

Encampment: review

Penn State Encampment '73, this weekend at the Elks Country Club, gave students, administrators, town officials and others a chance to sit down together and talk.

It brought together many individuals who rarely see each other, known to each other only by name or position.

The Encampment also marked the return to an 18-year-old tradition, discontinued in 1969. With this Encampment, the University has the option of renewing the event, much resting with the "success" or "failure" of the past weekend.

What was gained from the 18 hours or so of "communication"?

Very little has changed as a direct result of the Encampment. No concrete courses of action were planned, no problems were resolved, personal prejudices and biases, if weakened, remain intact.

Although policies have not changed, some individuals have. Many are better informed, aware

of opposing viewpoints, and more ready to cooperate.

The Encampment also helped people approach problems with a "community" spirit, leaving behind individual organizations or departments.

Most of the beneficial communication and discussion came from the 21 workshops on Saturday morning and afternoon. Many of those heading the workshops had prepared their presentations carefully and sensitively. The discussions which followed were informative, open and interesting.

One of the first workshops on Saturday was chaired by James McClure, State College Borough Councilman, examining the "transportation trauma" in the area.

His presentation, complete with drawings, maps and a slide show, answered a lot of questions from the group — and raised a lot more.

The discussion centered on the possibility of a comprehensive public bus system in the area, replacing the need for

automobiles. People were candid, one admitting he would be reluctant to give up the convenience and luxury provided by two cars in the garage.

In another workshop on the "implications of changing the age of majority," Yates Mast, legal counselor, again answered questions and raised more in an area of concern to many.

Other workshops looked at the relationship between campus and town, with borough officials speaking openly and honestly for the most part.

Admittedly, few policies will change as a direct result of the Encampment, little action will be taken. Though less evident, the real results of the weekend are more important — communication, interaction, meeting people.

Viewed in terms of what realistically could be gained, the Encampment was a success. Hopefully, the success story will be repeated with annual chapters.

Kilpatrick, Von Hoffman

Beginning this week, The Daily Collegian will feature the opinions of James K. Kilpatrick and Nicholas Von Hoffman on this page.

If you have ever seen the CBS news program "60 Minutes," you are aware that Kilpatrick is a Southern conservative and that Von Hoffman is a radical liberal,

both witty and articulate commentators.

A former editor of the Richmond News-Leader, Kilpatrick is a believer in limited government, a strict constructionist, a foe of compulsory integration.

An author and journalist, Von Hoffman has been writing a column for The Washington Post

since 1966, tagged by Ron Ziegler as the only one he "never reads."

What Kilpatrick and Von Hoffman have in common are a sense of humor, an exciting writing style and thoughtful independence.

The result is a balance of professional thinking about issues that concern students.



Nicholas Von Hoffman:

Surviving divorce

For people with enough money to have slow vacations in the lazy summer, Labor Day is as much the beginning of a New Year as January First. They come back to town ready with new projects, ready to start over. That early week of September is also when a lot of them announce their divorces.

So many millions of us have been divorced you'd think the word would have gotten around that separation isn't necessarily the solution to marriage. Perhaps we continue to put too much hope in splitting up because our literature has tended to concentrate on unhappy marriages rather than unhappy divorcees.

Phil Potter, the central figure in Dan Wakefield's morosely excellent new novel, "Starting Over" (Delacorte Press, \$7.95), is just such a one who broke up a bad marriage for a worse divorce. As the embodiment of the ascendant assumption that the childless, alimonyless American male with a fresh bill of divorcement in his hands has been liberated to carouse in the hog heaven of the libido, Potter's men friends wink felicitations at him.

Actually, men frequently take divorce harder than their wives. Brought up, as so many are, to deny their dependency on anyone, they suffer an unhappy astonishment at finding out that the jail they came home to every night was also a home, and that the second bachelordom they thought they wanted so much is a pitiable drag.

Women often permit themselves a more realistic assessment of the pros and cons of their marriages, and if their divorcees are no happier they are less surprised at their pain. Trained to cook, sew, and keep house, they can at least look after themselves, which retreat bachelors like Potter, who live off TV dinners and invites out, can't do.

