

Wesleyan Presents Intimate Theatre

Last Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights Miss Ann Bland, Miss Sheila Glover, and Mr. Bob Bronaugh, students of Wesleyan College Theatre, presented in the experimental theater the final products of many hours of directing efforts in a set entitled "Three Contemporary Comedies." In doing so, they gave Wesleyan three of the most enjoyable evenings of entertainment of the year.

Miss Bland's direction of the anonymous "A Morning After the Fig Tree Bloomed" tackled the very rough problem of an extremely abstract script, one which was perhaps a little ambitious, needing an acutely mature and completely ambient approach from curtain to curtain. The set was striking, as were all of the others, effectively contrasting a stark, almost completely black-and-white stage against the vividness of the coverings on the actors, glare of the opening alarm clock case, and the muted tones of the furniture. Add to this careful lighting and piped-in music, and an attentive audience was assured from the onset of action.

Barbara Koehnlein (She) opened rather stiffly, and seemed to be ready to snap into full character at any moment. Unfortunately, she only rarely made it through this snap and she had trouble carrying the full character beyond a few beats at a time. Both she and Jim Van Laan (He) seemed hampered by the disjunct lines, although when the timing did synchronize, they provided a stimulating effect. Jim Van Laan also seemed to hold back until the very end, when he opened completely and struck the audience, perhaps a little strongly, with the punctuated "WAIT!!!" This closing, how-

ever, strengthened the play considerably.

John Crumpler (Messenger), while having a minor speaking role, most definitely carried a major acting role, coming across with a reserved strength which was quite unexpected, but very powerful. Each of his words were filled with meaning, and he made very good use of his body with practically no waste of movement.

Kenneth Cameron's "The Hundred and First" was at its satirical best under Bob Bronaugh's direction. The blocking, both director's and actors', was well worked out and appropriate. Sam Morris (Francis Stockstill) came across immediately in his association with the audience and held up this contact rather well throughout the play. Judy Johnson (Ethel Stockstill) and Nancy Phillips (Miss Icenogle) should both be congratulated for their harshly contrasting portrayals. Two more radical and dissimilar characters could hardly be imagined, especially on the same stage. Both parts were interpreted with taste and conviction.

Undoubtedly, the unsung heroes, as usual in any show, were the supporting players, especially Barbara Epps (Grandma Stockstill), Ed Hardy (Thomas Stockstill, the son), and Ronnie Dean (The Blind Man). Barbara Epps, who was all technique and "love" in the feeble Grandma, was a constant source of amusement. Ed Hardy's legs were so convincingly paralyzed that it drew attention easily, enabling him to then show the real character of a broken boy. Ronnie Dean turned in a surprise as the blind man, creating with seeming

ease a tremendous audience appeal with the pleas for "right" and his "living."

As usual, Dave Siple (Judge Lacrima) was superb in his character, using just the right touch of real dash with fantasy in creating a delightfully ridiculous and inebriated judge.

Sean Moran turned in yet another type of characterization, one which, while not as strong as his previous almost brilliant examples, for the most part held up and carried throughout his onstage involvement.

Edward Albee once again was able to slap an audience and make them enjoy it in his "The Sandbox" but only through the workings of Sheila Glover, whose directions for stage placement, blocking, and movement were almost spartan and, as such, enabled the actors to so easily put across the meanings in their lines.

Robert Thomspson (Young Man) and John Hornaday (Musician) both became integral parts of the set between the moments when attention was focused on them. Their presence was constantly felt, yet they never distracted from the main movement.

The honors for the night must be given to Maria Gargano as Grandma in "The Sandbox." Although often seen in Wesleyan Theatre productions, Miss Gargano had never given a hint as to her true potentials. She ruled the entire play from her first screech to the moment she calmly laid back her head and accepted her fate.

All taken, the plays rendered a supremely enjoyable evening offering welcomed laughter, sought-after relaxation, and needed thoughts for pondering.
Roland Shaw

Convocations Airs

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the interest in population control, Miss Cantrell went on to say. With the military interest in Southeast Asia in the 60's, it was impossible to ignore another realm of interest that of an immense population problem. It thus became feasible for the United States to start thinking about population control within its own country, most particularly in disadvantaged homes, who could not afford, and yet were immassed in, large families.

Those two problems were dealt with, said Miss Cantrell through the use of demonstration projects. In both the field of mental retardation, and large families, demonstrations have been set up to show people how to deal with them. Such a project is Family Planning Project 721.

Speaking directly of the local picture, Miss Cantrell then elaborated on the problem of the Nash-Edgecombe, Rocky Mount situation. The Family Planning

Project 721 handles a case load of 5000 to 7000 disadvantaged women.

The goals of the Family Planning Project 721 then, are: "to assist families in maintaining and attaining", "to assist families in spacing their children", and "to decrease infant mortality, mental retardation, and children born out of wedlock". Thus a "team approach" is needed, and used, with a doctor, social worker, lab technicians, nurses, and family-planning aides, who work directly with the people.

Miss Cantrell ended with the Bill of Rights for Infants: "the right to be wanted, the right to be born whole and well, and the right to have continued care."

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