

'Lovers': a fine comedy starts Duke Players' year

By JEFF GROVE
Assistant Arts Editor

The Dukies have returned. With them comes the annual Orientation weekend production by the Duke Players. Designed to be a prelude to the Players' regular season and a grabber for potential drama majors, this year's opener, Brian Friel's *Lovers*, will probably work on both counts.

Lovers is an unusual comedy, set in Ireland in June, 1966. Joe and Mag, teenagers about to finish high school, are being rushed into a marriage of necessity because Mag is pregnant. The play is set on a hilltop overlooking Joe and Mag's town where they are studying for final exams. It becomes apparent that this marriage has a limited chance for survival. Neither partner is emotionally ready. In addition, Mag is impractical and Joe is insensitive.

A running commentary by two unemotional narrators who seem to be reading newspaper accounts of what happened to the young lovers is interspersed throughout the story. While Joe and Mag act out their story in one time frame, the narrators exist in three. They begin Joe and Mag's story before the events of the afternoon on the hilltop, continue it as they catch up to that day, and overtake the teenagers, reaching the eventual fate of the pair.

Jamie Rae Fleisher plays Mag. Everything about her performance clicks except

her Irish brogue, which frequently lapses into Exclusive American Prep Schoolese. But Fleisher lays a strong foundation for her character, preventing Mag from becoming merely a dim-witted ingenue.

In the role of Joe, John Austin is properly subdued and blank until Meg's chattering drives his patience to the breaking point. Joe is not allowed much development until late in the hour-long one-act play, but he seizes the chance when it comes. And his accent stays in place. He is particularly engaging in one sequence where he does impressions of notable town figures.

Dan Clancy and Lindsey Amtmann are appropriately detached as the narrators, although Clancy sometimes strains for too-perfect diction and ends up tripping over his tongue.

Barbara J. Balph's direction fails to take advantage of the ample space offered by Susan Lacey Maxwell's simple set. But while she keeps her characters confined to a relatively small area, she does create the illusion of great motion. Her work with Fleisher and Austin on character interaction pays off in a believable relationship.

All things considered, *Lovers* is a good sign for this year's Duke Players season, which officially kicks off with Brecht's *Galileo* Oct. 20-24. *Lovers* continues tonight and Tuesday at 8:15 p.m. in the Emma Shearer Laboratory Theatre in the Bryan Center on the Duke campus. Admission is \$1.

'Fast Times' satirizes youth, high school

By FRANK BRUNI
Staff Writer

It is a rare person who is able to laugh at his own shortcomings. It is a rare film which can satirize the same subject matter it embraces with a contagious joviality. *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* is such a film. Employing a quintessential California suburb for their setting, novice director Amy Heckerling and screenwriter Cameron Crowe take a humorous, affectionate glance at youth today and present this generation with a tale which captures our crazy, fad-filled times in much the same fashion as *Grease* depicted the young adults of the '50s.

The story which showcases this satire is a neat variation of the usual teenage maturation theme. Our

heroine, Stacy, doesn't take the usual path from innocence to experience through sexual awareness. After several disappointing one-night stands and a rather bothersome abortion, Stacy realizes that she does not want to assume adult responsibility. There are no tears or melodramatic situations. Stacy simply recognizes that the sexual liberation of her generation is not worry-free, and she decides to strike up a relationship with a physically clumsy but endlessly considerate schoolmate. It's an optimistic, yet believable, tale.

As the title of the film suggests, *Fast Times* often lapses into crude jokes and tasteless gags. These flaws, however, are easily overlooked, for *Fast Times* skillfully mocks the eccentricities of contemporary culture. When the camera pans a row of seemingly anorexic teenage girls who are all wearing different

designer jeans and playing video games, it is obvious that someone with a shrewd, satiric eye is behind this project. Indeed, Heckerling and Crowe leave no area overlooked in their satirization of current youth fads. They explore everything from fast food addiction and marijuana-induced mellowness to passionate concerns for clearing up acne, emulating pop music idols and losing one's virginity.

