

Pungent precocity

by Michelangelo Antonioni

Les Niais du Garneau
Written and Directed by
Lina Wertmuller
(Capitol Square).

There is a peculiar pungency about Lina Wertmuller's films, a roller-coaster careening from heights of great subtlety to jackhammer blows on the head. In this, her first film in French (trans: "The Simpletons of Garneau"), Wertmuller again regales us with the parade of absurdities and ironies which are the essence of life.

As in her previous classics (Love and Anarchy; Seven Beauties), the theme is simple: a year in the life of a Students' Union president at a dull, pedestrian barely-known university. Ah, but with what spirit she weaves the pastiche! There is all the Brobdignagian bragadoccio of a quadruplegic King Kong in her thrusting portrayal of the hero (improbably named Len Zoeteman).

In the title role of Zoeteman, Giancarlo Giannini has excelled himself. His is a performance of fulminating power, those oh-so ephemeral eyes darting to and fro with the joyous madness of a crazed pinball bouncing between frenzied bumpers. Yet Giannini can also be an actor of consummate depth. The haunting agony of his visage as he ponders the cancellation of a popular social event (curiously appellation *Bar None*) creates a moment not to be forgotten in cinematic history; particularly when combined with the grim spectre of a thousand chanting proletarians ("Aggies") attempting to influence his decision. This scene especially is a descent into Kafkaesque maelstrom, with horses here, cows there, and vast kegs of "draught beer" swirling around the chaos.

Also poignant is the Renaissance beauty of Dominique Sanda, who archly portrays a vice-president forced to sacrifice a powerful political career to care for her lunatic brother.

The whole bizarre beauty of "university life" portrayed through a slightly askew lens makes *Les Niais du Garneau* the unquestioned cinematic triumph of the season.

Gogol misses

by Christopher Marlowe

The Legislator Nogooks Incident
Rice Theatre until April 21

Few things in recent Canadian history have left as bitter a taste as the maltreatment of white people by intolerant, unthinking immigrants who are unwilling to tolerate and accept white Canadian culture and insist on maintaining ethnic purity.

The public outcry against this injustice, however, has not been forthcoming: it is a sad but true fact of Canadian life that the public has been all too willing to accept the outlandish behavior of the immigrants, and so far unwilling to press any decent, good, white values on them.

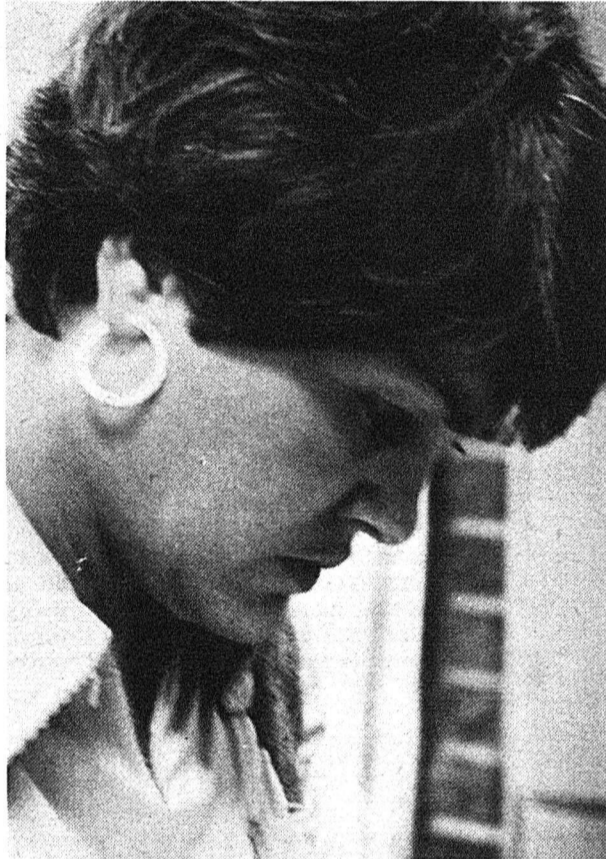
The problems faced by the courageous intellectual elite trying to do so — Alberta legislators — is poignantly etched in novice playwright E.P. Slougheed's gripping work *The Legislator Nogooks Incident*, now playing at the Rice Theatre of the Citadel complex.

Slougheed shows many of the weaknesses of the beginning playwright: there is a tendency to be ultra-sensitive to criticism, the long-term consequences of some actions aren't plotted out, but all the inherent weaknesses of the play are overcome by the masterful, driving performance of A.E. Gogol as himself. He is not a racist, Gogol explains, he merely wants to ensure that white Canadian culture as we know it is not overwhelmed by immigrants, and that goes for French Canadians too, he stresses in one of the most searing segments of a theatrical roller coaster.

