Winter 2003

Direction of the Play: Harvey

Don Hendrixson
Central Washington University

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Recommended Citation
Harvey: A Pre-production Analysis; Part One

Don Hendrixson

Professor Robinson

Theatre 700

24 February 2003
# Table of Contents

I. Preliminary Information

- Committee Option Approval Form .............................................. i
- Permission of Hiring and Space Authority .................................... ii
- Other Forms .................................................................................. iii
- Tentative Production Schedule ................................................. xi
- Groundplan and Set Design ...................................................... xx
- Script ............................................................................................ xiv
- Performance Schedule and Location .......................................... 1
- Parameters of Production Organization and Performance Space .... 1
- Evaluation of Play as Production Vehicle ................................... 4
- Evaluation of Play as Production Vehicle for Masque and Gavel Society ......... 8
- Director's Concept Statement .................................................... 11

II. PRE-PRODUCTION ANALYSIS .................................................. 16

- Given Circumstances ................................................................. 16
- Previous Action By Time and Character .................................... 24
- Dialogue Analysis ....................................................................... 31
- Dramatic Action .......................................................................... 37
- Character Analysis ..................................................................... 88
- Play's Ideas ............................................................................... 121
- Previous Reviews Summary ...................................................... 129
- Playwright Research and Other Works ..................................... 134
- Learning Objectives .................................................................. 140
III. BIBLIOGRAPHY .......................................................... 142

IV. APPENDIX ................................................................. 143
    Production Journal ...................................................... 143
    Final Self Evaluation .................................................... 170
    Costume Ideas ............................................................. 181
    Preliminary Research ................................................... 196
    Flyer, Program, and Photos ........................................... 229
(Submit in Quadruplicate) 

GRADUATE COMMITTEE
AND OPTION APPROVAL FORM
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Note: This form is to be completed as soon as the student has formed a committee and selected an option from the list below. The form should be submitted in quadruplicate to the Office of Graduate Studies in Barge 305.

Name: Don Edward Hendrixson 
Address: 

Student ID #: 
Date: 7/10/02

Check option: 
- Written Exam* 
- NonThesis Project 
- Creative Project 
- Studio Project 
- Portfolio Review 
- Thesis 

Indicate credits to be received for the thesis or option:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>TH 700</td>
<td>Master's Thesis</td>
<td>6</td>
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</table>

*Students taking written exam option may omit items 1-5 below.

1. Proposed Title:

   Direction of the play “Harvey.”

2. Purpose of Study:

   The direction of the play “Harvey” is my culminating experience in theatre graduate studies.

3. Scope of Study:

   Documentation includes preproduction research, postproduction evaluation, and actual direction of “Harvey.” This study shall benefit the cast, crew, and the Moses Lake High School Drama Department.

4. Procedure to be used:

   The three phases of study are 1) Preproduction research and thesis documentation, MLA Style; 2) Casting, rehearsal and direction of the production; and 3) Postproduction evaluation.

5. Does the procedure involve collection of data obtained from

   Human Subjects (including use of surveys)? Yes** □ No X
   Use of Animals? Yes** □ No X

** If yes, your procedures must be approved in writing by the Human Subjects Committee or the Animal Care and Use Committee before you initiate your research.

Scott Robinson
Committee Chair (typed or printed)

Derek Lane
Committee Member (typed or printed)

Mark Zetterberg
Committee Member (typed or printed)

Approved by:
George Bellah
Dept Chair/Designee (signature) Date 7/10/02

R. A. Mack
Associate VP of Graduate Studies Date 7/10/02

Approved by:

Students will be required to submit two copies of all motion picture film, film strips, sound film strips, slides, tapes, cassettes, pictures, etc. produced as part of the thesis. These are to be submitted at the time the thesis (three copies) is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
To Whom It Concerns:

Mr. Hendrixson has my permission and the permission of Moses Lake School District to use the theatre facility at Moses Lake High School to mount and present the play *Harvey* written by Mary Chase. Moses Lake High School Masque and Gavel club will be presenting this production under the supervision of Mr. Hendrixson on May 15th-17th, 2003. This will involve a number of students from Moses Lake High School and is a part of Mr. Hendrixson's Masters program in Theatre Production through Central Washington University.

Sincerely,

Mr. David Balcom
Principal;
Moses Lake High School

8-27-02

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
ABSTRACT

AN EXAMINATION OF THE PREPARATIONS,
PERFORMANCE, AND ANALYSIS OF A FULL
SCALE PRODUCTION OF HARVEY

by

Don Hendrixson

June 2003

The preparations, performance, and post-show analysis of a full scale production of Harvey involving young actors was studied. Twenty high school students and one recent high school graduate participated in the preparations, rehearsal, and performance of this production. The results helped prove the hypothesis that such a performance could be accomplished while meeting specified learning goals. Implications for program development are discussed.
February 5, 2001

Mr. Don E. Hendrixson

Dear Mr. Hendrixson:

It is my pleasure to offer you admission to the Master of Arts program in Theatre Production for Summer Quarter 2001. However, your master's program admission status is on a conditional basis pending completion of certain requirements: you need to successfully complete 3 hours of theatre history/literature prior to taking Analysis & Criticism/Dramatic Literature. Full admission to the master's program will be granted once this item has been satisfied.

Please carefully review the included letter Information for New Graduate Students. After that, your next step should be to contact the Department of Theatre Arts (509-963-1766) for advice on courses you should register for summer quarter.

It is very important that you keep the Office of Graduate Studies and Research informed of any changes in your status, e.g., address changes, name changes, other colleges attended, etc. Also, please notify us if for any reason you decide not to pursue your master's degree at Central Washington University or enroll in classes Summer Quarter 2001. If you are not enrolled for the quarter stated in the first paragraph as your quarter of admission, your application will be withdrawn.

I wish you well in your academic activities and hope to see you this summer.

Sincerely,

Richard S. Mack, Interim Associate Vice President
Graduate Studies, Research and Faculty

Please note:
This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.

Degree: Master of Arts
Specialization: Theatre Production
July 11, 2001

Donald Hendrixson

Dear Mr. Hendrixson:

Your course of study has been approved with one minor correction. The correct course number for the Teaching Shakespeare class that you took summer quarter 2000 is TH 546. This is the number that actually shows on your transcript. I have already made this correction so you will not have to submit a substitution form.

