

Girls rehearse domesticity in Brewer home

By Allyn Vogel

There is a course on campus that demands over 50 hours of work per week for 4 hours of credit. In the catalog it is listed as Home Management Residence, HE 493. 180+ hours. Why?

Thursday, October 11, the students in the Home Management House were preparing for Friday morning's tea for Meredith's maid and maintenance staff. An entertainment project is only a small part of the home management course. The six girls presently living in the house - Alice Winecoff, Beth Kimbell, Melanie Shaffer, Rosemary New, Robin Byrington, and Brenda Craig - are spending 18 days living in the Brewer House practically applying their classroom theories. During their stay, their tasks rotate; they spend six days as housekeeper and three days each in the roles of manager, assistant cook, planner and laundress. The house has "all the conveniences of home" to aid them in these jobs except no paper napkins - they launder and iron white cloth napkins and tablecloths.

Each of these jobs has a

distinct list of tasks attached to it. The girls, however, see the course as one in cooperation, and help each other when anyone is hassled by too much to do. It was with this spirit of "E Pluribus Unum" that they were decorating the dining room with pumpkins and leaves for the tea and discussing an uncooperative tea ring. Occasionally this fine organization crumbles, the decorative appointments can be perfect, the cuisine superb, the faculty advisor charming as she sits down to a formal dinner with her students. They pick up their well-polished silver and no plates!

Each girl is responsible for seeing that the chores associated with her job are done well. The planner organizes her menu for her three days as cook. She must stay within a budget of \$1.75 per person, per day. She must do the shopping and make a work plan for herself and her assistant cook to follow during meal preparation. The planner becomes manager for her three days of cooking. The two housekeepers are charged with the general cleaning of the living areas of the house.

The homemakers must

also fulfill a child care requirement. Mrs. Harmon, their supervisor, is donating her baby, Katie, for a day for them to approach with the techniques they learned in their Child Development and Child Psychology courses. The students are also responsible for a home improvement project during which they apply their Household Furnishings Laboratory, their Interior Design course, and their miscellaneous sewing courses. The present group is redecorating the House's three bathrooms.

The home economics students find that they occasionally have to work hard to destroy the preconceived anti-home economics major notions of the people who meet them. Ms. Winecoff had one date who verbally expressed amazement at her lack of hoopskirt and vignette.

The students are enjoying their stay and appreciating the opportunities it has given them to experiment with their new found homemaking arts. They prophesy that when they get back to their dorms their beds will remain unmade for a week.



Mrs. Nellie Pennington enjoys the Home Management House tea given by the girls in honor of Meredith's domestic workers Friday, October 12. Approximately 50 guests attended.

Theatre of the absurd comes to Meredith

Meredith College's experience with drama will take a new turn Tuesday, October 30 and Wednesday, October 31, with the first production of its "laboratory theatre." Edward Albee's one-act play "The American Dream" will be staged in the Hut at 8:00 on the two evenings, under the direction of Drama Instructor Linda Bamford and featuring Meredith students Mil Long, Susan Tew, and Jennie Jenkins. Admission is free.

The production will represent a departure from the usual. The Meredith community has been used to seeing traditional two or three act plays, either musicals (The Sound of Music and Carousel) or contemporary serious dramas (The Glass Menagerie and The Miracle Worker), and has not been exposed to the recent experiments with the

theatrical art-form. The new program is designed to fill that gap.

Albee, best known for his full-length work, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolfe?*, is considered a pioneer in what has come to be called "the theatre of the absurd," and is ranked alongside France's Eugene Ionesco, England's Harold Pinter, and Ireland's Samuel Beckett as a major explorer of the frontiers of the theatre. And "The American Dream" has already come to be considered a paradigm of theatrical absurdism.

Departure from Traditional

Absurdism in the theatre, as its name suggests, is a departure from the traditional dramatic form. Story-line and character-development, the staples of traditional drama and the criteria used to distinguish good plays from bad, are virtually ignored by

the absurdist; in their place, he uses the comedy he finds in every-day life, the "black humor" that arises from modern man's mechanical responses to the world around him. We are told by sociologists and philosophers that traditional values and institutions are inadequate to handle modern technology and its demands; the absurdist exhibits such inadequacies in his plays, and the result is both comic and insightful.

The Absurdist Playwright

The absurdist's departures from the traditional form have opened them to criticism. But their defenders note that the absurdist playwright does not really serve a different

function from his traditional counterpart. All dramatists attempt to speak to their audiences in a way that will show each audience-member some truth about himself as a human being or a member of his particular society. The absurdist, no less than the traditionalist, strives to do this. If his stories are disjointed and his characters one-dimensional, that is because the real world is sometimes out of joint and real people sometimes express themselves in cliches and stereotyped roles that have become meaningless and empty. That is no less the truth about people, the absurdist is saying, than that they are capable of nobility and self-sacrifice. The good

dramatist should look deep into the human soul, and examine its roots; the absurdist is doing that, even if he is examining hitherto darkened corners of the soul.

Like all absurdist dramas, "The American Dream" presents the playgoer with a challenge. Is he ready to see a gifted playwright's insights into his psyche on stage? Is he ready to laugh at the absurdities created when deeply-held values and ways of life break down? On October 30 and 31, some members of the Meredith community will have the opportunity to meet that challenge.

Joyce Martin's BLACK PERSPECTIVE

Students, faculty, administration, and clerical workers all play a major role in college life. However, let us not fail to remember the importance of the domestic workers and their role in the beautification and upkeep of our campus. There are the people who work behind the scenes to make sure every event goes over smoothly and that everything is "up to par." They keep the lawns and shrubbery looking attractive, keep the dorms neat, prepare and serve our food, and keep our classrooms looking presentable.

In the Housekeeping Department we salute: Thelma Avery (who first came to Meredith in 1953), Louise Booker (who first came to Meredith in 1939), Nellie Pennington, Christine Faison, Margie Davis, Doris Clinton, Martha Warren, Hazel Faison, Francis Gillis, Sally Beckwith, Mary Elizabeth Bell, Mabel Robinson, Pauline McCullers, Curlie Fuller, and Novella Dunstan.

In the Maintenance Department we salute: Lou Avent, Bernice Thompson, Conan Allen, William Crumel,

William Fench, Arce Jackson, Arthur Jones, James Jeffries, Willie King, James McDonald, George McFadden, Jack Mims, Johnny Patterson, William Stewart, and Eddie Turner.

In the cafeteria we salute: Mamie Sanders, Alice Sanders, Alice Wilson, Daniel Harrison, Cleo Young, Josephine Herring, Allen McNeely, Thelma Person, J. C. Sanders, Hubert Merritt, Irene McCullers, Peggy Seaborne, Molly Cotten, Lucille Sanders, Charlie Cannon, Jr., Fannie Madison, Mary Massenburg, Alivia Partin, Ernestine Gupton, Benjamin Morgan, Christine Harris, Martin Moody, John White, Phillip Goss, Eula Ethridge, Hazel Bullock, and Clinton Stroman.

Also we commend: Charlie Cannon, Louise Dandy, Doris Barber, Sandra Brown, Margaret Kieth, Virginia Robertson, Lewis Utley, Annie O'Neal, Mark Hudson, Tutti Sastrosumarta, Winnie Harris, Barbara Powers (Snack Bar), Leathia M. Holder, Margaret Sanders, Louise Silver, Diane McCullers, Mary McCullers, Willie Williams, Ella M. Losten, and Bryan Crook.



Mr. Conan Allen, one of Meredith's maintenance workers, views the goodies prepared by the home economics majors for the domestic workers tea. Entertaining is one project required of the girls.

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