

Truman Capote, renowned author, dies at age 59

By LYNN ELBER
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Truman Capote, who was acclaimed for mixing fact with fiction in his stark book, "In Cold Blood," and frequently splashed across the gossip columns with his flamboyant lifestyle, was found dead Saturday in a Bel-Air mansion. He was 59.

Police Cdr. William Booth said Capote was found dead in his sleep around noon at the home of Joanne Carson, who is divorced from "Today Show" host Johnny Carson. Booth said there was no evidence of foul play, but the coroner's department would investigate the death.

Police said Capote had been staying at the Mrs. Carson's home since Thursday, and she found his body and called paramedics. Capote had retired to take a nap, saying he was tired.

"They had made previous plans to go swimming this afternoon," said Lt. Ed Henderson. "She went to wake him up. She noticed his room wasn't good, and his forehead was a little cool. She attempted to find a pulse and couldn't."

Capote, who was one of a number of houseguests, was described as being in good spirits on Friday night. "They were making plans to celebrate his 60th birthday next month," Henderson said.

He said Capote had prescription drugs with him, but police did not know what they were. An autopsy will be conducted Sunday, said county coroner spokesman Bill Gould.

The 5-foot-3 author, who was known for his flamboyant wardrobe and Southern accented, high-pitched lisp, threw elaborate parties that drew celebrities from Hollywood, high society and politics.

Capote once said he had problems with drinking and taking medication.

"I put them together like some sort of cocktail," he said in a July 1978 television interview in New York City, but the host cut the segment short when Capote began rambling incoherently.

In August 1983, Capote pleaded guilty to a charge of drunken driving on New York's Long Island. He was rebuked by the judge for appearing in court in Bermuda shorts.

Capote was hospitalized in April 1983 in Montgomery, Ala., after tests showed he had a "toxic level" of dilantin and phenobarbital in his system. Doctors said he had a "bad reaction" to the drugs, which are used to control epileptic seizures.

In August 1981, he had collapsed from a convulsive seizure in the lobby of his Manhattan apartment. Capote was born in New Orleans on Sept. 30, 1924, was schooled in New York and Greenwich, Conn., and showed an interest in writing from his early years.

In 1946, he won his first of three O. Henry Memorial awards for short stories.

His "Other Voices, Other Rooms," appeared in 1948, followed by about a dozen other books, including "Breakfast at Tiffany's" in 1958, which was made into a movie starring Audrey Hepburn.

In 1965, he wrote his hugely successful book, "In Cold Blood," an account of the ruthless slaying of four members of the Herbert Clutter family near Garden City, Kan. A film based on the book appeared in 1967.

Capote hailed "In Cold Blood" as the first "non-fiction novel," which applied the techniques of fiction to the facts of the case to make it seem more truthful.

"I had this theory about reportage," Capote said of the book. "I've always felt that if you brought the art of the novelist together with the technique of journalism — fiction with the added knowledge that it

was true — it would have the most depth and impact."

The work originally appeared in The New Yorker, boosting sales of the magazine.

After the book was published, Capote became the toast of New York, throwing an elaborate masked ball at the Plaza Hotel.

Author William Styron said Saturday of "In Cold Blood": "That was the first major attempt and a successful one, I think, to merge fact and fiction in an artistic way, in a convincing way. And for that reason I think it was very important, almost a revolutionary work, and one that's going to continue to be read for a long time."

Another writer, George Plimpton, called Capote's death "a terrible loss to American letters. He is absolutely one of the most important writers of our times. A great storyteller, remarkable reporter when he was at his prime, and he really had all the gifts to a striking degree."

Capote also collaborated on screenplays, working with John Huston on the 1954 film, "Beat the Devil," starring Humphrey Bogart, and with William Archibald for the 1961 movie, "The Innocents," based on Henry James' "The Turn of the Screw."

Capote won an Emmy Award for his 1967 television adaptation of his work, "A Christmas Memory."

He made his only screen appearance as the eccentric millionaire, "Two Two Twain," in Neil Simon's 1976 comedy, "Murder by Death."

In his 1980 book, "Music For Chameleons," Capote reviewed his own career and told of the difficulties of his craft.

