

Commentary And Perspective

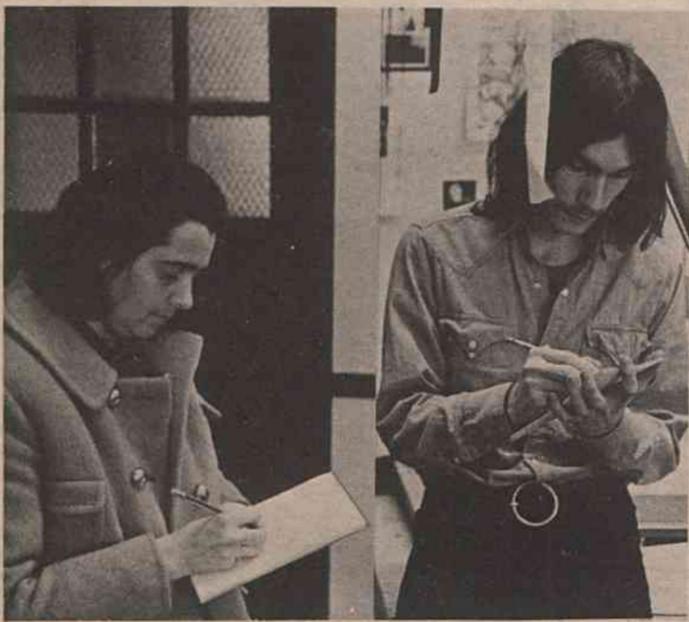


Photo by Beck

by mif

I've spent the good part of the last few weeks wondering what to say in this column. I've played with all kinds of pretentious "last words," struggling for some bit of wisdom to leave you with. Finally, the best thing, the most relevant thing, seems to be to talk about what we've tried to do here, what we've attempted this year with this newspaper.

Working on the Essay this year has been a paradoxical experience. On one hand, the "progress" we've made has been very gratifying. We've experimented with some things and they've worked. On the other hand, we've had a lot of misery over the things that weren't accomplished, the things we just couldn't get, the areas which still direly need improvement. You might say that we've fostered an intense love-hate relationship with this whole operation. (And believe me, there have been times when I've literally had to drag myself into this office to face the task of getting this newspaper out.)

But overall, we've gained a certain amount of satisfaction from all this; not ego-trip satisfaction (I hope), but a good feeling in knowing that the Essay is perhaps a little better, a little

Editorial

Advertising: The Senior Citizen by Cortlandt Jones

In the United States advertising is a media to entice the buying public. This attraction is stereotyped and pointed in one direction, youth. There is another direction to look: the Senior Citizen.

The Senior Citizen of today is a functional human being who should not be discarded as unattractive. Our society regards them as nonproductive citizens, whose energies are not worth attracting.

In television advertising, the Senior Citizen is virtually omitted. The message is, if you are not young, you're not living. This is far from the truth and should not be projected to the public, for the public believes what it sees.

more interesting, and that we have, in some ways, carried on what Tony Senter and other previous editors and staffs began. The only criterion we've had (aside from our own less-than-objective feelings) is that we've seen you reading the stuff we've written and that's the highest compliment.

So, in a sense, that's our only real measure of "success" (a really poor word to use). The fact that you've cared about us has made all the other nonsense (and there's been plenty of that) bearable. It's given us a reason to keep on caring.

We tried to do some new things. Sometimes it worked, other times, it fell flat. Hopefully, next year further improvement will be made and, sooner or later, you'll have a first-rate newspaper here. The best feeling we could have is to know that we contributed in that process of growth in some fashion. One thing is for sure: in spite of all the hassles we've encountered, we'll miss it.

Really, I guess the only meaningful thing to say now is Thank You, because without you, none of this would have been worthwhile.

That's all I have to say.
Peace, brothers & sisters.

According to advertisements young people buy tooth paste, mouth wash, clothes and save money. Older people buy laxatives, denture cleansers, aspirins and settle on reservations (strictly for them).

Why do advertisers produce these images?

Granted, there is a profitable market in youth but there is also an equally profitable market on the other side that could be attracted if the same advertising energies were geared for them. The Senior Citizen can spend money just as well as youth.

Since images are sold to sell the product, so are ideas formed. Just think, if you are brain washed into feeling old, you tend to believe it.

N.C. Essay Staff, 1971:

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Marijuana Smoking May Be Dangerous To Your Health

Two Philadelphia psychiatrists recently released the results of an "extensive" study pertaining to the use and effects of marijuana and have concluded (on the basis of tests made involving 38 persons, ages 13 to 24, who habitually smoked marijuana at least twice a week) that used could, and apparently did in these instances, lead to "serious psychological effects, sometimes complicated by neurologic signs and symptoms." None of the patients involved had a history of psychological disorders prior to smoking marijuana, the report further stated.

The psychiatrists, Dr. Harold Kolansky and Dr. William T. Moore, said that between 1965 and 1970 they began to notice a "sizeable increase" in referrals to individuals who, when a medical history was taken, showed "an onset of psychiatric problems shortly after the beginnings of marijuana smoking."

EGO DECOMPENSATION

"It is our impression that our study demonstrates the possibility that moderate-to-heavy use of marijuana in adolescents and young people, without predisposition to psychotic illness, may lead to ego decompensation ranging from mild ego disturbance to

psychosis," the psychiatrists stated.

The patients consistently showed symptoms including poor social judgement, poor attention span, poor concentration, confusion, anxiety, depression, apathy, passivity and, often, slowed and slurred speech, according to the doctors.

ALTERATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Many also exhibited an alternation of consciousness that included a split between observing and experiencing portion of the ego, inability to bring thoughts together, paranoid suspiciousness, and regression to a more infantile state. In a few patients, hyperactivity, aggression and agitation were common. The symptoms were present even when the patients weren't "high" on the drug, the doctors said.