"Nous sommes d'accord qu'il faut aimer les chinks et les chinois, mais nous esperons preserver nos traditions historiques et culturels," he says in this bilingual play funded by a 1.5 million dollar Canada Council grant which enabled the cast (who refer to themselves collectively as the Alberta Cabinet) to rehearse for six weeks at the height of the ski season in Gstaad, Switzerland.

This is the reasoning Gogol puts behind charging foreign students and immigrants exorbitant fees to study in Alberta universities, but his struggle appears to be for nought, as well-organized bands of radical communists and saccharin-users who boycott coffee oppose Gogol's valiant attempts to maintain cultural unity for whites. This leads to scenes of particular emotion, for example when Gogol, meeting with his opponents, makes a plucky, but unsuccessful plea of "Ein Volk, Ein Reich, Ein Führer."

How the struggle resolves itself in the end — and the questions it raises for Canadian society as a whole — make the play unforgettable.



U of A playwright, Sharon Pollock, who did not write *The Legislator Nogooks Incident*.



Answers page five...

BIBLICAL QUIZ

All answers are based upon the Revised Standard Version of the King James Bible.

SAMPLE QUESTION: Why was Reuben's birthright given to Joseph? ANSWER: Because Reuben "polluted his father's couch." (1 Chronicles, 5:1)

Now that you know the kind of book you're grappling with, continue.

1. Reuben's sons were: Hanoch, Pallu, Carmi —? (1) Alkibiades (2) Hezron (3) Samson (4) Tiresias (5) Li'l Reuben
2. Who is the only person described in the Bible as "Good-looking"? (1) Christ (2) David (3) Salome (4) Joseph of the many-coloured coat (5) Bathsheba (6) Lot's daughters, after two years of abstinence.
3. According to Proverbs (20:01) "Wine is a mocker, strong drink a —" (1) laugh riot (2) stultifier (3) brawler (4) thief of love's urgings (5) stout fellow
4. How many times does the Bible refer to "sixty-nine"? (1) never (2) thirty-one (3) 112 (4) two (5) I lost track in the "Song of Songs."
5. "In course of time the wife of Judah, Shua's daughter, died ..." and Judah went to his sheepshearers to find a new wife. With whom did he go? (1) His brother Micah (2) The King of Ai (3) Azreal, his neighbour (4) Hirah the Adullamite (5) by himself (6) Black Bart
6. What dealings did Joseph (of the many-coloured coat) have with the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt? (1) strictly platonic (2) cast lots for the king's daughter (3) helped them bake a blackbird pie (4) interpreted their dreams (5) refused them to appear in his presence.
7. When Reuben saw that Joseph (of the many-coloured coat)

was no longer in the pit what did he first do? (1) gnashed his teeth (2) rent his clothes (3) cried "Alas that ever I was born!" (4) mused: "Hmmm! Dat one big empty pit!" (5) sent a messenger straightaway to the King of Egypt.

8. Name the Twelve Apostles. We'll start you out: Matthew, Andrew, James and John, Judas, Simon (called Peter), Thomas, Philip ... ? Pick four from the following: (1) another James (2) Parsifal (3) Another Judas (4) Thaddeus (5) Wally (6) Portleigh (7) Thomas Aquinas (8) Ivan the Tolerable (9) Canan of Simony (10) Simon the Cananaean (11) Elton (12) Just Plain Bill (13) Bartholomew (14) Beatitude (15) Tull

9. Since the chief priests could not put Judas' thirty pieces of silver (which he returned) into their treasury since it was blood money, what did they do with it? (1) Bought the First Dari-Delite in Jerusalem (2) commissioned Leon Uris to write Exodus (3) bought an empty field which became known as the Field of Blood (4) gave it to Pontius Pilate (5) founded the St. Jude Society (6) put it all on Son-o-God at Sinai Downs.

10. How many times does the Bible refer to the Edmonton Journal? (1) never! (2) three times, in Testicles (3) countless times, if "void" and "darkness" are interpreted as code words (4) is this dreary put-on nearly over? (5) six in the description of Southam and Gomorrah.

11. How many times does the Bible refer to the Gateway? (1) never (2) once, in Revelations (3) four times, but only in the Apocrypha (4) five times, in the Book of Media (5) eleven times, mostly in Ezekiel, chapter 40.

12. Depending on your answers to the last two questions, which newspaper is more central to the Judaeo-Christian heritage? Discuss. Send answers to: Dean Baldwin, Arts Faculty.