Sincerely,

Christie A. Fevergeon
Program Coordinator

c Prof. George Bellah

Please note: This signature has been redacted due to security reasons.
This course of study form is to be completed before the student has accumulated twenty-five (25) quarter credits leading to a master’s degree. Please submit this list of courses in quadruplicate to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research (Barge 305M). Approved copies will be returned to the advisor, department chair, and the student. Unless the advisor and department chair approve substitutions or revisions, the Graduate Office will require completion of, or enrollment in, all courses listed below before the student may be advanced to candidacy for the degree.

If credit from another institution is included on this Course of Study, designate such course(s) with an asterisk (*) and name the institution from which credit is transferred.

An official copy of the transcript showing this credit must be on file with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Required Background Courses (not to count toward degree credits)

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The following list of courses, totaling at least forty-five (45) credits, will be accepted as meeting requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Theatre Production (field of specialization).

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TOTAL CREDITS: (50) 50

George Bellah
Advisor or Committee Chair

George Bellah
Department Chair or Designee

R. A. Mack
Dean of Graduate Studies

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
SUBSTITUTION FORM  
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY  
(Submit in Quadruplicate)

Name of Student Don Hendrixson  
SS# __________

Address __________  
Date 05-30-02

The following substitutions will be accepted, if approved, on the Course of Study for the Master of Arts Degree in Theatre Production Specialization.

1. SUBSTITUTE
   (New Course) THEATRE 531 Mime & Movement 3
   Dept. Course Number Qtr. Credits
   FOR (Old Course) THEATRE 535 Improvisational Techniques 2
   Dept. Course Number Qtr. Credits

2. SUBSTITUTE
   (New Course) Dept. Course Number
   FOR (Old Course) Dept. Course Number

3. SUBSTITUTE
   (New Course) Dept. Course Number
   FOR (Old Course) Dept. Course Number

Scott Robinson 6/5/02  
Course of Study Advisor or Committee Chair

George Bellah 6/5/02  
Department Chair or Designee

No more than three substitutions will be processed on a Course of Study by the Graduate Studies and Research Office without the student filing a revised Course of Study for approval.

R. A. Mack 6/5/02  
Dean of Graduate Studies & Research

GS&R: 2/99 Form D

Please note:
The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.
MASTER'S THESIS PROJECT
PLAYSCRIPT APPROVAL FORM

(PLEASE MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE READ THE PLAY SELECTION CRITERIA SECTION IN YOUR GRADUATE HANDBOOK)

SCRIPT TITLE Harvey

PLAYWRIGHT(S) [If musical, list lyricist/composer] Mary Chase

NUMBER OF ACTS 3
APPROXIMATE TOTAL PLAYING TIME 2 HOURS 0 MIN.

CAST (fill in with the appropriate numbers)

MEN 6 WOMEN 6 CHILDREN 0 OVER 40 6

ROLES REQUIRING PEOPLE OF COLOR 0 ROLES COULD DOUBLE 4-6

TOTAL NUMBER OF CAST 12

OTHER CASTING CONCERNS:

ARTISTIC STAFF (check those needed for this play or production idea)

MUSICAL DIRECTOR DANCE CHOREOGRAPHER
FLIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER DIALECT COACH SPECIALTY HIRE (specify what kind)
ORCHESTRA/BAND (specify what size)

SCENERY/PROPS (check those needed for this play or your concept of the play)

UNIT SET? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE) NUMBER OF SETTINGS 2
HISTORICAL PERIOD 1944 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION San Fransisco CA
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF SET CONCERNS OR SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:

We will need to make the set easy to change. Period accuracy is another area of concern. We will need to borrow pieces and find ways to make pieces inexpensively.

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF PROPS 100 PERIOD 1944
DIFFICULT OR UNUSUAL PROPS? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE) DESCRIBE:

3 Windsor chairs, Melodian, Victorian stool, Smilax.

WEAPONS OR FIREARMS? HOW MANY 0 DESCRIBE:

COSTUMES (CHECK THOSE NEEDED FOR THIS PLAY OR YOUR CONCEPT OF THE PLAY)

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF COSTUMES PER CHARACTER 1-2
HISTORICAL PERIOD 1944 SEASON Spring

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:
Period Costumes

OVER
JUSTIFICATION FOR CHOICE OF SCRIPT

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS SCRIPT PRODUCED? YES NO (CIRCLE ONE)

HAVE YOU DONE THIS PLAY BEFORE? BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE PRODUCTION:

No.

WHY SHOULD YOUR ORGANIZATION PRODUCE THIS SCRIPT?

Harvey, a Pulitzer Prize winning play, a fascinating, humorous study of the human psyche as well as social standards defining normalcy. The humor in this play is multi-faceted, allowing for a variety of approaches to the study of comedy and comedic techniques. This play will, additionally, encourage a focused study of the 1940s as well as serious research into society's response to the mentally ill and the practice of institutionalizing those who have been legally defined as insane.

WHAT ARE THE DRAWBACKS (IF ANY) TO DOING THIS PRODUCTION AT YOUR SCHOOL?

The school's administration will object to the word "bastards." (pg. 64) It may also object to the expression, "Oh, to hell with it!" (pg. 33) Deletion or substitution will probably be required. Many of the characters are over forty. This will present certain challenges.

PLEASE GIVE A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE SCRIPT ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER AND ATTACH.

PLEASE INCLUDE A COPY OF THE SCRIPT FOR THE THESIS COMMITTEE TO REVIEW.

SUBMITTED BY: Ron Hendrixson DATE SUBMITTED: 01-14-02
Harvey, by Mary Chase

A brief synopsis

Harvey, a six-and-a-half foot rabbit, is the product of Elwood P. Dowd’s amazing imagination. Unfortunately, this rabbit is the source of mental and social anguish for Veta, Dowd’s sister, and for Myrtle Mae, his niece. Veta, as a result, has Dowd committed to a sanitarium. Ironically, it is Veta who is mistakenly committed instead of her confused but gentle brother. Pandemonium reigns as everyone tries to make things right or cover their own mistakes. In the end, a cab driver sheds light on the indignation of medicating otherwise harmless people.
Project Schedule

January 5, 2001: accepted into Masters program.

July 11, 2001: Course of Study approved.

