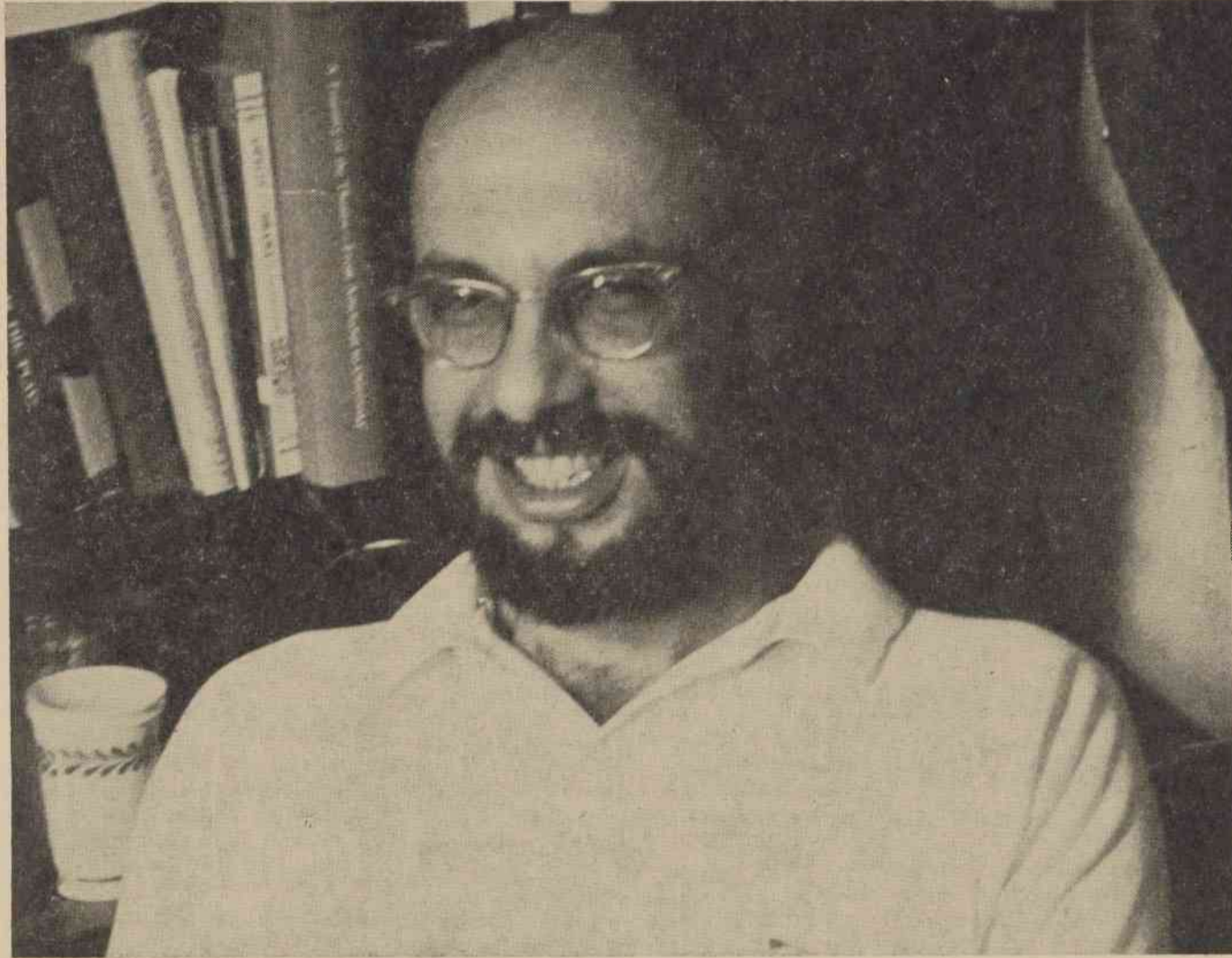


See
"The
Father"

COLUMNS

This
Is an
Ear!



Drama Coach Versteeg

"Columns" Has Exclusive Interview With Versteeg on "The Father"

The following interview with Robert J. Versteeg, Director of Drama for the Louisburg Players, was given to THE COLUMNS two weeks prior to the opening of the Louisburg Players' Production of August Strindberg's *The Father*.

COLUMNS: Do you think that Louisburg audiences are ready for Strindberg?

VERSTEEG: I'm not sure any audience is ready for Strindberg yet. But we're getting readier. And ready or not, there he is. Our so-called *avant-garde* playwrights haven't caught up with him.

COLUMNS: What about Ionesco?

VERSTEEG: Of course, I didn't mean to run down our *avant-garde*. But, yes, Ionesco-type echoes sound all through Strindberg. Much of what is being written today is a burlesque of Strindberg.

COLUMNS: What about Albee?

VERSTEEG: In my opinion, with Albee we have a clear case of a playwright trying to imitate Strindberg, and succeeding quite well — but not exceeding, by any means. *Virginia Woolf*, for example, is a watered-down version of *The Father* and *The Dance of Death*.

COLUMNS: What do you think Albee would say about that?

VERSTEEG: Something scornful.

COLUMNS: Are you doing *The Father* in the round?

VERSTEEG: Yes.

COLUMNS: Has it been done before?