One of the reasons people get divorced is, that they forget why they got married. Many men, for instance, can't fight off the infection of Playboyism, until they go and do it for a while, and then, like Potter in the book, they may begin to look forward to meeting a woman, taking her out and not sleeping with her: "He would take it slow, he would get to know her. He didn't just want to get laid and go on to something else, in the dulling old routine."

The first time around, when you're young, it's easier to find a mate. You live among singles and you're relaxed in the knowledge that you will just naturally pair off in monogamous happiness. The next time, by the nearly universal testimony of divorcees of both sexes, it's not so easy. The available all seem like life's culls, and the nights of

searching and party going to meet new people more often than not end in sad little grotesqueries as when Potter and a divorcee are interrupted, panicked and humiliated in their passion by her small son.

Far from giving relief and providing liberation, divorce opens up a new life of lonely tedium culminating once a year in the trinity of public trials called Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's, that annual punishing gauntlet known gaily as — The Holidays. Hence, the desire to find someone to share monogamy with can approach the dimensions of a frightened rage.

In Wakefield's book, Potter thinks he has found someone to monogame with, but then he runs into another phenomenon. He loses sexual interest in her. To keep it going they try to have sex in every imaginable position and circumstance. That doesn't work for long, and when his girlfriend demands to know why, as so many hurt and confused ex-partners do, the guilty, defeated Potter can only say, "After doing it a couple of weeks, it's as if the desire drains out. And yet you're the same person."

That's not much of an answer. Our ideals and our desires make us want to think love-making with the same person gets better over time, but increasingly we doubt that it happens that way. Wakefield has Potter wonder "if any husband in America was sleeping with his wife," and the rest of us have nothing to add to that.

Potter and his ex-girlfriend stop sleeping with each other, but they don't exactly break up. They become "allies," allies in the search for mates, going to parties together, tipping each other off as to possibilities, plotting and gossiping together. Once this kind of relationship existed only between members of the same sex, but now in a time of many divorces and later marriages, you see more and more couples who are really allies.

It makes sense. A man can scout other men for a woman better than she can and vice versa. Since they're not in competition for mates they don't doublecross each other and when nobody else is around you always have a date.

In life and in Wakefield's novel, allies haven't found a way to beat the game, only make it a little easier to play. The girlfriend is defeated in her attempts at matrimony and must settle for Christmas by herself as the mistress of a shrink. And Potter, unhappy in marriage and unhappy out of it, weds a perfectly horrible young woman he's barely slept with. He will lose interest in her later.



James J. Kilpatrick:

But he is-president

The day after Judge John Sirica's opinion came down, a page one headline in the Washington Star-News summed up the state of both the weather and the law: "Smog Is the Worst Ever Recorded Here."

All over town, lawyers, pundits, clerks and cab drivers are construing the Constitution. Both newspapers have handed down concurring opinions. Sen. Sam Ervin called in to add his note of approval. The consensus is that Judge Sirica was right, and the President was wrong, in the matter of the presidential tapes.

"It is ordered," the judge said, "that respondent, President Richard M. Nixon, or any subordinate officer, official or employee with custody or control... is hereby commanded to produce forthwith for the court's examination in camera the subpoenaed documents or objects which have not heretofore been produced to the grand jury..."

Well, I dissent. Judge Sirica's opinion was reasoned and temperate. His solution, if so, it may be termed, does the least possible violence to the principle the President is defending. This principle holds that the judicial branch cannot "command" the executive branch to disclose its confidential papers. That proposition seems to me sound; and the principle, like chastity, cannot be surrendered in part. If the principle can be violated, goodbye principle. The Republic would survive, but our power structure would be significantly altered.

It is said that the tapes contain, or may contain, substantive evidence of value to the grand jury still investigating the Watergate scandal. "What distinctive quality of the presidency," the judge asked, "permits its incumbent to withhold evidence?"