July 20, 2002: Option Approval Form submitted to Graduate Studies Office


November 27, 2002: Construction jobs and renderings due to shop teacher.

December 13, 2002: Order scripts. Set painting designs due to lead artist.

February 24, 2002: Part Two of Thesis due.

February 28, 2003: Construction projects completed.


March 5 and 6, 2003: Auditions.

March 7, 2003: Post cast list.


March 14, 2003: Complete set painting projects.

        Properties list completed and distributed.

        Costume designs and sizes to costumer.


March 21, 2003: Lighting specifications due to student technician.

        Sound cue specifications due to student technician.

        Actors off-book; prompted.


March 26, 2003: Publicity Meeting #1

March 28, 2003: Light fixtures moved as needed. Sound cues complete.
Properties completed, purchased, and placed on tables.

April 2, 2003: All publicity materials and methods prepared.

April 4, 2003: Light cue programming complete.

April 7-12 2003: SPRING BREAK

April 14, 2003: Costume Parade.

Publicity begins.

April 18, 2003: Costuming Complete.


May 9, 2003: Wet Tech. Rehearsal.

May 12-14, 2003: Dress Rehearsals.

May 15-17, 2003: Performances.
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FEBRUARY 2003

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- Spring Break
- Costume Parade
- Publicity begins
- Costuming Compit.
Section One: Pre-production Analysis

Performance Schedule and Location

Moses Lake High School’s Masque and Gavel Society is scheduled to perform Mary Chase’s Harvey at the Moses Lake High School Theatre in Moses Lake, Washington on May 15, and 16, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. and May 17, 2002 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Parameters of Producing Organization and Performance Space

Moses Lake High School’s Masque and Gavel Society (MAGS)

Masque and Gavel Society, although having experienced its ups and downs, is a long-established, highly attended high school theatre group. Under several directors, it has produced a large variety of comedies, dramas, and musicals.

The group has most recently survived several bumpy changes in program directorship. Last season under the leadership of Mr. Don Hendrixson, MAGS produced a successful Dracula by Steven Dietz, Rogers and Hammerstein’s Cinderella, and The Ledge, a one-act play paired with audience interactive improvisation as part of the senior show.

Budget

Other than its one paid director, this theatre group is largely self-sufficient. Currently, the MAGS Associated Student Body (ASB) account has $5,936.21. It is estimated that by March of 2003 this budget may have as much as an additional $1,000. However, based upon conservative ticket sales estimates, the budget for Harvey has been set at $2,000.

Staffing

Other than its paid director, MAGS is a completely volunteer organization. Along with the club’s President, Vice-president, Publicity manager, Art Manager, Secretary, and Treasurer, MAGS usually has a stage manager, an assistant stage manager, a sound and light technician,
students from art and shop classes, and a sturdy parent group.

The club’s constitution outlines responsibilities of officers, technical crew members, and actors. Harvey will require a producer/director, house and stage managers, builders, and crew members for costumes, lighting, sound, wigs and hair, makeup, properties, and publicity. Some jobs will be filled by actors. A photographer from the school’s annual staff and technicians from the video production class will help in completing thesis documentation required by Central Washington University.

Casting

The MAGS membership is currently near forty people. By March of 2003, that number will probably grow to sixty. Non-members, however, may participate in the production of Harvey. Membership, generally, is limited to high school students with an age range of fourteen to eighteen, which causes some obstacles for producing shows with characters over the age of forty. Unfortunately, Harvey has several characters who meet this criterion. MAGS, nonetheless, will work diligently with makeup, wigs, costuming, and, most importantly, character believability to meet this challenge.

Facilities

MAGS is blessed with an on-site proscenium theater space at Moses Lake High School. The theater seats 520 people, while the stage measures 34 feet deep by 42 feet wide at the proscenium arch with shallow wing space at twelve feet for each wing. MAGS’ audiences usually range between 150, on a Thursday night, and 400 on a Friday or Saturday night performance. Musicals tend to draw larger crowds than do straight shows.

Equipment

Moses Lake High School’s theater is equipped with computerized lighting and
sophisticated soundboard, a grand drape, three sets of legs, a middle traveler curtain, cyclorama, and an expensive partial fly-system.

Scheduling

MAGS has priority over non-school groups and has scheduled use of the facility a year ahead of time. However, because MAGS is considered to be a high user, it must maintain some flexibility to school groups throughout its rehearsal periods. Some rehearsals may be held in the gym or in the choir room to allow for this flexibility. Additionally, the sets must remain mobile in order to accommodate groups that need a cleared stage after we rehearse. Because of these expectations, time in the theater must be carefully planned and efficiently utilized.

This production has 114 hours of rehearsal scheduled. Most of these rehearsals will take place in the Moses Lake High School theater. The facility is also reserved for two work calls and a technical rehearsal.
Evaluation of *Harvey* as a Production Vehicle

It has been said that:

> art is valuable for its capacity to improve the quality of life—by bringing us pleasure, by sharpening our perceptions, by increasing our sensitivity to others and our surroundings, by suggesting that moral and societal concerns should take precedence over materialistic goals. Of all the arts, theatre has perhaps the greatest potential as a humanizing force, because much of it asks us to enter imaginatively the lives of others so we may understand their aspirations and motivations. (Brockett and Ball 20)

Regardless of some criticism, *Harvey* is indeed artistic to a high degree and is successfully “humanizing” because it explores and exposes basic human desires and dreams.

**Pleasure**

Significantly, this show offers its audience a wide variety of sensual pleasures. Through plot and character, for instance, *Harvey* presents an interesting visual and aural tapestry. The invisible rabbit concept actually heightens and peaks the audiences’ visual imagination. It causes people to look, imagine, and see something that isn’t really there. Furthermore, pleasure is enhanced by the play’s conflict patterns that naturally stem from its plot. The conflict between Elwood Dowd and his sister Veta is clear and pronounced from the story’s beginning. Elwood’s invisible pooka and Veta’s drive to get her daughter married off are the catalysts for the play’s overall conflict and plot line. Through this, however, Veta continuously struggles with internal conflict as she wrestles with guilt and the love she has for her brother.