He said he re-read everything he had ever written, leading him to believe that for all he had earned during his career, he had never written with the full powers at his command, never combined "with a single form" all he knew "about

every other form of writing."

In one of the pieces in "Music For Chameleons," he confessed the agony he felt as a child over his secret desire "to be a girl."

At the time of his death, he was working on his long-promised novel "Answered Prayers."

Capote was reared mostly by aunts and grandmothers in Alabama, New York and New England, after his mother who was married at the age of 15 was divorced. Capote had been completely on his own since he was 17, when he landed a job sorting cartoons at The New Yorker. At 24, he skyrocketed out of work with "Other Voices, Other Rooms."

He once said, "It's just impossible for me to write a sentence. I have to think about it such a long time. The thing that's most important is style; not what I'm saying but how I'm saying it; manner over matter."

According to a 1983 biography by an aunt who helped raise Capote, Marie Rudisill, his mother continually berated him for effeminacy when he was a boy. She said Capote's parents showed little sign of love for him.

In 1983, Capote put his acerbic wit to work by writing a gossip column for Esquire magazine called "Observations." In one installment, he took readers on a tour of Greta Garbo's apartment ("The walls burn with important but rakishly, strongly hung paintings and wrote of his dislike for Meryl Streep's facial features: "Her nose ... reminds you of an anteater."

Capote himself was described by the clothing designer Halston as "the perfect client."

Author Gore Vidal, who was involved in a long and sometimes light-hearted feud with Capote in the mid-1970s, once spoke of Capote's "bright wit and sweet charm."

In 1982, several manuscripts Capote had written as a child were sold

from the estate of one of his teachers from the Trinity School in New York City.

One of the stories, "How I Lost My Belief in Santa Claus," was written by Capote when he was 11 years old.

"The noise became louder. Then I peeked across the corridor. There was my daddy putting the gifts under the Christmas tree," read the manuscript, containing several dropped words. "Now I know there was no Santa Claus. The next morning I came down stairs as usual at first I said nothing, but later just for spite, I said, Daddy, look at all those presents that Santa Claus gave me. Now what are you going to give me. You should have the look on his face."

The manuscript, plus a five-chapter novelette called "Christmas Vacation" and 10 other stories and verses, were saved by his English teacher, John E. Langford.

A Florida real estate firm won a \$13,000 lawsuit against Capote in 1981 after accusing him of reneging on a contract to buy a home on fashionable Marco Island off the southwest Florida coast. Capote lost the suit by default when a judge ruled that the author failed to answer the real estate firm's inquiries.

NEW YORK (AP) — Here is a partial list of books by Truman Capote:

"Other Voices, Other Rooms" (1948)

"Tree of Night" (1949)

"Observations" (1949)

"Local Color" (1950)

"The Grass Harp" (1953)

"The Muses are Heard" (1956)

"Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1958)

"Selected Writings" (1963)

"In Cold Blood" (1965)

"A Christmas Memory" (1968)

"House of Flowers" (1968)

"Thanksgiving Visitor" (1969)



Truman Capote

University Resident Theatre Company to feature an exciting array of entertainment

By CHRISTINE INGEMAR ANDERSON
Collegian Staff Writer

For the 1984-85 season, the Pennsylvania State University Resident Theatre Company offers you five memorable performances. It promises excitement in its portrayal of drama, comedy, romance and adventure.

theater preview

The entertainment begins with Lanford Wilson's "Fifth of July" at the Pavilion October 5, 6, 9 through 13 and 16 through 20. Focusing on unrealized dreams of the 1960s, it is a look backward at four previously interdependent people whose celebrations and fireworks since ended. Put these people on a ramshackle farm in Missouri on Independence Day in 1977, and there is a clash of remembrances, recriminations, interests and expectations.

Next, William Shakespeare's brilliant farce, "Much Ado About Nothing," which runs November 9, 10 and 13 through 17 at the Playhouse, is a romantic yet comical view of the battle of the sexes. You'll meet Beatrice, a cultured, witty, yet egocentric woman who supposedly scorns the love of men. Her malevolent antagonist, Benedick, consecrates to the holy, surly and lonely vows of bachelorhood. They

taunt and mock each other while invariably they are being drawn closer together by the alchemy of love.

