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54/08/03 Bay Speculation Wild on Slaying

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MSL

ACADEMIC ENDEAVORS

Bay Speculation Wild on Slaying

Opinions come a dime-a-dozen today in the Sheppard murder case.

The name of Dr. Sam Sheppard, the athletic osteopath, is now a household word. He is spoken of by total strangers as "Dr. Sam" or just plain "Sam". This is the situation everywhere in Cleveland, and in Bay Village especially.

The quiet, tree-shaded lake-side community is slowly trying to recover from effects of the brutal Fourth-of-July slaying. But conversation buzzing around Dr. Sam's guilt or innocence drones on incessantly like the irritating noise of a summer fly.

His former colleagues at Bay View Hospital give him a unanimous if uneasy vote of confidence.

Persons who know him professionally and socially find it hard to put Dr. Sam in the role of a bludgeon slayer. Yet, they say, if he is guilty he must pay the penalty.

Hospital personnel who talk with reporters indicate they feel

Dr. Sam is a much-maligned, top-notch surgeon. They also feel the hospital has been victimized by the publicity attending the murder case.

Life at the hospital has changed little since the morning the body of Mrs. Marilyn Sheppard was found. A few aides were laid off for several days. Some operations were postponed because of the unavailability of the three Sheppard brothers, Sam, Richard N. and Stephen A., and the senior Sheppard, Dr. Richard A. The parking lot is less crowded.

There are still little usual

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POLICE PICTURES OF DOCTOR

These two pictures are Bertillon photos of Dr. Samuel H. Sheppard taken by the Cleveland Police Department when the Bay Village doctor was minus his orthopedic collar and eye glasses.

Bay Village Guessing Runs Wild on Murder

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jokes among service employees waiting for the hospital station wagon to take them to bus lines. The smiles haven't completely disappeared from the faces of comely nurses and official personnel. Yet one question hangs like a black cloud over everyone's head.

Wonder About Future

What is the ultimate future of the hospital?

"I hope they settle this soon. We don't deserve this," one employee said.

"I've got \$1,000 in this hospital, and several other doctors have \$3,000 to \$5,000 in it," another osteopath said. "I've had two maternity cancellations. I hate to think what is going to happen to the rest of us on the staff."

One nurse said, "Everything is the same as before."

"The patients seem perfectly normal and not a bit upset being at the hospital," she said. "We feel sorry for Dr. Sam, and hope they find the one who did it."

A staff doctor gave the accused doctor a vote of confidence.

"We're the only ones who believe him," he said. "The killing was the work of a mad man. Dr. Sam has a well-adopted personality. It's almost a question of whether they're more interested in finding the killer or in the personalities of osteopaths."

The doctor added that "if we didn't have confidence in Dr. Sam we wouldn't even go into the institution."

Others Defend Hospital

Others staunchly defend the hospital as "the nicest place I've ever worked."

"We still have a rule in this country that a person is innocent until proven guilty," said another.

Dr. William Carnegie, president of the staff, said Dr. Sam is "generally accepted at the hospital on the basis of his fine record as a doctor."

He said no official discussion of the youthful doctor was made at the last staff meeting nor at the trustees' meeting. Hospital Administrator R. A. Lease said the hospital suffered "some harmful effects" since the murder.

Lease said the Sheppard murder is "an individual affair" and there is "no tie-up between it and the hospital."

He said the hospital administration is "keeping its own coun-

sel" and "waiting to see what happens".

Others of the socially-conscious western suburb are increasingly sensitive to published accounts of their feelings. Several of the top people in the community are on record.

Mayor J. Spencer Houk was a close personal friend of the doctor's.

"I don't believe Sam did it."

"I can't believe Sam capable of murder," said Donald Ahern, who, with his wife, was probably the last person to see Marilyn alive.

Everyone Has an Opinion

Houk said he has "done everything in my power . . . to see this murder solved."

"Marilyn was like a daughter to me. If Sam did it, he deserves to be punished."

Other Bay residents have other opinions.

Patrolman Howard Nickel, who hasn't played any part in the investigation, said "it's obvious that everything is stacked up against him."

"If he's innocent, both he and his family have suffered unmercifully without cause. If he's guilty, it's too bad the case couldn't have been solved the first day to avoid needless suffering," Nickel said.

A housewife said "I can't help feeling sorry for him."

"He looked so pitiful in the newspaper pictures. He seemed so alone, and his face looked pathetic. Everything points to him as the killer, but I can't help hoping he's innocent."

A young drugstore clerk played basketball with both Dr. Sheppard and his wife.

"They always seemed happy. It's hard to believe some of the things that have come out. If Sam did it, he should be punished. Still I can't help thinking he's already gone through enough."

A gas station worker waited on both Sheppards.

"I liked them both. I hope Sam didn't do it, if only for the sake of his son. Imagine growing up with something like this hanging over your head."

And so the thoughts and words buzz on . . .