

PRC performance humiliates Sondheim

By **BOBBY PARKER**
Staff Writer

Who is Stephen Sondheim and why is everyone singing his praises?
Playmakers Repertory Company is trying to answer that question in its current run of *Side by Side by Sondheim*, the musical revue featuring some of the most brilliant numbers from Sondheim's impressive string of Broadway successes.

Okay, so Sondheim is the premier lyricist-composer of the American stage over the last couple of decades. But let's not assume that his claim to that position has anything to do with this shoddy piece of, if I may, theater.

Side by Side plucks Sondheim gems from a dozen of his shows, stripping them of all dramatic context and robbing them of their original fullness of meaning. What's left is a purposeless and embarrassing display of sugary affection for Sondheim—the "greatest thing since popcorn," as the narrator would have us believe.

Combine this conceptually weak show with the muddy production of director Errol Selsby, and you may wonder just how much you liked popcorn in the first place.

For all its weakness, the show is destined to be with us for some time to come because it is effortless entertainment for both the audience and the players. The narrator (Frank Raiter) warns us from the start that *Side*

by *Side* is more of a show than a play, which means that its purpose is pure entertainment.

Why, then, is it so dull and so boring? Because here the songs lack the strength of human emotions with which dramatic characters are identifiable.

The show, the first musical for the Playmakers, has three vocalists (Kenneth Garner, Marina MacNeil and Nancy Piccione) who alternately perform solos, duets and trios from Sondheim's most successful shows. The narrator has the impossible task of linking this together by explaining Sondheim's themes and giving quaint anecdotes about the dramatist's career.

The strength of Sondheim has to be his genius as a lyricist. He captures just the right feeling in concise and complete rhymes. He is a master of the *double entendre*—witness the multiple sexual connotations in "I Never Do Anything Twice" from *The Seven Percent Solution*, one of his few ventures into film.

It is difficult to choose an "ultimate" Sondheim, although the narrator tells us it is "Send in the Clowns" from *A Little Night Music*, the quiet sound of passion that is his most recognized. Equally brilliant candidates would be the poignant "Anyone Can Whistle" from the show of the same name, or the pulsating "Another Hundred People" (*Company*).

But despite some good material, director Selsby allows the show to become a stagnant parade of musical numbers, in the tradition of those salutes to Broadway that Carol Burnett once did on television. The show

becomes stale because of the similarity of many of the numbers and, more importantly, the lack of originality in the staging. There are far too many instances when the vocalists simply stand under the spotlight and sing.

If anyone finds the choreography for which Joy Javits takes credit, please tell her where it is. One feels the urge to move for the static cast, whose bodies remain inflexible while their arms fly in disconcerted rowing motions. "You Gotta Get a Gimmick" (*Gypsy*) is a lesson in how to succeed as a stripper which calls for a rousing presentation, but it was a humiliation in all its sluggishness.

Human compassion might allow us to forgive Kenneth Garner for being as bored as he appears throughout the show. His "Anyone Can Whistle" is one of the evening's highlights, but in the other songs he seems preoccupied.

When the narrator says, "Thank you, Stephen Sondheim, for being alive and sharing with us your special genius," no one believes it. This revue has destroyed much of the life of Sondheim's music, and this particular production has dealt further blows.

Perhaps the greatest insult comes near the end in "Conversation Piece," a medley of all those Sondheims we didn't have time to hear and old favorites we heard earlier. In cruel, teasing fashion, this number says, "See, we could have done all this in five minutes, and aren't you the fools for sitting here these past two and a half hours?"

Fools indeed.



Frank Raiter, Marina MacNeil, Ken Garner and Nancy Piccione...cast of 'Side by Side by Sondheim' rehearses.

Views mixed on report

By **GEORGE JETER**
Staff Writer

UNC faculty members showed mixed support Wednesday for requiring undergraduates to take both foreign language and mathematical science courses as recommended in the Thornton report.

The Thornton report, which proposes an overhaul of General College requirements, was discussed at a meeting of the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences. If the report is approved, its recommendations could be implemented as early as fall, 1981.

