

Daughter-in-Law expresses classic Lawrence theme

By ROSEMARIE HOPPS

D.H. Lawrence's "The Daughter-in-Law" is expressive of themes prevalent in his writing. "The Daughter-in-Law" concerns a small mining community in Northern England, surroundings familiar to Lawrence from his boyhood. The struggle in this play is between a dominating mother and her haughty daughter-in-law. The two women are fighting for control over the son. The theme of their mother controlling the son, making him fearful of other women, is one which appears often in Lawrence (as in, for example, "Love Among the Haystacks" or "Sons and Lovers").

Joan Orenstein, the mother is a powerful woman, commanding in voice and appearance. Her confidences and her expressions of fear to Nuala FitzGerald, as the daughter-in-law toward the conclusion of the play do not detract from the powerful aura she created from the start.

Nuala FitzGerald played Minnie, the proud, haughty daughter-in-

law. She was excellent both in showing arrogant reserve and fiery tumult. Her role weakened as the play concluded. As she lost her arrogance, she lost a great deal of her convincingness. Perhaps that is as it should be. As her husband left the control of his mother, and became dominant over her, so she weakened.

Dan MacDonald as Luther, Minnie's husband, did a fine job of portraying the acquiescent 31 year old with a tendency to walk out of sticky situations. Minnie claims he has "no go in him" and Dan MacDonald's portrayal convinces the beholder that she is right. It is perhaps typical of the man that when we feel he and his brother have been shot and wounded, it transpires that the brother, Joe, has gone home to his mother and Luther has been hit by a stone, not a bullet. It is ironic



Right to Left, Joan Orenstein - Mrs. Gascoigne, Dan MacDonald - Luther Gascoigne, Nuala FitzGerald - Minnie Gascoigne. The two women are fighting for control of Luther.

that the conclusion of the play suggests that Luther is going to assume control over his affairs and his wife, yet the final tableau shows Luther being supported in motherly fashion by Minnie, his wife.

The younger brother, Joe, played by John Peters, was a cheerful, cheeky fellow, who nonetheless seemed to have most

of the organizational ability vested in him. Joe was the first to admit his mother's control, exclaiming that he was only "a husk of a man." John Peters is excellent in this role, adding to it verve and vitality.

The old lady next door, Mrs. Purdy, whose daughter Bertha is pregnant by Luther, was given a lively interpretation by Doris Petrie. She is exactly the sort of "I wouldn't ask nothing for meself, it's only 'cos me daughter needs it" woman that we all know and love to catch in her finangling. She is in many respects a humorous character, who is, however, determined to fight for what she can.

Doris Petrie never allowed the role to become entirely grasping or entirely laughable. She maintained a steady balance of the two aspects of Mrs. Purdy.

Set for "The Daughter-in-Law" showed the respective kitchens of the mother (Mrs. Gascoigne) and of Minnie. The sides were cut away to show the drab rows of tenements prevalent in English mining towns. It is to the actors' credit that after leaving the kitchen sets, they retained their characterization while walking off-stage via the "street" bounded

by terrace-housing.

The characters were costumed in everyday clothes of the period (1912). Costumes were unpretentious and authentic.

Lighting, especially for the end of scenes, was a little delayed. This seemed to make the audience unsure of the time to begin applauding. Otherwise, light effect were competently handled.

One problem experienced by most was comprehension. The actors, except Ms. FitzGerald spoke in fairly broad Northern English dialects. But if individual words were lost, the sense of the dialogue was immediately apparent. Another weakness of this production was that both Ms. Orenstein and Ms. FitzGerald appeared to falter over some of their lines, specifically in Act III. Their recovery, however, was excellent which attests to both women's acting ability.

"The Daughter-in-Law" directed by Ted Follows, is playing through Saturday at the Playhouse. It provides an excellent opportunity to see the dramatic work of a man normally acclaimed as a prose writer. TNB has teamed a fine piece of drama with a perceptive director, imaginative designers and an interesting cast to create a work well worth viewing.



Nuala Fitzgerald and Dan MacDonald. In this scene, Minnie declared Luther is not really a man and threatens to leave him.

G&S Evening planned

"A Carabret Evening with Gilbert and Sullivan", written by UNB's Dr. Ed Mullaly, will be performed by 12 soloists from the Gilbert and Sullivan Society of Fredericton. On November 11, 12, and 13 at 8 p.m. Memorial Hall on the UNB Campus will be transformed into a Victorian cabaret for the performance. The production features popular songs from the various Gilbert and Sullivan operas, interspersed with dialogue about the two Victorian collaborators' careers. Tickets are available from society members, Mazzuca's, or by calling 4541799. On campus see Dr. Mullaly, English Dept., or Terry Horner, Aitken House.

Anyone interested in musical drama (i.e. comic opera) is welcome to come to the rehearsals for *Patience*, a Gilbert and Sullivan opera that spoofs the Oscar Wilde set. Full production will be done at the Playhouse next March 17, 18, 19. It helps if you can read music although lots of our chorus members can't. Rehearsals are Wed. nights at George St. Junior High in the cafeteria at 8 p.m. until the first week in December. The Gilbert and Sullivan Society resumes with stage rehearsals in Mem. Hall in January. Come and join us. For more information see Dr. Ed Mullaly in the English Dept. or David-Michael Greenwood, Harrison House or Terry Horner, Aitken House.

NB writer to give reading

New Brunswick writer David Adams Richards will give a public reading at UNB's Memorial Hall in Fredericton Friday, October 22, at 8 p.m.

Mr. Richards is the author of two novels, *The Coming of Winter*, 1974 and *Blood Ties*, 1976. Published by Oberon, the novels take for their setting New Brunswick's Miramichi.

He has also published a collection of poetry, *Small Heroics*, Chapbooks, 1973, and will soon have published a collection of short stories.

He has been the recipient of two grants from the Canada Council and three grants from the Ontario Arts Council. In 1973 he was awarded the Norma Epstein Award for Creative Literature.

American Graffiti portrays era

One of the most popular films of 1973 and a genuine contribution to cinematic arts. The misadventure of four California teenagers on one later summer night in 1962 became the focal point for an audience trip back to the last "innocent" year of the 50's and early 60's - the year before the hopelessness of political assassinations, the drug scene, Vietnam and Watergate.

Young director George Lucas paints a tender, funny, spirited portrait of the end of an era in a single night.

Graffiti is also a testimonial to ingenious move-making through its successful blending of superb acting, cinematography, editing and skillful integration of vintage rock 'n roll.

Starring: Richard Dreyfuss,

Ronny Howard, Cindy Williams, Paul LeMat, Charlie Martin Smith, Candy Clark, MacKenzie Phillips and Wolfman Jack.

It will be shown on Tuesday, October 26 with showings at 7:00 and 9:00 in Tilley 102. Admission is \$1.00 for UNB students and \$2.00 for all others.

Give a hoot!

