

Gene Drops Out

THE MAN WHO couldn't decide whether or not he wanted to be President, but knew that he didn't want Lyndon Johnson in the position, has confused the American public once more.

Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy has abandoned his seat on the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee and casually announced that the chair will soon be scratched by hawk's claws. The enigmatic and dovish Minnesotan has yielded his prestigious post to Sen. Gale McGee of Wyoming, long regarded as a hawk on the Vietnam war issue.

THUS McCARTHY, the nation's leading dissident on the Vietnam issue, adds another chapter to his already impressive credentials as the Senate's most puzzling personality. Only a few days before, McCarthy had stunned his democratic colleagues by voting for Russell Long and against Ted Kennedy in the race for majority whip.

That move was shrugged off by some as a natural for McCarthy, who also serves on Long's finance committee and has been somewhat less than liberal on issues not related to the war. What is more, McCarthy never has been fond of the Kennedy family, a fact he scarcely attempts to conceal.

But McCarthy's surrender on the Foreign Relations Committee was a shocker to everyone, including McGee, who said he was "flabbergasted." McCarthy mumbled something about wanting to reduce the size of the committee, but few took the explanation seriously. Just how, most wondered, could calm, peaceful Clean Gene yield his important position to the man who backed the Johnson war effort and praised the Chicago police for their performance during the Democratic Convention?

IT IS NOT an easy question to answer, for the issue is hidden in the Minnesota poet from so many of his colleagues. We do not agree with the majority of Democratic senators who called the move a "cop-out." Rather, it appears that McCarthy has decided to "drop-out" with all the hippie connotations that the term holds.

He is a confused and frustrated man, more a philosopher than a statesman, more inclined to soul searching than speech making. The problem with McCarthy's seemingly spiritualistic nature is that he has trouble communicating it. Anyone who listened to his boring essays on the history of the Vietnam conflict can understand this.

THIS IS NOT to say, as some have, that Eugene McCarthy is not sincere. We can think of no one that has remained truer to his ideals. It is just that the rest of us seem unaffected or unsure of what those ideals are, and McCarthy has grown tired of it all.

He could not convince the nation that the Vietnam War was a growing cancer eating away at America, and apparently has decided to abandon the task. He will not attempt to build the machinery which could prevent future Vietnams, a project which could come from the Foreign Relations Committee.

McCarthy probably will not seek re-election in 1970. He would then fade from the American political scene, and our analysis of him would be just as hazy as it is now.

We hope McCarthy does not decide to truly "drop-out" of American politics. His unique presence on the national scene has been a strange but stimulating one. Only time will tell us the effects of his 1968 presidential effort.

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The Daily Collegian

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BERRY'S WORLD



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"The trouble with people today is—nobody wants to work!"

Letters to the Editor

Communication Needed

TO THE EDITOR: It seems to me that President Walker must think more of the Centre Daily Times than The Daily Collegian. Evidence the fact that he chose the CDT to be his forum for commenting on the year end state of the University. Aren't you insulted? Even more than that, it is an insult to the student body in that he chose to speak more directly to the town's people than to them.

I have written several letters to you asking that a weekly column be set up in the Collegian in which President Walker would answer the questions sent in by students and faculty. You must admit we need more communication, and we have the right to get answers from the Administration on matters that directly affect us.

I am sure that, if you asked students and members of the faculty, you would find that they would be in favor of such a column.

Charles L. Andres
11th - Science

(EDITOR'S NOTE: At reader Andrew's request, The Daily Collegian has consulted the Administration about the possibility of establishing a question-answer column with University President Eric A. Walker answering student questions. An Administration spokesman discouraged the Collegian from pursuing the idea, saying he doubted that such a column could be a "viable communications medium.")

Letter Policy

The Daily Collegian welcomes comments on news coverage, editorial policy and campus or non-campus affairs. Letters must be typewritten, double-spaced, signed by no more than two persons and no longer than 30 lines.

opening night

'Hair' Is Total Theatre; Musical Says It All

(EDITOR'S NOTE: During term break, Collegian Drama Critic Alan Slutskin made a tour of Broadway that all theatre lovers must envy. He saw "Hair," "Your Own Thing," and "The Boys In the Band." The following is his account of the widely acclaimed musical, "Hair.")

By ALAN SLUTSKIN
Collegian Drama Critic

New York's Broadway theatre, like most other old institutions, is steeped in tradition.

