

Those Doris Day Pictures: Delightful or Destructive?



Cary Grant and Doris Day in "That Touch of Mink."

Hollywood — The way moralists are talking about her films, you would think her name was Brigitte Bardot or Gina Lollobrigida instead of Doris Day.

Criticism of a number of highly popular pictures made by the blonde actress — once considered the ideal "girl-next-door" — have become so severe as to make a person wonder if he should move if Doris Day became a neighbor.

The reason for the turnabout is the growing conviction among Catholic film officials that too little attention has been given to seemingly innocuous pictures which may be harmful to morals and society than films which treat immorality more blatantly.

Doris Day films have been singled out because they are considered a proto-type — particularly "Pillow Talk," "That Touch of Mink" and "Lover Come Back" — for films which communicate a false view of life, while a superficial shocker might communicate an authentic view of life.

That is critic Moira Walsh's comment in "Tenets for Movie

Viewers," a pamphlet published by the Jesuit-operated America Press. She deals in part with what is known as the Doris Day "formula film," in which the heroine — always lavishly costumed regardless of her income — manages to keep her virtue intact while at the same time flirting with suave characters played by Cary Grant, Rock Hudson, James Garner, Rod Taylor and such.

"The Doris Day will-sher-won't she epics are very destructive because they don't treat life honestly," argued the Rev. Anthony Schillaci, O.P., a film educator, before the National Catholic Guidance Conference meeting in Dallas recently.

"Superficially there is not an obvious moral problem," conceded the head of the National Catholic Office for Motion Pictures, the Rev. Patrick J. Sullivan, "but subconsciously they communicate a false view of life, while a superficial shocker might communicate an authentic view of life."

"Too long, moral garbage like the Doris Day films have escaped censure because they break none of the rules," observed the

Rev. John Phelan, S.J., a priest, scholar specializing in mass communications. "They merely contradict flatly every value of realistic ethics."

Neither are the critics "beating a dead horse" for a number of highly successful Doris Day films are either going into theatrical re-release ("That Touch of Mink" is scheduled for reissue this summer) or are appearing frequently on television.

One of the latter, "Lover Come Back," was featured on NBC-TV's "Tuesday Night Movie" this past season and is scheduled for a repeat showing on May 16. In that one, Doris Day plays an advertising executive who believes that a competitor (Rock Hudson) is unscrupulous and sets out to discredit him. Of course, at the final fade-out she gets the ring while being wheeled into a hospital delivery room. Doris Day? Yes, the story has her getting drunk on liquor-filled candy nine months earlier and waking up in a hotel room with Hudson and a marriage license. She gets a hangover and an amnesia almost simultaneously then a change of heart later on

Although the film received a "morally objectionable" rating from NCMP for "light treatment of marriage," there are those who believe that "Lover Come Back" and similar films are guilty of a more serious offense: namely, light treatment of life; so light that it's false.

"This, in a sense, is the most pressing moral problem presented by the mass media of communication," writes Miss Walsh in "Tenets," "yet it has never been adequately faced up to by the guardians of film morality."

Treating "That Touch of Mink" — in which Doris Day is an unemployed stenographer who is romanced by millionaire Cary Grant — Miss Walsh wrote:

"It deals with a valid contemporary situation — a girl's dilemma about whether or not to surrender her virtue when a particularly attractive proposition from a millionaire comes her way. At every turn, however, it substitutes wishful thinking fantasy for any semblance of reality, so that the audience can happily imagine that a girl can say 'yes' to the proposition and yet wind up, virtue intact, at the altar with the propositioner. The viewers can conclude that millionaires on the make are just charming overgrown boys like Cary Grant, who obviously meant no harm anyway." She lamented that most viewers saw the film as "cute" or "delightful."

Of course, not all Doris Day films have come under such fire — they range from musicals like "On Moonlight Bay" to an upcoming western called "The Epic of Josie" — but one of her future pictures has a working title that seems to corroborate (or perhaps ridicule) the opinion of Miss Walsh and Fathers Phelan, Sullivan and Schillaci.

It's now titled: "Doris Day's Complete Guide to Gambling, Crime and Other Ill-kept Pleasures." — (Catholic Press Features)

COURIER-JOURNAL Friday, April 28, 1967

Scouts Slate Annual Sale

Boy Scout Troop 21, of Blessed Sacrament Church will conduct their annual fertilizer sale this Saturday, April 29, in Blessed Sacrament parking lot, Moreau Ave. at Rutgers Street. Proceeds from the sale will be used towards the troop's camping program. Phone orders can be placed by calling these numbers: 271-2390 or 442-3458.

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LOBLAWS

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Five Topics Face Bishops at Rome Meeting

By FATHER ROBERT A. GRAHAM, S.J.

Special Correspondent

Rome — (RNS)—The agenda of the Synod of Bishops, scheduled for its first session beginning next September 29 reflects some of the major pastoral problems facing the universal Church. Stated in five brief points, the agenda was prematurely released outside of Rome, notably in France and the United States.

It embraces the following subjects:

1. Dangers possibly affecting religious belief.
2. Revision of Canon Law.
3. Relations of national hierarchies to the Congregation on Seminaries, and the education of young candidates to the priesthood.
4. Mixed marriages.
5. The execution of liturgical innovations.

The Synod of Bishops was created by the Vatican Council as an expression and organ of episcopal collegiality.

The body is primarily advisory but on occasion can constitute itself a deliberative body whose decisions become binding when sanctioned by the Supreme Pontiff.

