

# On the shelf

## Boyd tells of Southern experience

By LEAH TALLEY  
Arts Editor

Growing up in the South has its blessings. Mint juleps, watermelon and pond fishing anecdotes make living below the Mason-Dixon somehow mythically superior.

But life isn't all roses and homemade, hand-turned ice cream. In *The Redneck Way of Knowledge*, Blanche McCrary Boyd wrestles with her Southern heritage and its conflict with her more enlightened, liberal "Northern" mind.

There's something bewildering about being a SOUTHERNER besides the often unintelligible (to Yankees, that is) accent. As Boyd puts it, "A dreadful truth came to me: Southerners were not normal people."

This revelation came to Boyd when she was young, while watching television. The people on her screen walked, talked, and did everything differently from the people of Charleston, S.C., her hometown. After this discovery, Boyd had but one purpose in life: to escape the South.

This escape came in many different ways. First, Boyd got married, then moved to California where she got into Esalen. She attended a class where she learned that humans have only two legitimate fears, fear of falling and fear of noise. *So we went outside on the grass in front of the Stanford library, the instructor said "Fall!" and we all flopped down in simultaneous spontaneity. I was hoping that nobody I knew would see me behaving like this.*

But even flopping and floundering in California was not enough to release Boyd from her past. She then moved to a Vermont commune and made it all the way to New York where she lived the high life



Blanche Boyd

for several years. Boyd eventually returned to Charleston to wrestle with what she could not escape: her self, her Southern self.

*The Redneck Way of Knowledge* is composed of 11 tales. In each, Boyd explores the southern heritage's conflict with her liberal mind. Her writing is clean and honest. In "Growing Up Racist," the last chapter, Boyd is honestly mystified about her prejudice. *Like every white American I've encountered, I am a racist. During the sixties, I disavowed and tried to disown racism. Many young whites took up this cause. Yankee students came South on their summer vacations to convince the dispossessed to register. White Southerners like me turned against their families. Some risked or lost their lives. All I chanced was my heritage.*

There is Boyd's dilemma. As Boyd says, the essence of the South, whatever it means to be Southern, is built in her character like the way she holds her shoulders.

*The Redneck Way of Knowledge* grabs your imagination with captivating stories of wild, four-day parties, alligator stampedes and stock car racing. Even more importantly, *Redneck* challenges the liberal Southern mind. If you've ever felt ill-at-ease with your heritage, Blanche Boyd's account of her recognition of her Southern self can enlighten one coming to grips with his or her past.

## Rejected plays try again in print

By MARC ROUTH  
Staff Writer

Neil Simon and Woody Allen both have long-standing reputations for their comic plays and movies, yet they are not without their failures. Two recent book releases, Woody Allen's *The Floating Light Bulb* and Neil Simon's *Fools* (both Random House, \$10.50), are plays which failed to attract a significant audience in their original New York productions when they were produced in April 1981.

Each of the two plays is a departure by the playwrights from their commercial successes. *The Floating Light Bulb* is a contemporary drama which is more of a social statement than many of Allen's earlier works. Although the films *Stardust Memories* and *Interiors* were equally strong in social comment, this play lacks the humor elements of incongruity and verbal word play that are characteristic of many Allen works.

*Fools* is surprising from the beginning due to its setting. Simon has succeeded throughout his career with comedies set in apartments or hotels that depend largely on their contemporary nature. Yet in *Fools*, Simon chooses to set the play in the village of Kulyenchikov in a "time long ago." His style is similar to other plays he has written, but he seems handicapped by his inability to use contemporary references.

It is unfortunate that each of the playwrights suffered because they dared to depart from their more commercial products. Although it would be easy to pass off their failures as proof of the inability of the commercial artist to offer a quality artistic product, their attempts to broaden their scope deserve analysis.

In *The Floating Light Bulb*, Enid and Max Pollack are victims of poverty, apathy and selfishness as they and their two children, Paul and Steve, attempt to survive in a dilapidated \$30-a-month apartment.

The play places Paul in the position of the gifted child who has not been exposed to a proper childhood and thus cannot succeed in front of a stranger when he tries to do his magic tricks. Paul is much like the character of Tillie in Paul Zindel's *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon-Marigolds*, a metaphor for the results of an unfeeling society.

Leon Tolchinsky is the young schoolteacher in Neil Simon's play who falls in love with his student. But there is one problem. Everyone in the village is completely stupid due to a curse which has left all the inhabitants foolish for the last two hundred years. After two acts of madness, the curse is lifted.

The plays are both promising attempts for each of the writers to expand their craft. Perhaps with more forays into new areas they will find greater success. Until then, the countless productions of more successful Simon and Allen plays and movies will keep fans content.

# Popular Clef Hangers, Loreleis hit a responsive Tar Heel chord, carve own special niche at UNC

By MONT ROGERS  
Staff Writer

Within five years, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has added two a capella singing groups to its already abundant list of musical attractions. But these groups are special in that they are not under the guidance of the music department or any other full-time instructor.