Chemistry department Chairman Thomas L. Isenhour disagreed with the report's recommendation that special math courses for non-math majors should be developed to meet the proposed two-semester math requirement. Isenhour pointed out that few other fields have special curriculums for non-majors.

"We have this concept that everyone can learn Portuguese but not everyone can learn calculus," another professor said.

A few faculty members spoke against requiring even remedial math courses. "To some students who come here already knowing they want to be professional artists, musicians or such, the math requirement is absolute torture," one professor said.

English professor Weldon Thornton, chairperson of the committee which wrote the report, said the math requirement was not meant to be a remedial high school program but instead should be something to help students in today's world.

Thornton added he found the non-major math courses in the present option, where a student can choose between math or foreign language, to be appalling.

"If the new requirements become just remedial courses over the next few years then I would ask to change the requirement," Thornton said.

The Thornton report also would require students to pass the equivalent of four semesters of foreign language by taking a placement test, two semesters of an intensified five-hour-per-semester course or four semesters of foreign language.

Consumer Line

Q. I saw an advertisement in *The Daily Tar Heel* concerning Pentax Corp. in Middletown, Ohio. According to the ad, you could make large sums of money through their homework scheme. When I wrote off for the information, I got a letter informing me that in order to participate in their program I would have to send them \$15. Are they above board and legal?

A. No, according to the Ohio Better Business Bureau, the Pentax ad is false—There is no homework scheme. They have had several complaints that the company took \$15 from customers and provided no job.

Anytime you are dealing with an out-of-state company, be very cautious, especially if the company requires any initial deposit for homework or summer job schemes.

Always check to see if the company is reputable. Even in out-of-state mail order cases involving large sums of money, it is virtually impossible to obtain refunds for undelivered or defective merchandise.

Q. Which hair dryers contain asbestos?

A. The latest list of hair dryers with asbestos, which may cause cancer, includes: Clairol's Son-of-Gun TD-1 and TD-2 and Super Zap SZ-F; Conair Corp.'s Style Stream 070, Junior Pro 066 and Thermo Styler 067; Hamilton Beach Division of Scovill's Models

480, 3830, 479, 423, 3850, 1858, 434, 432, 477, 478, 480, 481, and 425; Korvettes' Models 23A and E-2100; Sperry Rand's Models HW-1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and PD-600, 750, 850, and 900; Sunbeam's Northern 1821, 320, 6350, Oster 202, 301, 302, and 370 and Sunbeam D-CW Professional, 52-9C, 52-9K, 52-9H, 52-9P, 52-12J and 52-9R, all Professional.

For information on other hair dryers, you can call any of the following major manufacturers toll free:

Clairol, Inc.—800-223-5800; Conair Corp.—800-631-5391; Gillette—800-328-9208; General Electric—800-241-9992 or 800-241-5822; and Norel Co.—800-223-1828.

All companies have stopped distributing models with asbestos. Most companies will replace or repair hair dryers with asbestos. For a complete list of hair dryers with asbestos and manufacturers positions on replacing or repairing dryers, write to: Hair Dryers, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, D.C. 20207.

If you have consumer questions or information on merchants, please call, write or come by the Student Consumer Action Union office in Suite B of the Carolina Union. Consumer line is researched by Debbie Gray of SCAU.



Indigo

A local Latin and soft rock band plays tonight at 8 in Chase Cafeteria as part of the "Southern Comfort" coffeehouse.

Assaults in area

Attacks on women increase

By **ANNE-MARIE DOWNEY**
Staff Writer

The number of reported attacks on women in Orange County this fall has risen to eight, with one attempted rape reported in Chapel Hill and another assault occurring in northern Orange County.

Earlier in November, local police and law enforcement officials reported an increase in the incidence of rapes, attempted rapes and assaults on women in the last three months. At that time there were two reported sexual assaults in Chapel Hill, two in Orange County and two on campus.

University Police Lt. Charles E. Mauer said no more incidents had been reported since the Nov. 14 assault in the Bell Tower parking lot.