A few patients who smoked marijuana four or five weekly for many months showed indications of neurologic impairment, such as slurred speech, staggering gait, hand tremors, thought disorders and disturbed depth perceptions, according to the psychiatrists.

In these cases, the doctors hypothesized that marijuana use caused "such severe decompensation of ego that it became necessary . . . to develop a

delusional system in an attempt to restore a new form of reality."

INTERNAL CONFLICTS

Because an adolescent normally experiences intense psychological and physiological changes, the psychiatrists warned that habitual use of marijuana during adolescence "will likely deprive him of the ability to adequately resolve his internal conflicts."

In the group studied, marijuana use seemingly accentuated the "very aspects of disturbance bodily development and psychological conflicts which the adolescent had been struggling to master," the doctors concluded.

The two psychiatrists, affiliated with the Child Analysis Division of the Philadelphia Association for Psychoanalysis, cited earlier estimates that between 12 million and 20 million adolescents and young people are using, or have tried smoking marijuana.

Postscript: Needless to say, the entire report is too lengthy to print in its entirety. We do, however have a copy, and anyone interested in reading it is welcome to do so. Also, since the issuing of this report, there have been several subsequent reports and statements, made mostly by doctors, refuting its contents and validity.

REVIEW

"The Just Assassins"

by Tony Angevine

Notice: This review does not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editor or staff of the N.C. Essay.

There have been some excellent senior project productions at the School of the Arts, beside which "The Just Assassins" withers in comparison. Camus would have wept to see his brilliant subtle work so mangled and mocked.

For professional-rated actors who have spent three and more years studying the craft, the cast should know that acting is a great deal more than reciting lines and throwing out grandiose gestures. For the most part, the actors ignored each other and the production as a whole looked no better than a sloppy rehearsal.

Kurt Yaghjian as Stepan, the Hot headed and brutally sincere revolutionary, knew and portrayed his character well, but because he, as actor and character, received no response from the other characters, his most explosive lines fell flat. Stepan, a man who scoffed at the sparing of children for the sake of tyranny's deposition, would more likely bomb the revolutionary coup out of existence and carry on the terrorism with only his vengeance as comrade. But because he backed down so easily, his sincerity was open to question and his desperate impatience seemed no more than petty heckling.

Steve Bordner's Alexis was smooth and consistent; his few lines were handled with admirable professionalism. The gentleness and sensitivity of his character were strongly evident through the toughness of dedication. His scene with leader Anna, in which he confides to her that he is not meant to be a terrorist, was particularly touching.

The part of Boria Annenkov, played by Christine Rosania, was originally written as a man's part, but having a woman play it opened fascinating possibilities. Had Miss Rosania used her

physical appearance, her strong voice and her very dominant personality to strengthen her role, she would have had an impressive and memorable characterization. Instead, she seemed to be laughing at herself for even being on stage, laughing at the other actors for taking it so seriously. One wonders about this Anna's being chosen leader; the revolutionaries must have been merely playing at their game to entrust their lives and souls to such an ineffectual leader. Annenkov's humanity and near-maternal understanding presented themselves as weakness and indecision.

And Joyce Rheeling's portrayal of Dora was quite embarrassing. The role is an ingenue's dream - passionate, sincere, the proud maiden sacrificing her love to the cause. But Miss Rheeling got so wound up in her overly dramatic performance that she failed to notice that the other actors were not responding sufficiently. Or perhaps she overacted to compensate and, trying to carry the weight of the entire performance on her own shoulders, stumbled absurdly under the weight. Her self-abuse, flinging herself into walls and such, was agonizing.

Dora and Yanek - silent lovers whose love seemed rather to pop out suddenly at the threat of parting. Their physical love for each other was transformed into love for and dedication to the cause. Their conversations showed that they cared only for the glory of dying violent deaths as revolutionaries. Their lines were courageous and necessarily idealistic, but they were presented in idiotic raptures of innocent romanticism. They seemed totally oblivious to the danger of their lifestyle except as enticement, oblivious to the ghastly importance of their work except in its potential to make them heroes and-or martyrs. They shared their anticipation as the only permissible mutual excitement. And later, Dora's reaction to the too explicit details

of Yanek's execution was a raging perverted arousal -- leading her in a struggling climax to the need to throw a bomb and be hanged herself to share with Yanek the apocalyptic orgasm of death that she had missed out on in bed.

Yanek's character, played by Ron Dortch, was painfully out of place. His dealings with the Chief of Police, especially, seemed unmotivated and directionless. Dick Macwell as Police Chief Skuratov created a character too syrupy to ever be cunning, more like a consoling minister than a cajoling, bribing political enemy. He made Yanek's loudly verbal indignation seem unwarranted and foolish. Both Mr. Dortch and Miss Rheeling should know that even a dynamic characterization is no good if it doesn't work within the context of the other actors' interpretations. This combining of interpretations is the director's job: Mr. Hotton must have slept during the rehearsals, for his presence, his guidance was nowhere evident in the production.

In spite of all, Jim Stubbs did a beautiful job as Foka, Yanek's fellow prisoner, "brother", and executioner.. the irony of his disclosure suitably crushing. Berlinda Tolbert as the Grand Duchess was believably bereaved and slightly crazed, though her very soft delivery was hard to catch at times.

Sets, costumes, props..perfect.

Conclusion: The failure of this show as a polished production was not necessarily the fault of the students involved. Many outside factors .. end of the year laxity, impending court appearances for certain actors, lack of overall direction .. made it a burden and a bore. But in light of the students' past achievements, they deserve a slight reprimand and a second chance with hopes that their future careers blush no lower point than "The Just Assassins."

tony angevine
19 May 1971