The answer, it seems to me, is that the presidency is in fact unique. Everything about the office is distinctive. A good deal of demagogic blather has been heard these past few days about the President "being like other men." The argument runs that Citizen Nixon just happens to be sitting in the White House now, but he is plain old Citizen Nixon so far as the law is concerned. "He ain't no king."

The argument is specious. Patrick Henry long ago looked sourly upon the presidential office: "It squints of monarchy." Henry's vision was defective. No president is a monarch; but he is — president. Even in a purported criminal case, even if he himself were suspected of criminal conduct, a sitting president cannot be "commanded" by the courts to perform the act here demanded. If this were not true, as Jefferson told John Marshall at the time of the Burr trial, any federal judge could order any president, under pain of contempt, to produce any paper, to appear in person, to testify at distant trials and so on.

The Washington smog is filled with wild surmise. Suppose Judge Sirica's order is upheld, all the way through the Supreme Court, and the President still refuses to give up the tapes. (Nixon has said he would obey a "definitive" order, but he has changed his mind before.) Would he then be cited for contempt? Would marshals be dispatched to arrest him? To drag him physically into court? Could a president then be jailed until he purged himself of contempt?

We have had quite enough hot air without this. We have had too much law and not enough politics, for Nixon's problem is not legal, but essentially political. He could win 9-0 in the high court and still lose everything in the country. Eventually he will have to yield those tapes. The day has long passed when Andrew Jackson could say (as he probably never said), "John Marshall has made his decision — now let him enforce it."

If the President loses, he will have to obey the court; if the President wins, he will have to make the tapes public as a voluntary act. Nothing less will suffice to dispel the suspicion, reflected in presidential popularity polls, that Nixon was in this up to his ears.

Another suspicion also floats in the smog, that the tapes have now been doctored and no longer contain "the truth." But it is too hot to harry that suspicion. On this issue, the President should be trusted, or the President should be impeached. But a president, I submit, cannot be "commanded."



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'Superstar'—Both sides now

Stunning, hypnotic

By MARK TRACHTMAN
Collegian Columnist

It isn't often that a motion picture utilizes the medium of film so expertly that it deserves to be called a "masterpiece."

Most commercial films are basically narrative affairs, composed of a series of photographs showing performers acting out what is essentially a play. Only rarely will a film maker exercise the power he has with filming, editing, music and so on to produce a truly cinematic motion picture. Only rarely can a commercial film handle so effectively the elements of sight and sound that it creates a stunning, hypnotic effect.

Walt Disney did it in the 40's with "Fantasia." Stanley Kubrick did it in the 60's with "2001" and it now appears that Norman Jewison has achieved this refined success in the 70's with "Jesus Christ Superstar."

Jewison set out to do the opposite of most movie production — take an existing piece of music and find visual images to match. The usual procedure is, of course, to put a musical score to a film after it has been completed. With "Superstar," Jewison tackled the difficult problem of transforming one of

the most popular, unique and somewhat controversial musical results of the last few years into a movie.

Jewison took his cast and crew to the Middle East and in brutally hot temperatures proceeded to enact the rock opera. Using some truly breathtaking aerial photography and some extraordinarily awesome locations he captured on film visual images that are at once beautiful, striking and finely suited to the music.

"Superstar" is made up of a series of songs, each one staged separately and performed almost as if it were a number in a traditional musical, some even complete with choreography. But here dancers and singers appear from nowhere and the music seems to be a part of everything, not a rude interruption as in typical musicals. Here the players take on striking visual clarity.

Jewison refuses to tie the film down visually to any particular time, giving the picture an abstract, timeless quality, as if the laws of time and space were somehow suspended for the duration of the film. His characters move among ruins, through ageless landscapes and rock formations, wearing anything from traditional robes to purple T-shirts. Machine guns, tanks, post cards, jet planes, all find their place among the bits and pieces of the film. And in what is perhaps the single most stunning visual segment in the movie, he uses shots of classic paintings of the crucifixion.

Jewison utilizes the audio end of his film with equal expertise. Of course the vast majority of the soundtrack is the music, the opera itself, but in a few special instances the sound either stops completely or crashes suddenly upon the audience.