*Harvey*, moreover, is filled with interesting, pleasurable characters. The play’s primary character, Elwood Dowd, is a fascinating man who looks at life in a very different way than do
most people who are considered sane. He declares that, “I wrestled with reality for forty years, and I’m happy to state that I finally won out over it” (Chase 49). Veta Louise Simmons, Elwood’s harried, confused sister is also an interesting character to observe and absorb. Because of her constant inner conflict and her battle with external driving forces, Veta’s rhythms are simultaneously frustrating and humorous. This seemingly dichotomous mixture contributes to both visual and aural comedy because it constantly keeps other characters and audience members off balance when her character is in the scene. Another character that brings delight to the reader is Myrtle Mae, Elwood’s greedy niece. Admittedly, this character is a bit of a stock type, but her greed is expertly balanced with both lustiness and naivete. This use of opposites within a character acts as fodder for an explosively funny character.

Perceptions

Along with other parts of drama, both music and spectacle in this play help to sharpen one’s perceptions of humanity and human interaction. “Music, as we ordinarily understand the term, does not occur in every play. But if the term is extended to include all patterned sound, it is an important ingredient in every production, except those wholly silent” (Brockett and Ball 47). This play’s perceptive mood is established right from the beginning with a bad female voice singing, “I’m Called Little Buttercup.” The rendition of this song is disharmonious with a spring day but is harmonious with the “faded grandeur” visually apparent in the spectacle of the Dowd estate. If Brockett and Ball are correct in asserting that music can be “extended to include all patterned sound,” then vocalizing the words themselves creates a sort of patterned sound. Even Elwood agrees when he says, “The evening wore on! That’s a nice expression. With your permission I’ll say it again. The evening wore on” (Chase 53). Admittedly, the actor completes the musical elements of communication with pitch, volume, and other vocal qualities, but the
words and word combinations have been first intellectually conceptualized and then manifested in written form before they are articulated and delivered to an audience.

Since “spectacle encompasses all the visual elements of a production” (Brockett and Ball 49), then a consideration of season and setting is helpful to realizing how much of this built-in spectacle contributes to the awakening of perceptions. Spring offers many possibilities for visual representation that heighten our understanding of human nature. This happens as a result of good directing that utilizes both design and acting to reveal ideas embedded in written dialogue. Lighting, for instance, in the Dowd home can reflect a faded spring, representational of Veta’s lost years. It is these lost years she is currently living through her daughter that cause a clash between Veta’s perception of Myrlte’s innocence and the reality of her lustful, greedy nature. Clash, then, can be enhanced with lighting. Also providing many opportunities to connect the visual elements with human understanding is the setting of a mental sanitarium. “Her idea of playing many of her scenes in a sanitarium for whacky alcoholics was obviously not a merry one, but it has resulted in tremendously funny passages. The writing is good and genuinely comic” (Barnes 1). It is this symbiotic relationship between spectacle and human awareness that helps to make this play truly artful.

Sensitivity

Through the author’s choice of language, identified by Aristotle as diction (Brockett and Ball 42 and 47), theatre artists and audience members become more sensitive to others and their surroundings. We, for instance, get a chance to snicker at pretentiousness as Myrtle Mae insists that her mother exaggerate to the high-society press about the number of people at their tea party and when Veta uses the ridiculous phrase, “the parlors and halls are festooned with smilax” (Chase 2). This is not only a great opportunity to see others as they are but to examine oneself
as well because, after all, self-introspection leads to the greatest sensitivity of all. When we see others who lack self-awareness, we are brought closer to a revelation of our own weaknesses. Since most people avoid doing this on a serious level, comedy helps lighten the weightiness of this kind of thought. Hence, when Doctor Sanderson in Chase’s play says, “I’d like to know where you get that inflated ego” (Chase 48), the reader knows that he is unknowingly revealing himself and his own flaw. The words “inflated ego” are critical here because they create a strong visual image which intensifies our sensitivity. An intense sensitivity is also discovered as Elwood states that he and Harvey warm themselves “in all the golden moments” (54). These words are so connected to the senses that we truly gain a heightened awareness of how happy this character is and how unhappy we can be when we lose sight of life’s golden moments because of our busy routines.

**Morality and Society**

*Harvey* is most significantly artistic, though, because it loudly declares that there are more important things in life than the acquisition of material possessions and that people need to be continuously aware, and responsive to, social and moral injustices. Since “the idea of the play is told in its story” (Shapiro 35), it is through this story that a reader discovers Mary Chase’s themes, or thought, as identified by Aristotle (Brockett and Ball 46). So what is the story here? It is, most importantly, the story of a man who believes that it is better to be a satisfied pig than a dissatisfied Socrates. He has, essentially, come to the realization that he would prefer to be pleasant rather than smart. This is also a story, however, of a society that forces people to try to be smart, successful, and powerful even if they are completely miserable, that isolates, monitors, and controls people who do not conform to this expectation, and that mistreats people who color outside of the lines by behaving unusually or are simply different, a phenomenon reminiscent of
the Salem witch trials, lynch mobs, and gay bashing. Hence, if the reader looks deeply into the script’s meaning and deeply within himself, he will discover personal and universal application. He will then, hopefully, think and act upon those discoveries.

Desires and Dreams

If there is introspective discovery for people who watch this play, then it should reach to the very core of all that they truly hope for, wish for. By observing characters who desire and dream, this essential revelation is possible, and through the play’s comedic events and language one can digest it without choking on its more serious implications. Doctor Chumley, for instance, is a fascinating character that wears a figurative mask to hide his true feelings. His mask is demanding, self-absorbed, and powerful. Yet, he reveals his true self to Elwood by exposing his basic dream to have an anonymous woman “reach out a soft white hand and stroke [his] head and say ‘poor, poor thing!’” (Chase 63). Another character, Elwood’s sister Veta, is a bit more complicated. She is pulled between the desire to please her family and the dream of being socially important. Veta wants her daughter to marry well, so Myrtle Mae’s interest in Wilson, the sanitarium attendant, chips away at this dream. However, she does want Myrtle Mae to be happy, as she wants Elwood to be happy. His happiness, likewise, is in direct clash with Veta’s dream of high-society forums, teas, and ceremonies. Similarly, Doctor Sanderson and Kelly desire and dream about companionship with each other, but this violates the rules of the sanitarium, an ironic condition for a place that houses people who have broken society’s rules. Who are the crazy ones, anyway?