In the Playhouse on February 15, 16 and 19 through 23, "Children of a Lesser God," by Mark Medoff, captures the story of a deaf woman and her husband, a hearing therapist. You'll enter the world of the deaf and understand the artistic communication and the frustration of those who cannot hear. The play tends to make the audience realize that deafness isn't a silence in a wasteland of deprivation, but a condition of being an "other" — a state that has its sufficient rewards.

"The Beaux Stratagem," by George Farquhar, plays March 22, 23, 26 through 30 and April 2 through 6 in the Pavilion. It is an involving comedy and fanciful tale of two young men scheming to improve their fortunes by marrying heiresses. As they arrive at a country inn, they pose as master and servant until they can accomplish their purpose.

Lastly, "History of the American Film," which appears at the Playhouse April 19, 20 and 23 through 27, is a zany comedy by Christopher Durang with music by Mel Marvin. This play presents a multi-levelled satire on films — their effects on first audiences and on those who later view them on television.

The URTC box office is located in the Playhouse Theatre and is open Monday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., and until 9 p.m. during the night of the performance. Tickets for the Pavilion performances are also available from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. during performance evenings at the Pavilion box office. Special discounts are available.



Last year the University Resident Theatre Company featured such exciting plays as "Skin of Our Teeth." This year promises to be the largest and most entertaining. The URTC will present plays like "Much Ado About Nothing." The season opens Oct. 5, so get your tickets ahead of time and don't miss out on the fine entertainment provided by this company.

Abe Lastfogel, famous talent agent, dies

By LEE SIEGEL
Associated Press Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Abe Lastfogel, the "super" talent agent whose clients ranged from Marilyn Monroe to Elvis Presley and who built the William Morris Agency into a powerful Hollywood talent broker, has died of cardiac arrest. He was 86.

"Abe Lastfogel was one of the great leaders in the vaudeville business, the nightclub business and the radio business, then in the motion picture and television business."

— Morris Stoller, co-chairman of the William Morris Talent Agency

"He was a super agent. He was really Mr. Show Business," William Morris co-chairman Morris Stoller said Sunday.

He built the largest theatrical agency in the world. He built it up to its heights," Stoller added.

Lastfogel's clients had included Presley, Miss Monroe, Jimmy Durante, Eddie Cantor, George Burns, Gracie Allen, director Fred Zinneman, Danny Thomas, Dick Powell, David Niven, Fanny Brice, Frank Sinatra, Katharine Hepburn, Spencer Tracy, Lana Turner, Rita Hayworth, Walter Matthau, Al Johnson, Mae West, Edward G. Robinson, James Cagney and Will Rogers, Stoller said.

Lastfogel, who lived in Beverly Hills, died Saturday night of cardiac arrest at Cedars Sinai Medical Center, said Lee Solters, head of the Solters-Roskin-Friedman public relations firm.

He had been admitted to the hospital Aug. 10 for removal of his gall bladder, but later developed complications, including a mild heart attack, Solters said.

Lastfogel was chairman emeritus of the William Morris Agency, which he joined in 1932 after leaving his own agency, the William Morris Agency, which he founded in 1932 after the death of the firm's founder, William Morris.

"Abe Lastfogel was one of the great leaders in the vaudeville business, the nightclub business and the radio business, then in the motion picture and television business," Stoller said.

"Abe was truly legendary," Solters said. "He really built up the William Morris Agency. He was only a kid and built it up into one of the largest and most powerful."

Lastfogel, born on May 17, 1898, left school and

went to work in 1912, taking a \$6-a-week job with William Morris in New York rather than an employment offer from a local tailor.

"By the age of 20, he already was a top agent," Stoller said. "... He came out here in 1933 and was responsible for bringing a lot of the stars in New York into the motion picture industry. He dealt with all the top studio owners."

Solters and Stoller said that as the studio contract system died, Lastfogel made some of the pioneering efforts that gave stars a share of the ownership in and profits from their own films.

