

Ordinary People

a heavy drama

by Terry Dupuis

Ordinary People is no ordinary movie. It is extraordinary in almost every way, from its direction to its performances to its script. This intense and absorbing drama marks a triumphant directing debut for Robert Redford, the best performance of Donald Sutherland's career, a startling role for Mary Tyler Moore, and a powerful performance by newcomer Timothy Hutton.

Robert Redford has maintained one of Hollywood's most successful acting careers ever since he co-starred with Paul Newman in 1969's *Butch Cassidy And The Sundance Kid*. Very few of his films failed to click at the box-office. He took several years off in recent times, but returned full force this year with *The Electric Horseman* and *Brubaker*.

Actors who attempt directing have often

met with indifferent results, and sometimes with embarrassing results. But Redford has emerged triumphant with his first directorial stint.

Ordinary People is a heavy drama, filled with emotional scenes. In less skillful hands it could easily have emerged as an excessive heavy-handed melodrama or soap opera. But Redford has directed with sensitivity and skill. None of the scenes are overdone or get out of control. The result is one of the most intelligent and satisfying dramas to appear on the screen in recent years.

Redford also gets extraordinary performances from his players. I never used to regard Donald Sutherland as much of an actor, maybe because he seemed to have a penchant for playing looney roles. But he

reveals a depth in Ordinary People that I never would have expected. His performance as Calvin Jarrett, the head of an upper middle class family which is undergoing a crisis, is unerringly perfect.

Mary Tyler Moore has also surprised her public with the depth of her characterization in Ordinary People. Associated for years with television sitcoms like "The Dick Van Dyke Show" and "The Mary Tyler Moore Show", she emerges as a fine dramatic actress in Ordinary People.

Screen newcomer Timothy Hutton plays the Jarretts' son Conrad. Tim is the son of the late actor Jim Hutton who died last year of cancer.

Young Hutton plays his role with such subtlety and intelligence that if there is any

justice at all in Hollywood, he will surely win an Academy Award next April for his stunning performance.

The Jarretts are an upper middle class family who appear to be just "ordinary people" who seem to have everything under control. On the surface they seem to be a perfectly happy well adjusted family. But Redford and his extraordinary cast take us beneath surface appearances to show us what is really going on. Ordinary People is every bit as intense, powerful and revealing as that classic Eugene O'Neill play "Long Day's Journey Into Night."

Redford, Sutherland, Tyler Moore and Hutton - may they all be remembered next April when the annual Academy Awards are handed out.



Christmas cheer

Dave Bennett, left, a prospective candidate for the Salvation Army, and volunteer Chuck Belanger braved the very cold weather Wednesday to collect money on King Street,

Midland, for the Army's Christmas Cheer fund. Salvation Army representatives will be on the street until 8 p.m. Christmas Eve.

Snowmobile found in bush

On Wednesday, Midland OPP were advised by a 15-year-old Port Severn resident, Orville Cadeau, that

while walking through bush area near Sunnylea Cottages, Port Severn, he discovered an abandoned snow

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Investigation by police revealed the snow vehicle to be owned by A. Recollet, Port McNicoll.

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