Evaluation of Harvey as a Production Vehicle

for Masque and Gavel Society

The relationship between the director and the potential cast and crew is a relatively short
one, as is the relationship between the director and potential audience. Harvey is not considered


to be a highly difficult play to produce but does offer sufficient obstacles to challenge the
director who is working with a fairly new, unsettled group of students. Also, this play will create
opportunities for the director to work with actors on techniques of comedy and fundamentals of
acting, such as character research and development, objectives, super-objectives, obstacles,
tactics, physicality, vocalization, and basic movement. Ultimately, this should provide a good
foundation for future productions at Moses Lake High School.

With 1,775 performances in its original Broadway run and its success as a 1950
Universal-International Pictures movie starring Jimmy Stewart, Harvey is certain to have some
name recognition for its potential audience in Moses Lake and the surrounding area.

Budget Constraints

Masque and Gavel Society has nearly $6,000 in its ASB account and has been roughly
self-sufficient for three decades. Since it has a pretty good supply of stock scenery and a
moderate support system for donations, furniture, properties, and costumes, purchases of this sort
should be modest. Furthermore, because of the high school’s recent censorship of the musical
Grease, there will be only one major show produced this school year. We are, hence, expecting
sizeable audiences, but we need to be fiscally cautious because nothing is certain.

Staffing

Most of the major staffing positions, including the stage manager, lighting specialist,
sound technician, and set builders for this production are already filled. A volunteer parent will
probably serve as costume supervisor, while a responsible student will manage all properties.

Casting

This will be an area of greatest challenge for the director. Since several of the characters
in this play are over forty and the potential acting pool has an age range of fourteen to eighteen, careful selection during and after auditions will be imperative. Also, finding a young man skilled and mature enough to play Elwood Dowd will be an additional obstacle. Even though no pre-casting has occurred, certain young men who might meet this requirement will be encouraged to audition.

Facilities

Even though the stage is fairly small, the facilities at Moses Lake High School are appropriate for this play. Although, since the play has two locations, the director must be creative in his ground plan, set changes, and use of the stage.

Equipment

The equipment at Moses Lake High School theatre, including light and soundboard, is sufficient for the needs of the production. However, we will probably need to rent a stage phone or two from Pacific Northwest Theatre Association if one is not available at Big Bend Community College or at The Chapel Theatre, our local community theatre group.

Scheduling

As has been mentioned, the facility has been reserved for Masque and Gavel Society rehearsals and performances. Nevertheless, we have been instructed to be somewhat flexible when other groups on campus request its use. We have been promised that the last two weeks of rehearsal will be treated as sacred by administrators and school groups.

Appropriateness of Harvey for Venue and Audience

Moses Lake High School's facility is sufficient to produce Harvey. The theatre is large enough to meet seating needs but small enough to ensure that most seats are close enough for intimacy with the show. With a few minor cuts and modifications, this script is suitable for
almost any audience. Because Elwood drinks, some people from Moses Lake might think that we
are promoting drinking. Our plan is to play that element down as much as possible. Elwood is an
unusual person who happens to drink a great deal, not a drunkard suffering from alcohol induced
hallucinations. A reputation for good productions from last year and name recognition for
Harvey will help bring in people from Moses Lake and the surrounding areas.

Director’s Concept Statement

Mary Chase’s Pulitzer Prize winning play Harvey is considered by some to be a farce. The twist that Veta,
Dowd’s sister, ends up in the asylum, not the pooka-seeing Dowd himself, is a major farcical element. However, the weighty themes and humorous dialogue in this comedy help to offset its whimsical premise. “What makes Mary Chase so remarkable a playwright is
that she uses the medium of comedy to present an issue that has most often elsewhere been
treated tragically or with high seriousness” (Chinoy and Jenkins 167). Through the use of irony, then, Chase expertly balances farcical comedy with serious social criticism.

An analysis of the play and the author’s background reveals that this play probably takes
place in Denver, Colorado on a spring day of 1943, most likely in late March. The first day of
spring, March 20, offers some nice symbolism for transition from old to new. The director, in
addition, will work with the technicians to come as close as possible to reflecting this wartime era.

One of the major themes in this play is “the necessity of dreams and the vitality of the
life of the imagination” (Chinoy and Jenkins 168). Throughout this story, the audience’s
imagination is constantly being challenged, encouraging viewers to question their own senses
and perceptions. Furthermore, Elwood Dowd encourages audience members to look at life just a
bit differently and to be more open to others who do likewise. Mary Chase helps us to see the
flaw in our social fabric, a flaw that can potentially crush creativity and the human spirit if it is not kept in check. When groups of people demand absolute conformity by rewarding it and by punishing any deviation, they may temporarily ensure some kind of security, but, in the long run, this may ultimately be the seed of their own destruction.

Another strong theme in this script is the examination of mental care in this country. Notably, there have been significant advances in this area over the last century, but, unfortunately, we still have a long way to go. It wasn’t too long ago when torture racks and electric shock treatments were a regular part of a mental patient’s daily prescription. Formula 977, Chase’s fictional solution drug, may not be too far removed from the inundation of anti-problem drugs that have hit the American market over the last several years. Some people probably do, in fact, benefit from these drugs. Nonetheless, much of the consumption of such drugs is market driven by gigantic drug companies. The cab driver that enters the story late in the third act, interestingly, magnifies the absurdity of introducing any formula or drug as a cure-all. He also, in a not so eloquent fashion, provides the audience with a different perspective of normalcy. Specifically, he asserts that normal human beings are “bastards.”

Harvey’s atmosphere can be described with a variety of adjectives and metaphors. It can be understood as a cool, sunny day just after the last winter’s thaw, reflective of a change from the old to new with remnants of the past still lingering in the air. The environment of the play can, furthermore, be defined as caviar served in gelatin dessert, portraying something serious in a funny, silly container. The color palettes for the set could include earth tones, emanating images from the Great Depression, and bright yellows, reds, oranges, and blues, projecting images of spring, a new beginning, and, hopefully, a near end to war in Europe and The Pacific. Elwood’s costume colors, gray and brown, should be simple and representative of a simpler, more gentile
time. A blend of subdued colors, such as dull blue or gray, with brighter colors, like yellow and red, could symbolize Veta’s confused emotions throughout the play. On the other hand, Myrtle’s costume colors can change throughout the play. She can start with Rancho Rose, likely suggesting a sort of pretentiousness over just plain pink, in the first act, change to green, indicating, for most people, greed in the second act, and finish with a bright red, revealing a vibrant lustiness in the third act.