The Clef Hangers and the Loreleis are both singing groups organized and run by students here at UNC, many of whom have no professional interest in music, but just find the activity enjoyable.

The Clef Hangers is a men's vocal group started by Barry Saunders in 1977. Saunders had the notion that UNC, being one of the nation's larger universities, should have some sort of a capella group comparable to the Ivy League schools where this type of singing originated and has become a tradition.

With four men and four-part harmony, Saunders entered the group in a talent show at Morrison residence hall. The group had a mixed reception, but with a lot of work, eventually established itself as a worthy addition to campus life. The group now has 12 members and gives concerts in Memorial Hall.

Since the beginning, the responsibility for the operation of the Clef Hangers has fallen to members themselves. Different members of the group do the jobs of booking tours, keeping track of the money, taking care of business and directing the music. The members have worked together to make the Clef Hangers a highly successful organization.

The success of the Clefs is evident from their many accomplishments. They have sung in the Great Hall of the Carolina Union, the auditorium of Hill Hall and in Memorial Hall. They have traveled as far north as Maine and as far south as Louisiana. Just last spring the Clefs sang in the Salisbury and Kannapolis areas of North Carolina.

Recently the Clef Hangers reached another milestone by cutting an album. The album is a mix of live material from last spring's concert in Memorial Hall and songs recorded in the studio.

The business manager for last year's group, Miles Lackey, said the album will help the Clefs in many ways. "It will be easier to book tours now that we have an album to send to different places. At first we could only write letters telling them what we did," Lackey said. The album, if successful, could also generate revenue for the group and increase the group's popularity.

The Clef Hangers' popularity stems from the diversity of their music and the diversity of their personalities. Last year's music director, Tim Smith, pointed out that "you can't look for the best voices, you have to look at the personalities as well."

The Clef Hangers are quick to say that their music is not limited to barbershop quartet-type music, but includes songs from quite a few different musical eras. In their latest repertoire, the Clefs sing the music of the Beach Boys and Elvis Presley. There are ballads like "Loch Lomond" and up-beat numbers like "Come Go With Me," and many humorous songs as well.

With the budding men's group on campus, a few women decided it was time to take the initiative and start a ladies' a capella group. Led by Sarah Klemmer, eight female students blended their voices only last fall to form the Loreleis.

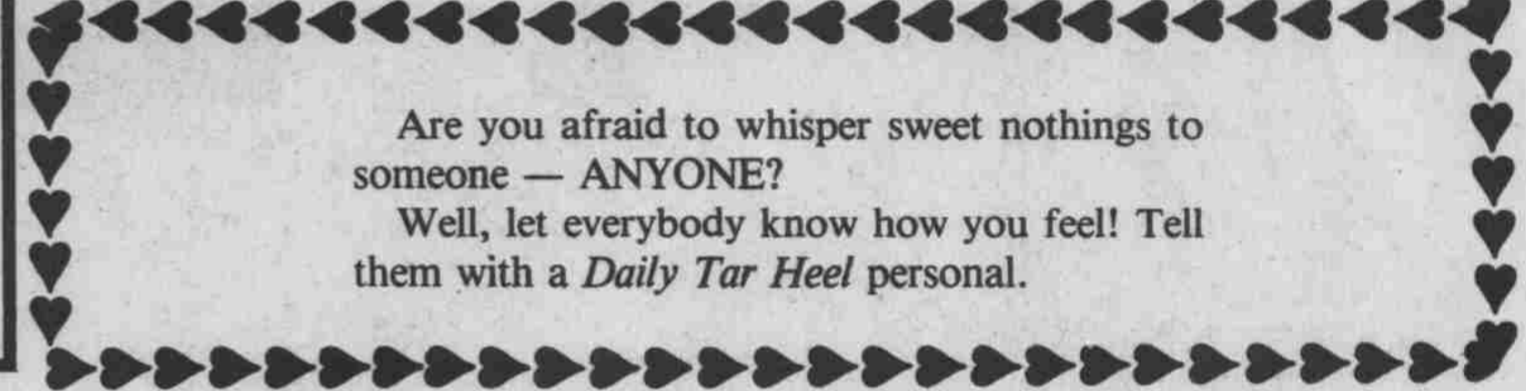
Some of the music of the Loreleis is based on madrigals, vocal pieces developed in the 16th and 17th centuries. Other songs are from the swing era of the 30s and 40s, not unlike some of the songs of the Manhattan Transfer.

Considering that the Loreleis have only existed one year, they have made tremendous progress. They have made their way to various banquets and functions in the area and have become quite popular. They have also accompanied the Clef Hangers in two of their concerts.

Klemmer said the Loreleis strive for diversity. Like the Clef Hangers, the Loreleis do not require that each member be a music major. Klemmer said, "I hope the group stays diverse because there are few groups on campus for people who just like to sing."