But Ben Callahan, administrative assistant with the Chapel Hill Police Department, said police were investigating a Nov. 14 attempted rape at Pinegate Apartments. The woman was emptying her trash at night when a tall man grabbed her, Callahan said. The woman was assaulted but was not raped, he said.

A sexual assault in northern Orange County, which Orange County Assistant District Attorney Carl Fox said was not similar to other recent attacks, occurred when a woman left a Mebane bar in the company of two men and another woman. The woman was assaulted and her clothes were torn, but she was not raped, Fox said.

The two men involved were arrested and charged with attempted rape, Fox said. The case now is pending before Orange County Superior Court.

Faculty to be liable for library fines

By **MELODEE ALVES**
Staff Writer

The UNC faculty has been granted a temporary reprieve from the loss of its long-enjoyed privilege of immunity from overdue book fines imposed by University libraries.

But as of Jan. 9, faculty members will have to join students in the line to pay up for every day books are late, said A.R. Fields, head of the circulation department for Wilson Library. The faculty fines had been scheduled to begin Oct. 1 but several professors claimed they were not notified in time, he said.

Many faculty members complained that they didn't know they were going to be fined because they didn't read or receive the notices," Fields said. "We have changed the date to start collecting so right now we're in limbo."

Duke University has been the only school in the state to charge overdue fines to faculty members in the past, Fields said. But UNC officials felt a similar policy was needed here after many students complained that they could not find needed books which were sitting in professors' offices, he said.

"Without the fines, there is no way to compel faculty members to return books," Fields said.

When the new policy is implemented, faculty members will have a 10-day grace after receiving an overdue notice in which to return the book. Students are granted a three-day grace period. After 10 days elapse, faculty members will be billed at 25 cents per day, Fields said.

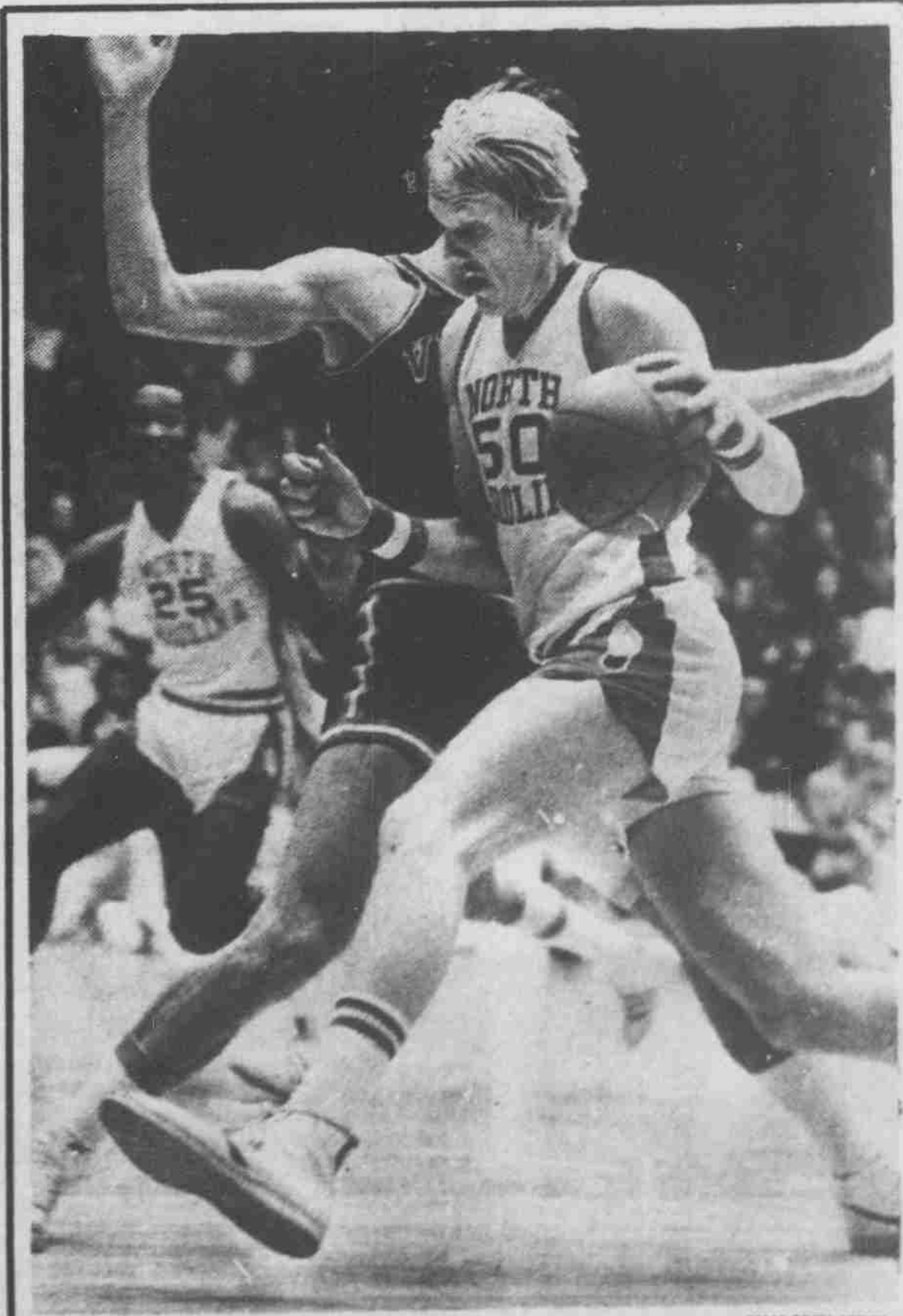
If the total bill exceeds \$15, the faculty member's borrowing privileges will be suspended until the bill is paid, he said.