During World War II, he ran the USO shows for soldiers and in 1945 President Harry Truman awarded him the Medal of Freedom and a presidential certificate of merit.

Stoller said Lastfogel was semi-retired after a stroke in 1969, but that until his recent illness "he came to the office every day. He went to functions. He was around."

Lastfogel's sole survivor is a sister-in-law, Solters said. His wife Frances, whom he married in 1927, died in 1977.

Stoller said funeral services will be held Tuesday at the Hillside Memorial Cemetery in Los Angeles.

William Morris Agency, with twin headquarters in New York and Los Angeles and 550 employees worldwide, is chaired by Stoller and Sam Weisbord. Lee Stevens is president.



Abe Lastfogel was agent to many respected personalities, such as Elvis Presley and Mae West. Other clients included David Niven, Frank Sinatra, Marilyn Monroe and George Burns. Lastfogel joined the William Morris Agency as a teen-ager in 1912, making \$6 dollars a week, and moved up through the ranks to eventually head the corporation by 1932 after the death of the founder.

'Red Dawn' is a problematic, but gripping tale

By DIANE D. DIPIERO
Collegian Arts Writer

Imagine you are in a classroom in a serene little town in Colorado, nestled peacefully below the Rocky Mountains and at the edge of the Great Plains. It seems to be a laid back town. But one day, as your school teacher gazes out his classroom window, he sees hundreds of black paratroopers trickle down to the ground. As the prof steps outside to confront the intruders, he is immediately blown away by one of their machine guns.

One thing's for sure: "Red Dawn" is not a misleading film. It sets an ominous tone from the very beginning, when the school teacher is killed. As teenagers are being murdered left-and-right outside that once peaceful school, eight boys manage to escape; they get provisions and head to the mountains for safety.

The boys learn that the Cubans succeeded in a surprise attack against the United States, and now occupy the territory that was once their happy home town. Most of the boys are scared, but the eldest and leader of the pack, played by Patrick Swayze ("The Outsiders," "Grandview, U.S.A."), refuses to let their emotions get in the way. After some persuading, the boys decide to stay in the mountains until it is safe to descend.

Unfortunately, things never quite get back to normal in fictional Calumet, Colo. As three of the boys sneak downtown for news, they learn that the Communists have completely taken over the town; the mayor is nothing more than a puppet, mimicking their wishes; no one is allowed to talk town. But one day, as your school teacher gazes out his classroom window, he sees hundreds of black paratroopers trickle down to the ground. As the prof steps outside to confront the intruders, he is immediately blown away by one of their machine guns.

Swayze and his brother find their father in one of these large camps surrounded by barbed wire, where a droning voice over the loudspeaker repeatedly announces that the United States is evil and corrupt. The scene between father and his sons is very real and emotion-packed.

While the boys are downtown, they visit an old friend, who entrusts in their care two of his nieces, who were attacked by lecherous foreign soldiers. Together, these young survivors decide to fight the enemy. Especially notable is a scene where they've acquired, they emerge as the "Wolverines," making clandestine trips to town, while bombing, shooting and outsmarting the enemy. Of course, the communists have no idea where these attacks are coming from. Will they ever find the Wolverines? Well ...

"Red Dawn" is one of the fastest paced, most gripping films of the year. Director John Milius ("Mag-

num Force," "Apocalypse Now") has created such highly realistic scenes, that you cannot help but imagine the same horrible thing happening to yourself.

The film is not without its problems, though. The most perplexing question: how did those kids get all that ammunition? When they left on the day of the attack, they had nothing more than bows and arrows. Suddenly they had progressed to the ranks of machine guns and hand grenades. We can assume that they stole them from some foreign soldiers, but the movie never gives us enough evidence to convince us.

As far as acting goes, no Academy Awards will be won by this cast. However, an honorable mention goes to Ben Johnson, the Cuban leader, whose zest for war and later sympathy for the his captives is both convincing and touching. The scenes are so intense, though, that you automatically feel something for these guys. Especially notable is a scene where Swayze must decide whether or not to kill one of the other boys who has led the enemy onto their trail.