The Clef Hangers and Loreleis audition new people in the spring to replace their members who have graduated, but the Clef Hangers say they keep spaces open for talented freshmen who may come in in the fall. Information about auditions can be obtained by contacting Sarah Klemmer of the Loreleis or Mark Jacobson of the Clef Hangers.

The members of the Loreleis for 1981-82 were Joni Hanna, Janet Nickelston, Jan Jaynes, Sarah Klemmer, Karen Gray, Gretchen Steiger, Mary Camp, Helen Little and Meredith Banner. The members of the Clef Hangers 1981-82 were Chan Carter, Wiley Lowry, Jerry Blackwell, Thane Kerner, Mark Jacobson, Todd Johnson, Miles Lackey, Tim Smith, Bill Schaw, Andy Baker, Alan Denning and Billy Vonschritzt.



## Barbershop quartet supporters perform, hold open house

The Research Triangle Park chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America will hold an open house tonight at 7:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall of University United Methodist Church.

Several barbershop quartets will perform, and guests will be invited to join in the singing. Refreshments will be served. Men of all ages are welcome, and students are especially encouraged to attend. For more information, call 942-7035, 929-2212, or 942-3485.



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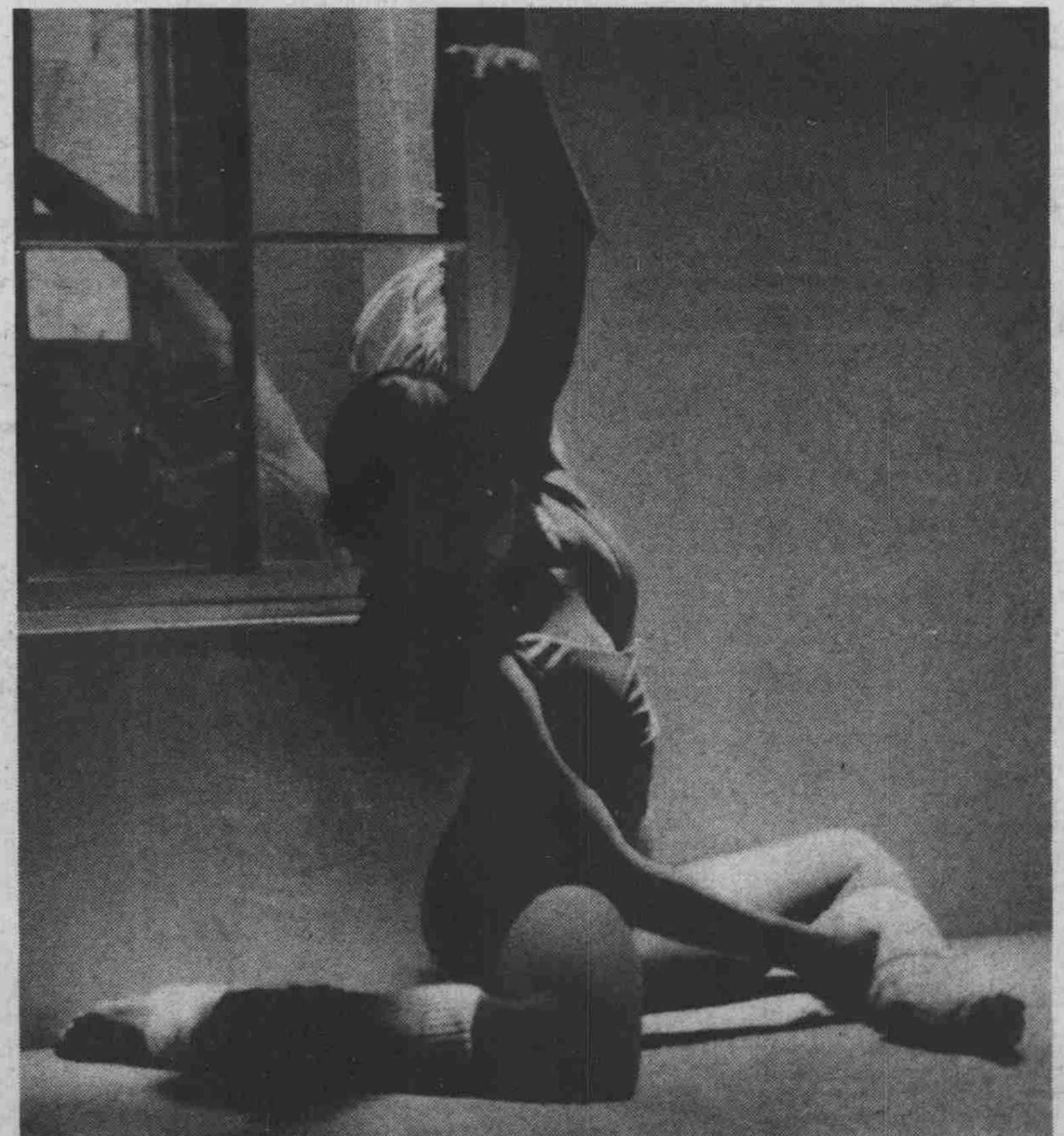
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