"Some people are dismayed," Fields said. "Other faculty members say they like it—fines are long overdue."

Because faculty members can check books out on a six-month basis, Fields said many professors tend to forget the dates when the books are due. Faculty members should return books as soon as they have finished with them, he said.

Notices of the change have already been mailed to the faculty, Fields said.

"Some faculty members say they just don't open mail from the library," he said. "This is a luxury they cannot afford in the future."



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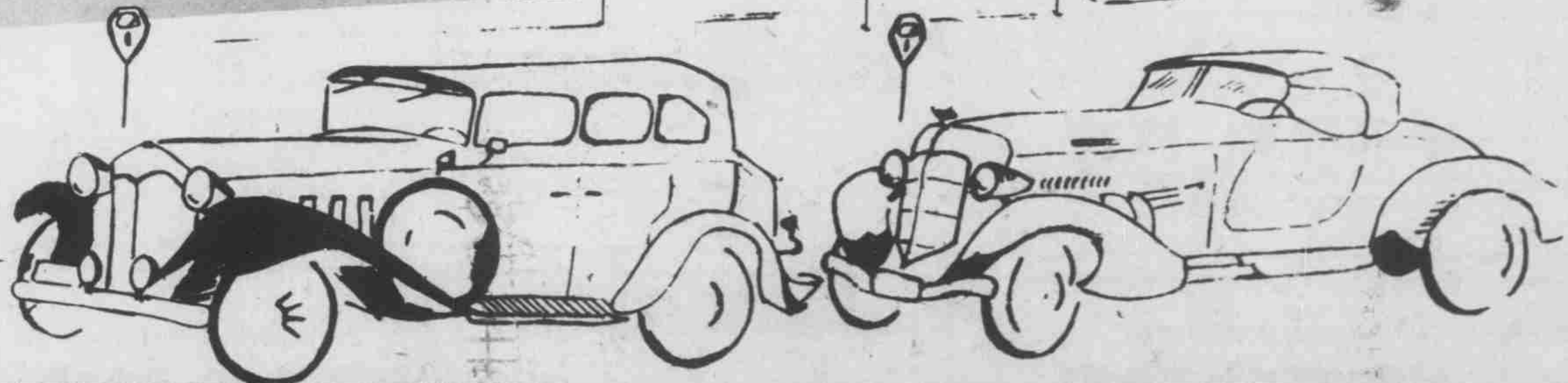
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