The September meeting is expected to last three weeks or a month.

The first item on dangers to the faith is a theme that has appeared frequently lately in discourses of Pope Paul VI. Recently, in addressing the Italian Episcopal Conference, he alluded with regret to excesses evidenced here and there in the Catholic world. The Synod is requested to advise on measures to cope with this problem.

This first point referred to the "dangers to the faith from somewhat widespread theories exaggerating the value of man and of the world that make more difficult the knowledge

and acceptance of the supernatural order and of a transcendent God, theories that are manifested in various forms of atheism." It will be recalled that Pope Paul recently proclaimed 1967 a Year of Faith.

On seminaries, an important decision concerns relations between national hierarchies and the Roman Sacred Congregation for Seminaries. This latter body now headed by French-born Archbishop Gabriel Garrone has been searching to reorganize its program and methods. The subject of preparation of young candidates to the priesthood is certain to elicit a wide variety of opinions based on local conditions and national psychologies. It is not expected that the question of clerical celibacy will come directly under consideration.

Pope Paul VI is known to be strongly opposed to any change and this has led to reports, up to now unconfirmable, that an encyclical or similar papal statement is in preparation on the subject of married diocesan clergy in the Latin Church.

Current Vatican preoccupation with this question is seen here in Rome in the withdrawal from sales and drastic revision of a book entitled "The Affective Integration of the Priest." The author is a well-known Italian writer on spiritual and moral questions, Father Tullio Goffi.

Those who have seen and compared the original and revised editions comment that they are unrecognizable as the same book. Rome newspapers assert that the initial withdrawal was on orders of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith.

The mixed marriage question arises from an instruction issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith on March 18, 1966; notably its provisions leaving the option to bishops to waive the customary written pledge concerning the Catholic upbringing of children. Lack of consistency in different countries and between different countries has suggested the need to pool experiences and viewpoints in the interest of common practice.

THE SYNOD of Bishops, as an expression of episcopal collegiality with the Roman Pontiff, operates directly under the authority of the Pope and is

SVD Seminary Slates Rites

Conesus — St. Michael's Divine Word Seminary will be the scene of Investiture and Profession of some thirty young men as Brothers in the Society of the Divine Word on May 1 at 10 a.m. The Society of the Divine Word numbers over five thousand members laboring in various parts of the world, and St. Michael's is the Society's Central Novitiate.

The Very Rev. Leo Hotz, Provincial of the Society's Eastern Province, will officiate at the ceremonies in which some sixteen young men will be invested with the habit of the Society and begin their two years' course of intensive spiritual training.

Among these are three Rochesterians: Michael Callan, son of Mr. and Mrs. John F. Callan, 69 Kircher Park, Webster, a member of Holy Trinity Parish; Edwin Collier, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Collier, Sr., 49 Morrill St., Rochester, a member of St. Michael's Parish; and George Covotta, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Covotta, Sr., 133 Southampton Drive, Rochester, a member of Sacred Heart Parish.

On this occasion, thirteen young Brothers, who have completed their novitiate, will pronounce their first vows. Two are from the Rochester diocese: Brother Bede D'Eufemia, son of Mr. and Mrs. John D'Eufemia, 121 Pine St., East Rochester, a member of St. Jerome's Parish;

and Brother Theodore Finch, son of Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Williams, 74 Weld St., Rochester, a member of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish.

Folk Ballet At Eastman

The Ballet Folklorico of Mexico, applauded for its brilliant costumes and decor, its fiery dances and its exotic music, will bring a cross-section of Mexican life to the Eastman Theatre stage on Wednesday, May 24 at 8:15 p.m.

Acclaimed throughout the Americas, Europe, the Soviet Union and, most recently, Australia, the company of 75 dancers, singers and musicians will offer a fiesta-like program drawing from the history and legends of Mexico's past, with the pageantry of the Mayans and Aztecs, and the celebrations of today.

Favorite dances retained in the company's repertoire by popular demand are the world-famous "Deer Dance" of the Yaqui Indians, which is performed today, as in centuries past, prior to the tribal hunt, "Wedding in Tehuantepec," and the "Tarascans."

Reservations for the performance on May 24 may be made at the Eastman Theatre box office.

Honors Rite At Nazareth

Dr. Albert W. Brown, presiding at Brockport, was the featured speaker at the annual Nazareth College honors convocation. Dr. Brown was recently named "Man of the Year" by the Brockport Chamber of Commerce.

All Dean's List students were cited during the convocation as well as five seniors elected to Kappa Gamma Pi, National Catholic Women's Honor Society. The students, who qualified for membership in the society by maintaining a quality point index of at least 2.6 for the first 3½ years of college are: Elaine M. Bair, Catherine M. Dobbertin, Joan M. LeBel, Helen P. Wilkie, Narita Yannie.

Named the college's outstanding student teacher by the Rochester Teacher's Association was Joanne J. Paris.

Undergraduates Elect Slate

Undergraduate officers have been elected by the student body of Nazareth College. The following officers were elected:

President, Mary L. Walsh, 65 Astor Drive, Rochester; 1st vice president, Catherine M. Kelly, Rockville Center; 2nd vice president, Anna M. Serafini, Binghamton; treasurer, Joan M. Revolt, Syracuse; lay apostolate, Martha Keller, 81 Corley Drive, Rochester; Academic Coordinator, Judith M. Anderson, Yonkers; secretary, Jean Chechak, Brockport.

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