VERSTEEG: I'm sure someone somewhere must have done it in the arena, but I don't know. I've never seen it done on any stage — Outside of my brain, that is. But I think — I hope — it will work. It was written for the box-stage. But later in his life Strindberg helped found an experimental theatre — the one for which he wrote his

Chamber Plays. From that fact, and from his written descriptions of staging, I'm sure he would have been enthusiastic about the possibilities of doing it arena. Problem is, the play, as you know, has all these — searing — disturbing — very powerful climaxes, such as, particularly, the throwing of the lamp, and for all I know that may just be too much emotional force — intolerable — for an audience that is in the same room with the players.

COLUMNS: Particularly if anyone in the audience gets hit with the lamp!

VERSTEEG: I hope not!

COLUMNS: You seem to talk as if you thought the emotional experience might pack too strong a punch for our audience. Don't you think we're living in a more sophisticated — callous — emotionally resilient age?

VERSTEEG: I'm sure you're right. But we don't get exposed to Strindberg's intensity too often. He was psychotic, as you know, and he can take you on a trip through the most harrowing features of insanity as no one else. He is the Vergil of hell of the subconscious. No; I don't think we have yet reached the point where we can experience Strindberg — experience; I think that's the word for him, instead of seeing or reading — We can't experience him without feeling our nerves shredded raw and screaming.

COLUMNS: What is the effect of all this emotionality on the actors?

VERSTEEG: Depressing.

COLUMNS: In what way?

VERSTEEG: Oh, I think the actors — I guess I'm speaking for myself mostly — appreciate the greatness of what they have the chance to be part of, but these people are so sick — sick — that after a rehearsal you kind of have to shake

the cobwebs out of your brain. We all know that just as we get ourselves into these states by concentrating, we can get out of them, too. But you have to make an effort. I think it is more tiring to work on this sort of role.

COLUMNS: Does the actor have to give more to this kind of a play?

VERSTEEG: Yes and no, I guess. Again, for myself, it isn't long before I have run out of things to give, and I'm just hoping I can hang on through the rest of the show. It demands so much, that soon you're out. Then you have to count on the skill — genius — of the playwright to bring you through. So in a way you have to leave more of the doing to the playwright. I think only a very great playwright dares make such demands on his actors.

COLUMNS: Why did you decide to play this role yourself?

VERSTEEG: That's what I've been asking myself!

COLUMNS: Was there a particular reason?

VERSTEEG: Of course, we have several students who could play this role very well, and of course several faculty members and community residents who could do it. One very practical reason is that we have such a limited amount of time to do it in — far too little. I can cut down on time problems greatly by doing it myself. The true reason is probably simple that this is the kind of role no actor can resist the chance to take a crack at — it's terrific fun.

COLUMNS: I thought you said it was depressing.

VERSTEEG: It's both. It's depressing to think like a depressed man; it's fun to play a role of such intensity, subtlety, range — you name it.

(Continued on page 4)

Student Art '68

Eligibility — All full time students of Louisburg College — Entrants are not required to be enrolled in art classes — They are required to fill out all forms.

Entries — Work may be submitted in any of the following categories:

Class I — Painting — framed, oil, acrylic.

Class II — Sculpture — wood, plaster, wire, clay, or metal.

Class III — Prints — wood cuts, lithographs, serigraphs, must be matted.

Class IV — Drawings — water colors, tempered, ink, pastel — must be matted.

Awards — For Class I and II \$25, \$15, and \$10. For Class III and IV \$20, \$15, \$10, and \$5.

Work for sale must be noted on the entry card and label.

All entries must be delivered to College Gallery before 6 p.m. Friday, April 19.

For further information see Mrs. Kornegay, art instructor.

Sen. Morgan Speaks Here

Dr. Robert Morgan, candidate for state Attorney-General, spoke here on Tuesday, February 13, at 7:30 p.m. in the auditorium. The speech was jointly sponsored by the ICC and the YDC.

Before the speech, a dinner was held for the Democratic state senator in the B. N. Duke Dining Hall. YDC and ICC members also attended the dinner.

Morgan began his career even before graduating from law school. He was elected Clerk of the Superior Court by the people of Harnett County a month before finishing law school. He assumed office at the age of 25, and was one of the youngest Superior Court Clerks in state history. He has served in the N. C. Senate for five terms, and was elected five times to the General Assembly.

The highlight of Morgan's legislative career came in 1965 when his colleagues in the Senate elected him President Pro Tem.

Senator Morgan is a leader in mental health facilities and programs, jail reform efforts, and education and legislative research pro-



Matt Brown

honorary scholastic fraternity and is serving as President of his sophomore class. He maintains a B average on all his college work.

Matt, as a son of a retired Naval Captain, has traveled extensively and holds a keen interest in sports and lists antique cars as his favorite hobby. He plans to major in mechanical engineering and hopes to enter Johns Hopkins University next year. He spent some time at the institution in Baltimore, Md. during his recent school holidays.

In high school, Matt was fourth in his class, averaging over 95 and gained a scholastic letter in his senior year. He was a member of the French Club and the Science Club and was a class marshall in his 11th year.

The local civic club honors outstanding young men monthly as Junior Rotarians. The program has been in effect for the past several months.



Senator Robert Morgan

grams. He is chairman of the ECU board of trustees and was president of the University alumni association from 1957 until 1959. He is a practicing attorney, a member of several Bar associations, and of Alpha Delta Law Fraternity.

When LC was a female academy, one of the house counselors had to meet the postman at the statue each day, so that the young ladies would not cast lustful eyes on a man.

The old well, as well as an old brick chimney which was all that remained of an old building on campus, were recently destroyed.

At one time, the seven deadly sins, including sloth and gluttony, were listed in the Louisburg College catalog.