Other design elements that will need to be examined, evaluated, and executed are the double unit set, hair and makeup, lighting, sound, and properties. The Dowd family mansion is large but comfortable. It is neat but a bit dusty. Reflecting a turn-of-the-century lifestyle, this home is filled with books, pictures, and furniture that cause the viewer to see the period as innocent, dignified, polite, and nearly forgotten. Their home is an extension of both Elwood and his mother, “the late Marcella Pinney Dowd” (Chase 2) and symbolizes human dreams and desires. In contrast, the mental sanitarium, Chumley’s Rest, is cold and sterile. Institutional green walls, possibly offset with white desks, chairs, and tables could communicate such a sterile environment. Furniture should be cold and uncomfortable. Sharp angles in furniture and set design can add to the oppressive nature or the asylum, making the word “rest” in its title a misnomer. The set should suggest anything but rest. Exaggerated colors, angles, and sizes will allow the viewers to think about the asylum’s oppressive nature while they laugh about it.

Hair and makeup will certainly be a challenge with this show. Actors will need to be trained in the use of old age makeup. The director, with the assistance of a makeup specialist in the community, will work with actors on technique and application several weeks before the show opens. Period hairstyles will also have to be studied and practiced. The director’s spouse is a licensed cosmetologist and will be researching and assisting with both hair and makeup.
Fortunately, due to unity of time, hair and makeup will remain fairly consistent through the show.

To minimize set changes and curtain closes, lighting will be used to switch between asylum and mansion, from the right half of the stage to the left. General pools of light, back lighting, and some specials at windows and doors to indicate the changes in time of day will meet our major lighting concerns.

Along with “I’m Called Little Buttercup,” pre-show, transition, intermission, and post-show music will be a combination of upbeat era music juxtaposed with Ozzy Osbourne’s “Crazy Train” and selections from Pink Floyd’s album Wish You Were Here. Phone rings, a gong sound for the asylum, plus some other unusual sound effects for humor will probably be the only sound effects needed.

A moderate list of properties is provided in the script. A concerted attempt will be made to make the props as close to era appropriate as possible. Properties that will provide some challenge in this way are the melodeon, a Victorian stool, Windsor chairs and general furnishings. The painting of Elwood Dowd with Harvey and the painting of Marcella Pinney Dowd will also have to be planned and executed well.

One of the biggest acting challenges will be for the young man cast as Elwood Dowd. This person will need to work hard to convince his audience that he actually sees Harvey and that he is, in his mind, physically present. The actor will need to practice mime and physical movement.

Since several of the roles are characters who are over forty, much time will need to be spent working with actors on age appropriate movement, gesture, and voice, making significant effort to help them avoid over-exaggerated choices. An emphasis will have to be place on
subtlety rather than stereotype. The humor in this show should not be as a result of an actor’s inability to create a believable older character.
Part Two
Coloradans, generally, and Denverites, specifically, of the 1940s were gravely influenced by the pioneer spirit of their homesteader parents and grandparents. “The homesteaders were mostly young people, very often single, and they knew how to have a good time” (Probst 6). Elwood Dowd’s mother, Pinney, who “arrived in Denver as a child by ox-team” (Chase 2), is an example of such sturdy stock.

Date of Play Including Seasonal Information and Time of Day

Harvey is set in “the present,” that is March 20th, 1943. The script states that it is a spring day (Chase 1), but it also says, through Veta, that it must be before April 24th because Elwood “turned forty-seven the 24th of last April” (11). It is unlikely, especially considering her character, that Veta would not have said that Elwood turns forty-eight this month if the play took place on a day in April. This leaves us with the several days of spring at the end of March. Helpfully, the first day of spring, March 20th, offers some interesting symbolism. In late March, Denver is generally still cold, with temperatures in the thirties at night and forties during the day. Some patches of winter snow may remain under the shade of trees and buildings, while small, rugged perennial flowers have begun to bloom in people’s yards and bushes.

The time of day in which the play begins is stated as “Mid-afternoon” in the script (Chase 1). Using time breaks, the approximate time elapsed for each scene, and the information that Elwood, who seems to be regularly on time, is to return to Chumley’s Rest at ten o’clock (24), mid-afternoon means roughly two o’clock. This also means that the final scene of the play ends at around eleven o’clock p.m. Since this is but nine hours from start to finish, it notably meets the Aristotelian unity of time criterion, falling within a twelve hour day.

Economic Environment

Without question, because Harvey is set in 1943, the impact of The Great Depression and
World War II upon the lives of the characters in this play and upon its themes is dramatic indeed. Even though this play was probably intended as an escape from the troubled times, it must be noted that audience members will bring with them to the theater their experiences and their understanding of the world around them. Therefore, their understanding of the circumstances surrounding the play and its characters is at least as significant as the author’s intentions. Conditions on the national, state, and local levels, as a result, all play a part in the theatre experience that is *Harvey*.

On the national scene, America was just beginning to feel the effects of federal relief programs and a wartime production economy. It had just experienced its greatest ever economic catastrophe, The Great Depression. Significantly, the plains states and mountain states with massive farmland east of the Rocky Mountains were the hardest hit. Colorado was one of these states. The dust storms of the 1930s only served to exacerbate the problem. The characters in *Harvey* most likely to be affected by economic depression and World War II are Miss Johnson, the maid, Ruth Kelly, the nurse, Duane Wilson, the attendant, and E.J. Lofgren, the taxi cab driver. All of these characters have employment that is closely tied to the strength of the local economy. Lyman Sanderson was able to complete medical school during The Depression, and the mental health industry grew steadily, leaving Dr. William R. Chumley and his wife Betty in a safe condition. Although Nurse Kelly is a registered nurse, she is still an underpaid, disposable woman in a male-dominated culture. Judge Gaffney is a public official whose job was highly secure throughout the depression years. Finally, Myrtle and Veta Simmons, Elwood Dowd, and Mrs. Ethel Chauvenet are all very well taken care of by inherited wealth.