The most ostentatious of these inner circle intrigues seems to be the plastering of excerpts from a hit show's favorable reviews all over the outside, underside and backside of the theatre's marquis, and on just about every other square inch of white space in sight, out of sight and around corners.

The marquis in front of the Biltmore Theatre, in bold print, announces the presentation of "Hair," subtitled, "The American Tribal Love-Rock Musical." This proclamation, standing alone, is the most accurate, sufficient and outspoken announcement to grace Broadway to date. However, the matter is cheapened by the extension of, yes, "tradition." One excerpt from the drama critic of the London Times quotes, "The best musical I've seen on either side of the Atlantic." Impressive, but completely superfluous.

Worst of all is the reprint in the next largest lettering. The Biltmore's management possessed the stupidity to post this quote, "The hairiest, swingiest, rockiest musical since The Sound of Music."

The last thing the producers of "Hair" should desire to attract is the conventional, "isn't she darling," family type audience that could get into something as "sweet" as "The Sound of Music." "Hair" isn't any of these things, and most important, it's not steeped in Broadway tradition.

"Hair" says it all. It expresses pointedly and magnificently each and every idea, emotion, intellectual conflict, instinct and desire that all of the young people in our society are experiencing every minute of their lives.

"Hair" has been called the first musical with "no book." This in itself is a major contradiction. True, it isn't the stereotype show that tells a story through dialogue and intermittently bursts into song, but each of the 28 numbers could easily be adopted as the storyline of a successful show in itself.

The lyrics, written by Gerome Ragni and James Rudo, who fall right into place with the show's line—"Just cause I look different I'm subversive!"—take a shot at just about everything wrong with today's world.

The most significant element of "Hair," though, is that it does not fall into the tempting rut of becoming an abusive, bitter satire. The show happens, lives and says things—sometimes subtly and sometimes violently, but it says a great deal.

"Aquarius" blatantly pleads for harmony. "Colored Spade" involves a Negro, who in one song runs through an ethnic experience of 300 years, and "Hashish" pleads for the plant verses alcohol. "Manchester England" is Claude's choice of a home instead of "slummy, mucky, polluted Flushing." In "Don't Put It Down" the flag is folded and the colors are put to bed—red, white, and blue, and the yellow fringe. "Able Baby" is a birthday song sung by a black girl.

At the culmination the chorus says, "bang, bang," and the girl's answer is, "Bang! shut I'm not dyin' for no white man!" There is more, much more. "Three-Five-Zero-Zero" talks about "that dirty little war," "Hair" sarcastically describes long locks as "a hive for bees and a nest for fleas." "Black Boys" is dedicated to George Wallace. "Air" welcomes carbon monoxide and "Initials" puts LBJ on the IRT to somewhere in the USA where he finds the youth of America on LSD.

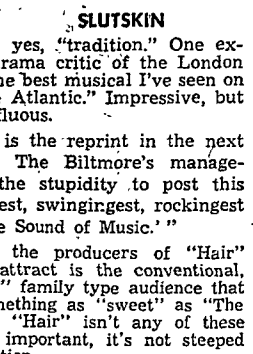
Probably the best dialogue in "Hair" comes in the beginning of Act II when Berger turns to Claude and mimics the middle-aged, anti-thinking individuals who walk out on this production (I saw at least 30 of these "adults" do so at one performance) and says, "O.K. Theima, we saw the nude scene, can't we go home now?" The nude scene accompanies the song "I Got Life," which portrays human physiology as something to revel in and be proud of, not ashamed of.

The cast of "Hair" is probably the greatest living example of the dramatic concept of the body as an instrument. In every song, the vocal chords play only one part in the delivery. The entire tribe displays such superlative physical command of every muscle that it becomes more and more difficult to stay in your seat. As difficult as it may be to imagine, you don't watch "Hair;" you join an experience.

In many ways all of the currently used descriptive theatre terms can be applied to "Hair." It is "total theatre," "living theatre," "theatre of commitment," "theatre of involvement," "theatre of the absurd," and even "theatre of cruelty." It involves every element of the stage—dialogue, song, choreography, tragedy, comedy, a light show and sound.

The cast members come out into the audience (orchestra and mezzanine), and they draw the audience onto the stage. Things happen. Some make sense through lyrics, others through rhythm, others symbolically, and others only because they make no sense at all.

But most significant is that "Hair" doesn't end after each performance. It goes on when you leave the Biltmore only magnified a thousand times; because you go out into life, and that is what "Hair" is—life.



SLUTSKIN

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