What you get when you put the sound and visuals together is more than just a movie because the individual numbers run together to give an overall absorbing, engrossing experience for eye and ear.

The motion picture itself, the photography, sound, etc., becomes such a dominating force that to talk of individual actors seems as foolish as debating the exact size and shape of tiny figures on a painted landscape. The performers are generally good, but this is just not an actors' film, not a traditional play where expressions or words matter much. The total becomes more important than any part.

Certainly there are flaws in "Superstar." The basic simple-mindedness of the story, for example, or the almost backward religious attitudes. But these flaws lie in the original conception of the opera, not with the film.

What makes the motion picture so superb are just those things that make up a motion picture — cinematography, visual imagery, conjunction of sight and sound. For anyone at all serious about film as a means of expression, or for anyone wanting a breathless two hour trip with music, this film is a must.

Musical mockery

By STEVE IVEY
of the Collegian staff

Is nothing sacred in this age of cinematic exploitation?

"Jesus Christ, Superstar" is a perfect example of how not to film a rock opera. "Superstar's" major failing is that it is totally ridiculous.

First of all, it is a rock opera in which the singers cannot sing. Andrew Lloyd Webber's music and Tim Rice's lyrics have been sung before, and better.

Ted Neeley's voice is too weak and effeminate for the role of Jesus. When he sings, it sounds as if someone were squeezing him.

Barry Dennen, playing the part of the chief priest, has the voice of a Brooklyn gangster. He is better suited to a Frankenstein movie than "Superstar." Still worse, his assistant sings like Truman Capote.

This stereotyping of the characters is too simplistic and offensive. Producer-director Norman Jewison has taken the easy way out by his choice of singer-actors.

He did, however, select Yvonne Elliman to play the part of Mary Magdalene, the role she had in the original album. Her singing is

acceptable but a bit nasal and lacks body.

One of the better singers in the cast, Carl Anderson, is hindered in that as Judas, he cannot act.

Pilate is excellent and the only actor to make his character come alive. Although his singing is not superb, his acting more than compensates. Pilate is real, the other characters fake.

The choreography leaves much to be desired, and is reminiscent of the worst of "The Dean Martin Show." The dances are too commercial while the dancers act like they are monkeys on fire or as if they have the DTs.

The photography is generally poor. Close-ups of the actors singing make them look like horses neighing. The shots of Masada, however, are well done, as are those of the surrounding desert and rocky crags.

Jewison attempted the impossible and utterly failed. In an effort to make "Superstar" simultaneously historical, relevant to today's youth, religious but not too religious, and a light comedy, Jewison came up with a disaster.

Discounting the historical inaccuracies, Jewison's bid for relevancy by introducing modern gadgets is ludicrous. There were better methods of making it relevant than opening with a shot of a bus with a cross on top, putting cash registers and postcard stands in the Temple scene, and arming the guards with submachine guns and spears.

By keeping the film in just one time frame — historical or modern — the film would have been improved ten-fold. As it is, the switching back and forth just annoys the audience and detracts from the film.

Relevancy does not depend on modern dress and machines. Jewison insults the audience by thinking that it cannot "get into" the film if it is filmed historically. Instead, the most effective scenes were those done historically.

To top it off, Jewison's strange sense of humor is obscure. When the Pharisees decided to talk to Judas, they sent Centurians after him. In this film, Jewison uses Centurian tanks.

Humor and irrelevant religion team up to make Jesus' encounter with Herod offensive and disgusting. Herod wallowing in a Coney Island on a lake.

Jewison does succeed in some scenes. Those that stand out are when Jesus tries to help the sick and the grief and anguish on Mary's face when Pilate condemns Jesus to be crucified.

Unfortunately, the development of a realistic mood in which the audience can empathize, is always ruined by the intrusion of modern-day artifices. By far, the best scenes are those without anything modern in them.

"Jesus Christ, Superstar" is a mockery of what a good rock opera can be on film. But it is a film that will make money in spite of its poor quality and poorer taste.