The best thing about "Red Dawn" is that it keeps your attention throughout the whole movie. You're constantly being pulled into another battle scene, gripping life-and-death situation or small touch of humor. If action and life-like danger is what you're after, this movie's got both.

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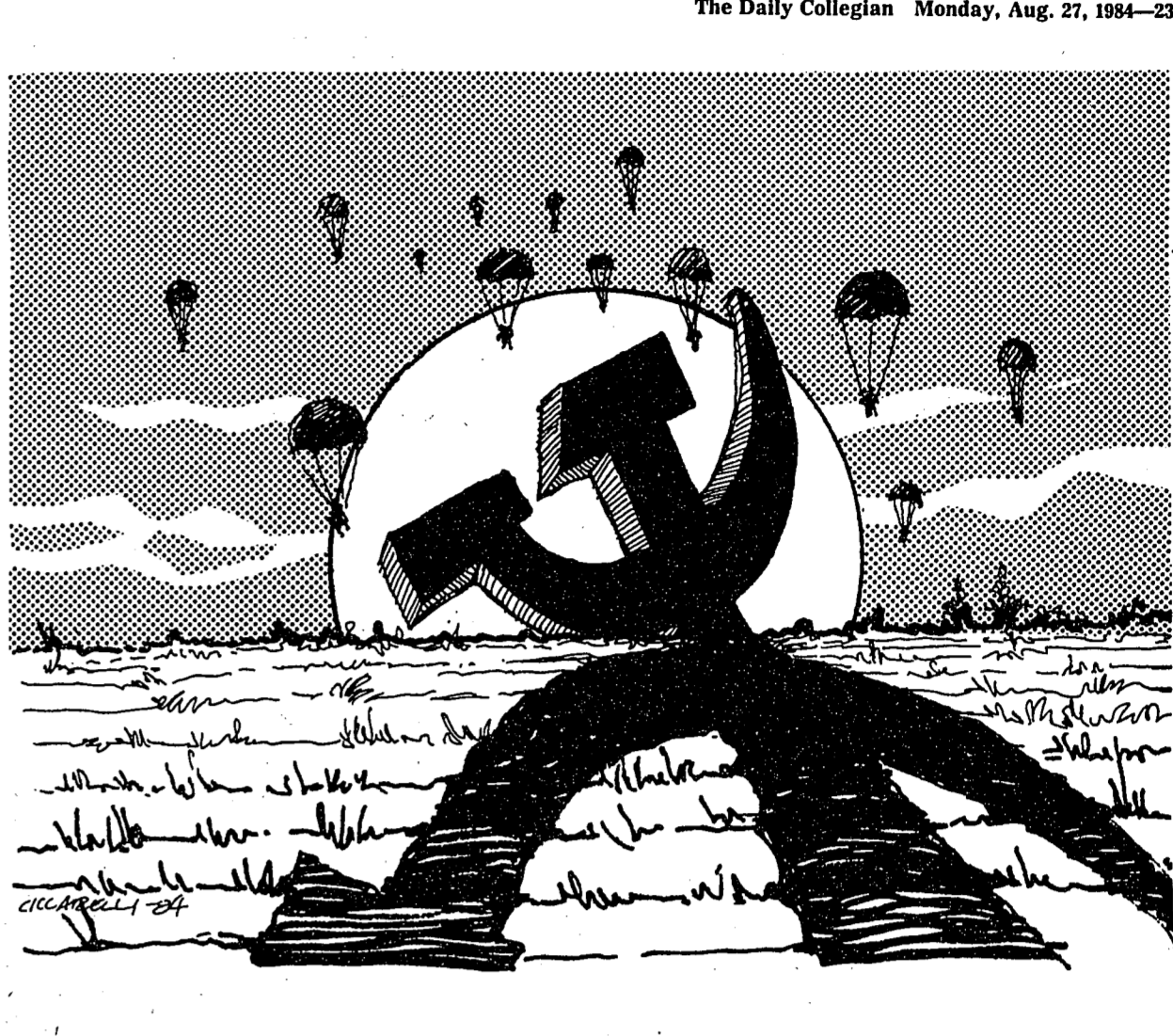
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