

ENTERTAINMENT

King subject for student's screenplay

by gary mantz

staff writer

Corina King, the former Strip cocktail waitress convicted last December of felony drunk-driving in the death of two Las Vegans, is the subject of a proposed film project being scripted by a UNLV student.

Sophomore English major Jean Boudreau, an adult learner attending full-time, has begun work on the made-for-TV screenplay, which he hopes will relay in objective terms the tragedy of driving while intoxicated through the experience of Ms. King.

For screenwriter Boudreau, who followed the case from the day of the accident, this "different kind of tragedy" as he called it became per-

sonally significant when it began intruding on his nighttime dreams.

"It always affected me, right from the word go," he said, adding that he found a degree of diversion through his classes. But the impact of the tragedy lingered.

"Finally, at the end of the semester, strangely enough, it was out of my mind, but all of a sudden I started having these dreams," Boudreau said. "I saw myself sitting in front of a television, and I was watching all this as a finished product." In other words, as a movie made for TV.

This was in April of last year, and though Boudreau had no idea how the case would turn out, he felt "something inside" impelling him to plan a screenwriting

project.

Even as Corina King began her ordeal, other DUI cases involving loss of life had recently been tried. What was it about the King case that he found so powerfully different?

"The sincerity in her, and the sorrow," Boudreau said. "Shortly after the accident, I saw a picture of her in the newspaper. In an accompanying newspaper, there was a picture of the young lady who was sentenced to life in the show-and-tell murder. I cut both pictures out and put them side by side. In one, there is no regret, no sorrow. But in Corina's, it's as if a part of her had died as well."

These strong subjective impressions have motivated the writer since, and in fact he has yet to

meet King. He did send her a "treatment", a general outline of the project without dialogue. After more correspondence, she gave Boudreau "a green light" for his idea.

Boudreau indicated he does not want to write the script from King's point of view, preferring an objective account that relays the tragic impact of drunk driving by way of a visual medium.

"The main characters in this (script) are attorney Jack Howard and Rick Kirkham. Corina may be perceived as a main character, but she is a silent main character," he said, referring to central roles played by King's defense lawyer and the KVBC TV newsman who obtained exclusive jailhouse interviews with her.

By "silent main character", Boudreau said he meant that her views and reactions are secondary to implications of the accident for the community and to the issue of DUI generally. He will rely on years of experience as a writer of short stories and poetry to help him develop an objective script. But he acknowledges the story of Corina King "affects us all."

Boudreau is pressing on with his writing despite an ongoing screenwriters' strike. He said an "experienced screenwriter" told him it would "cut my throat" to get the project aired in defiance of the strike, though the professional did not indicate how the film could be completed by Boudreau without the cooperation of the other industry unions,

which honor the strike.

In any event, the UNLV student is prepared to wait on production as long as necessary, once a producer is found. Already he is in contact with an agent, who reported to him recently that there is preliminary interest in Hollywood production circles.

Meanwhile, Corina King's mother has expressed her qualified support for the project.

"It's great, especially if it helps other people see the light about the DUI problem," Iris Hutton said. Her main reservation concerns the possibility of resurrecting dormant passions about the case.

"I don't know if Corina can go through that again," Ms. Hutton said.



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