All said, *Fast Times* still stands as less than truly sophisticated fare. Like Frank Zappa's "Valley Girl," which comes immediately to mind when watching this film, *Fast Times* is unpretentious, raunchy fun laced with truth and affection for the quirky identity our generation has created for itself. And it's certainly a welcome break from the more esoteric rewards of a college textbook.

freshmen

on which courses were taken in General College.

Another change involves the "refinement" of parts of the old curriculum, Graves said. "We're not just making a tougher curriculum. We're refining the old one by closing a few cracks and shoring some leaks."

One example of "shoring some leaks" is the change in the General College mathematical and foreign language option, Graves said.

The new plan requires either two courses from both mathematical sciences and a foreign language — either through course 2 in a high school language or course 3 in a new language — or one course from mathematical sciences and any foreign language through course 4.

The third, and perhaps most important, change involves the creation of a full-time faculty committee to monitor the General College curriculum to ensure quality, Graves said. This change created the Office of General Education of which Graves is associate dean.

"Through my office we're setting up a vehicle so that breadth in general courses has as much emphasis as specialization in each major," he said.

Universities across the country are in the

midst of a trend of curriculum revision and review, Graves said, citing Harvard's core curriculum and revisions at Indiana and Stanford universities. UNC did not use a model for revision, he said. "We took our own unique situation and proceeded on our own strengths."

One of the main reasons for UNC's curriculum revision was the indication that upper level students were not getting enough emphasis on writing, math and science, causing professors to spend a lot of time with "catch-up work," said Samuel Williamson, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences.

UNC also has recognized the importance of communication in the future, leading to increased emphasis on math and foreign language, Williamson said.

Another motivation for the curriculum revision is to add a sense of logic to the organization of the foreign language and math option, Williamson said. "I've been an adviser myself and have failed to ever see any logical organization of the option," he said.

"It is my belief that every decade the curriculum should be examined."

The idea of the curriculum revision began in the summer of 1978, when

Williamson set up the Thornton Committee. English professor Weldon E. Thornton led the committee to review the existing curriculum for undergraduate general education.

"Perhaps the most important thing the committee did was to redefine course categories from administration divisions or departments into educational perspectives," Thornton said. Upperclassmen will be allowed to pursue the new curriculum, as well, Graves said. "The new system will provide maximum flexibility for students already at UNC."

Many of the actual courses offered in General College will remain the same, Graves said, although older ones may be revamped and new ones introduced, with a course reward being offered to faculty members as an incentive to design courses to fit under the new curriculum.

"The new curriculum tries to give students a better liberal arts education with better direction," Graves said. "UNC has always emphasized liberal arts and sciences, but the new curriculum emphasizes to the student the importance of breadth in education."

"We (at UNC) think our basic strength is in liberal arts and sciences and that students should come here to sample them."

virus

"aspirin or Tylenol or Bufferin to keep yourself comfortable until your own body can take care of it."

The greater resistance your body has, the less chance you have of getting sick and, if you do become ill, the easier you will recuperate. People trying to avoid catching a virus should try "the best they can to get as much rest as they can and be in good physical condition," Loehr said.

"Some people think that taking large doses of Vitamin C will increase resistance," Loehr said. He said that although it would not hurt you, this method had not been scientifically proven.

"Obviously there is a virus around," Loehr said. He has seen an increased incidence of a virus involving the intestinal tract. He pointed out, however, that this may not be the same virus that is infecting Chapel Hill students.

"There is a type of upper and lower respiratory infection that the people in our family practice department are seeing a lot of," said Memorial Hospital spokeswoman Kathy Bartlett. "It's a kind of viral bronchitis. The chief symptom is a cough. They advise people who have had a severe cough for more than a week to see a doctor."

One student told *The Daily Tar Heel* that a professor had cautioned his students that they should not come to class if they became ill. But there has not been an administrative recommendation on the matter.

"This would be something each professor or perhaps even each department would make a judgement on," said a spokesman of the College of Arts and Sciences.

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