By 1943, however, the war was at the center of America’s attention. Because so many men were off to war, women were needed to replace the men, "and so the first great exodus of
women from the home to the workplace began” (Goodwin 1). Rosie the Riveter became a popular icon for single and married women alike. It was even considered patriotic and a part of one’s duty to her country to get out and work. This exodus offers a sharp contrast to Veta’s old-fashioned notions of keeping Myrtle at home until she catches someone to marry. It is also indicative of class and financial means. The Pinney Dowd estate takes care of everything.

In Colorado, much effort and money was put into economic recovery. The Thompson Dam project, which cost five billion dollars for example, also provided needed jobs and hydroelectricity to the region. The depression, however, magnified problems between white Coloradans and the immigrant Hispanos. Many of these Hispanos were deported as Ku Klux Klan (K.K.K.) groups, relatively dormant since the 1920s, had a flurry of resurgence. Sara Deutsch writes in her 1987 book No Separate Refuge that Ku Klux Klan members passed out and posted “handbills that warned ‘ALL MEXICANS AND ALL OTHER ALIENS TO LEAVE THE STATE OF COLORADO AT ONCE BY ORDERS OF COLORADO STATE VIGILANTES’” (174). Even Mayor Ben Stapleton appointed K.K.K. members to important city posts. Along with Mexican immigrant workers, blacks in Denver also lived in substandard housing and continued to fill the most menial and low paying service jobs such as maid, cook, mechanic, and barber. However, since they shared a common language with whites, their plight was not as severe as that of the Hispano population. In his book The Queen City, A History of Denver, LyleW. Dorsett confirms this when he states that “blacks were also well below the majority population in per capita income, and much of their housing failed to measure up to decent standards. Nevertheless, they were measurably better off than Hispanos” (242). Moreover, many African American men were drafted or signed up to join America’s armed forces in its fight against fascism. Thus, many black families began to receive a regular
paycheck, which greatly enhanced the buying power of these families. As a result, nonetheless, of racial tension and economic recovery, many white Denverites raced to create suburban retreats from the inner-city ethnic changes. Denver was just one of many cities that faced this “white flight” and the problems it would leave for inner-city residents. It would soon create separate neighborhoods, schools, parks, and lifestyles.

Social Environment

Even though recovery efforts were slowly paying off, many sacrifices were being made in the early 1940s. “Automobile production,” for instance, “ceased in 1942, and rationing of food supplies began in 1943” (Goodwin 2). This rationing was supported and lifted to patriotism through the aggrandizement and promotion of “Victory Gardens.” With its location near Lowry Air Force Base, Denver had first hand experience with supporting Government Issues (G.I.s). Significantly, Denver was nationally recognized for its support of local airmen and other military personnel. Most of the nation, conversely, struggled with bar fights, carousing, prostitution, and public drunkenness by military personnel. To combat this, Ben Stapleton appointed Robert Harvey to manage relationships between Lowry airmen and the Denver community. “Harvey discovered that drinking-related problems usually occurred after midnight, so he asked all tavern keepers to close at that hour” (Dorsett 240). He was highly successful and gained a positive reputation for providing the impetus for mutual respect between servicemen and civilians.

In America, as well as in Denver, culture had been greatly altered by World War II. For example, many German Jews emigrated to America due to Adolph Hitler’s genocidal policies. This mass immigration of both creative and scientific brainpower has greatly affected American culture up to the present century. These immigrants brought sophisticated mathematics, a strong
understanding of banking and financial matters, and Abstract Expressionism. Commercial television would not make its debut until 1947 (Goodwin 3), so radio was still the lifeline for Americans in 1943. Along with providing war news and radio stories, it provided the Big Band music of Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, and Benny Goodman, creating rhythms for the new dance craze known as The Jitterbug, “the first dance in two centuries that allowed for individual expression” (8). The war was also influential in theatre and film cultures. Abstraction was prevalent in Thorton Wilder’s The Skin of Our Teeth. Musical Theatre also had a rebirth, and, as a result of Realism, Agnes de Mille’s technique of dancing in character in Oklahoma (1943) and Carousel (1944) was well received. In film, movies like Casablanca (1943) and the government’s Donald Gets Drafted (1942) were often seen together until the war ended in 1945.

Although much of Colorado had been sharply affected by the depression, by 1943 Denver was still in the mood for economic recovery, technology, and consumer products and services. Most of Colorado’s farmers and miners had moved away or stayed and found a way to survive with government subsidies and disaster relief. The remaining population, especially that of urban Denver, was ready for a “new deal.” Coloradans were heavily influenced by Midwestern values and had long compared themselves to the metropolises of St. Louis and Chicago. They wanted all the pleasures of materialism and convenience without all of the environmental, social, and political headaches. However, Colorado’s diverse culture as well as its varied landscape would bring both the pleasures of modernity and the struggles of change:

Coloradans produced a mosaic of localities that varied in their texture and character. Many threads contributed to these new geographies: a dense multilayered, and spatially variable physical framework established their broad contours; a set of political and economic imperatives structured their form and
function; a layering of diverse cultural elements gave personality and feel to the fabric; and, perhaps most important, the experiences of individuals shaped the everyday reality of Colorado landscapes, imputing each place with their evanescent but palpable presence. (Wyckoff 293)

Political Environment

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was serving his fourth and last term in 1943. His New Deal Policies and the distraction of the war in Europe and The Pacific made him one of the most popular U.S. Presidents ever. In Colorado, voters elected two Republican Governors, Ralph L. Carr and John C. Vivian, to lead their state from 1939-1947. Ben Stapleton continued as Denver’s Mayor even through the post-war recovery period. Inevitably, change would become Denver’s biggest obstacle:

What no one apparently foresaw during the 1930s and early 1940s was the overwhelming impact of the ‘second capital’ program. The promotional campaign, ironically, was too successful to suit Denver’s power structure. A tidal wave of change was unleashed—one that inundated Denver’s ‘controlled growth’ power elite, left a new group of leaders in its wake, materially altered the city, and left it burdened with new problems. (Dorsett 223)

In the final analysis, national and local politics in 1943 were driven by the economic, social, and cultural demands of World War II. It is exactly these demands from which audiences of Mary Chase’s Harvey were trying desperately to escape, even for just a few hours.

