. By the time she was thirteen, Millie had decided that "males were...rotten brutal creatures, all after one thing." She struck up a friendship with a teacher which developed into a lesbian affair. She too attempted suicide.

In the epilogue we learn that Millie found friendship and love in the family of a youth counsellor.

"I've started a new happy straight life...and as I grow older I appreciate how hard it is to raise a kid in a one parent home."

Jane was the product of a happy home, but she seemed to be the family misfit. She didn't like school, and began experimenting with drugs. Then, she began to hang around with a

"bunch of sleazes", and inspired by Hustler and similar porno magazines she and her friends fell into a schedule of wild parties and mindless vandalism.

Jane hit the bottom, but was rehabilitated through a college course called "Yes I Can" which worked at improving her self image.

Voices tends in places to sound like the whining of over-privileged kids who want everything except responsibility, but the story of Mary and her cult experience is really gripping and worth reading.

All four youngsters suffered not from lack of money but from the emptiness of their relationships. Both parents and children will find "Voices" - particularly the voice of Mary - an illuminating book.

Voices, Beatrice Sparks ed. Fitzhenry and Whiteside pub.



What's happening in Canadian Television

ON THE TOWN

Painter Harold Town has been called one of Canada's greatest assets. Certainly he is one of our wittiest. For some time on CBC radio, his caustic comments on art politics and social issues caused the cream to curdle in lots of morning coffee cups. You can spend a day with Town on Sunday, July 30 at 9:30 p.m. visiting his Toronto studio, built for him by Group of Seven member Lawren Harris. The profile also takes a trip to Town's farm near Peterborough. There are comments on Town and his art by Sol Littman, Robert Fulford and David Silcox co-author with Town of a 1977 book on Tom Thomson, one of the biggest art book successes in Canadian publishing history. Host Hana Gartner will lead you through This Half Hour, and production by Larry Zolf assures that it will be an entertaining half hour.

ROYAL VISIT

Attention Royalty watchers - Her majesty plus Prince Philip and the Princes Edward and Andrew will arrive in St. John's Newfoundland today, July 26. They're on their way to the Commonwealth games in Edmonton, and the CBC cameras will be following along. The arrival of the Royal party will be telecast today at 1 p.m. and later on the news. On Saturday at 11:30 p.m. the Queen's speech to the Nation will be televised, and Prime Minister Trudeau will also be saying - as they say - a few words. On Monday, August 7, at 8 p.m. there will be a final report on the visit - with a recap for those who missed the first two presentations.

THE CUCKOO WALTZ

British comedy isn't what it used to be, but hope springs eternal. On Friday, July 28 at 8:30 p.m. a five occasion mini-series from Granada Television of England begins. Called *The Cuckoo Waltz* it stars David Roper as a young reporter struggling to support a wife and a brace of babies, as well as a mortgage and a mother-in-law. He also has a disgustingly affluent friend whom his mother-in-law keeps holding up as an example. And there, they say, lies the comedy. We'll see.

CHAPLIN ROLLS AGAIN

Perhaps a more reliable choice for comedy might be the old classic *Modern Times*, written produced and directed by Charles Chaplin in 1936, and starring the old master himself plus Paulette Goddard. There's a famous roller skating sequence in this film about a man whose factory job it is to tighten two bolts on a moving belt, and who becomes caught up in the machine age of the modern world. *Modern Times* rolls Tuesday, August 1, at 12:40 on CBC-TV.

ATLANTIC COUNTERPOINT

CBC Summer Symphonies, Sunday at 10 p.m. mates the music of Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky and Dvorak with the splendid scenery of Prince Edward Island and the Annapolis Valley. If you have colour television and a stereo near it, you're in for a treat, for the sounds of the Atlantic Symphony will be simulcast on the CBC Stereo Network. It should be a feast for the ear and the eye.

THE SINGING BARBER

Another musical treat on CBC-TV happens on Thursday, July 27 at 8 p.m. when Rossini's masterpiece *The Barber of Seville* is telecast, as staged by the National Arts Centre's Jean Gascon. It's a live production and stars Richard Stilwell, Gail Robinson, Gimi Beni and Rockwell Blake.

MONSTERS AND OTHER SCARY THINGS

From ancient times to the present, monsters have been reported in just about every corner of the world. On Thursday on CBC-TV from 4:30 - 5 p.m. a special program explores the dark places where monsters live and examines the evidence for and against their existence. Maybe now we'll get the truth about Kempenfelt Kelly.