Religious Environment

Even though Denver had a Midwestern flair, between the wars it had become very culturally diverse. William Wyckoff writes in Creating Colorado that in the early years,
Colorado’s earliest settlers, Native Americans, had been almost completely eliminated or placed upon reservations. The earliest Hispanic and French settlers had moved out, built their own separate communities, or had assimilated into the dominant white culture. Along with Midwestern values, white settlers brought Methodism, Lutheranism, and Presbyterianism. Resident Hispanos, immigrant Mexicans, and Italians were largely committed, dutiful Roman Catholics. Later migrations brought Eastern European Orthodoxy and Mormonism; both groups were often mistreated and misplaced. Needless to say, by World War II, Denver was culturally and religiously diverse compared to its far west brother and sister cities. Likely, only San Francisco surpassed Denver in this area. Along with severe protestant values, white settlers had brought a rugged individualism, puritanical moralism, and a relentless longing for, and romanticism of, the past.

Significance of the Facts in the Total Meaning of the Play

This play is largely about holding on to the past or at least a romantic illusion of what the past is. It is about escape and ignoring reality. Amazingly, no one even mentions the war. Because the war was as common a topic in 1943 as was the weather, this is particularly significant. Pinney Dowd, the rugged, earthy pioneer woman, ironically, left an estate that would allow the entire Dowd family to distance itself from the problems of the world and in its community. It seems likely that Veta, Myrtle, and Elwood are not even aware that there had been a decade-long depression. Elwood is “reminiscent of the Joe College Era” (Chase 4), Veta is still holding forums and trying to marry her daughter off to a respectable gentleman, and Myrtle is a spoiled little doll that acts to greedily maintain a high-society lifestyle.

The facts, or given circumstances, of this play are important, in large part, because they represent everything these characters are trying to escape, avoid, or ignore. Even though many of
these problems are the types of struggles that Pinney Dowd and other homesteaders like her survived, characters in this play ignore the problems of minorities, farmers, miners, and the mentally ill. Yet, it is these struggles that offset the romanticism of the bygone days of trail blazing and dirt farming. Veta, Mrs. Chauvenet, Betty Chumley, and other wealthy whites in Denver choose to close their eyes to this reality, just as they choose to close their eyes to Harvey the pooka. Elwood, on the other hand, is the only character that freely and openly admits to his disdain for reality and responsibility.

The mountains and plateaus of Colorado represent the isolationists of America who fought tooth and nail to keep the United States out of the war and to ignore Hitler’s genocidal extermination. Mountains and plateaus act as blinders, blinding us to the growing problem of mental illness and the institutions built to provide a cure. Spring represents the naivété and childlikeness of youth. It is the coming out from the winter of The Great Depression and the hard times of reality into the playfulness of spring, prosperity, and the hopeful return to the so-called good old days. Veta’s puritanical Protestant moral ethics are fostered by the isolation of the Rocky Mountains. She is a prohibitionist, against any consumption of alcohol, and she views sex as a dirty act, given by God strictly as a means of procreation and possibly as a way to punish all of womankind for Eve’s sin of tempting Adam with that awful piece of fruit.

Previous Action by Character

Elwood

- has played pinochle at the Fourth Avenue Firehouse (Chase 3).
- his mother willed the house to him (4).
- joined several clubs (5).
- has spent a great deal of his time at the Fourth Avenue Firehouse and at Charlie’s Place
• has attended horse shows (6).
• mail was delivered to him (7).
• has spoken of Mrs. Chauvenet (7).
• called Mrs. Chauvenet Aunt Ethel (7).
• born April 24, 1896 (11).
• has been single all of his life (11).
• has visited taverns (14).
• invited strangers to the house (14).
• insisted that his closest friend is a big, white rabbit (15).
• had business cards printed (18).
• had an old phone number (18).
• had trust in Judge Gaffney (23).
• cut holes in Harvey’s hat (20).
• lived next door to Mrs. McElinney (29).
• was well liked (35).
• had “brains, personality, and friends” (35).
• women sent him blue-scented envelopes (35).
• was always calm (35).
• always wanted to share everything with Veta (39).
• brought home, six months ago, a large portrait of Harvey and himself (39).
• knew the foreman at the grain elevator (40).
• met generous girls in his youth (49).

• wrestled with reality for forty years (49).

• developed a friendship with Mr. McNulty, the bartender at Charlie’s Place (53).

• drank and played the jukebox at Charlie’s Place (54).

• talked to strangers at Charlie’s Place (54).

• introduced Harvey to strangers (54).

• one night several years ago, walked along Fairfax Street between 18th and 19th (55).

• helped Ed Hickey into a taxi (55).

• father’s name was John Frederick (55).

• had a playmate named Verne McElhinney as a child (55).

• promised Harvey he would take him to the floor show (56).

• said that, “Mrs. McElhinney’s Aunt Rose would drop in on her unexpectedly tonight from Cleveland” (59).

• has predicted many other things (59).

• signed Power of Attorney over to Veta (64).

• gave Veta the key to his safety deposit box (64).

• his mother said to him, “you must be oh, so smart or oh, so pleasant (64).

• read and memorized part of “Ovid’s Fifth Elegy” (64).

• women have kissed him (65).

• gave Myrtle money for her new hair-do for the party (67).

• has always been generous (69).

• for years, he knew what his family thinks of Harvey (71).

Veta
• invited ladies to the forum (1).

• hired or invited a vocalist and accompanist (2).

• her mother, Pinney Dowd, traveled to Denver by oxen as a child and founded the Wednesday Forum (2).

• has known vocalist, Miss Tewksbury, for years (2).

• decorated the house for the forum (2).

• has been trying to find Myrtle a match (3).

• told Myrtle to promise she would not say “Harvey” (3).

• wondered whether her mother knew about Harvey (4).

• knows her mother died in Elwood’s arms (4).

• misplaced the forum guest list (5).

• her husband died (6).

• invited Mrs. Frank Cummings to the forum (6).

• has seen Mr. Cummings (7).

• took mail up to Elwood’s room (7).

• has met Mrs. Halsey (9).

• has been disgraced by Elwood before (9).

• when she calls, Elwood has always come (9).

• born and raised in Denver, 343 Temple Drive (11).

• gave birth to Myrtle (11).

• was born in July or August (11).

• told Myrtle to hold her “head up and go on just the same” (11).
• knew, or at least knew of, Dr. Chumley (12).
• lived in Des Moines, Iowa up until her mother’s death (13).
• asked Myrtle Mae, “if your uncle was so lonesome why couldn’t he bring home something
• human?” (15).
• saw Harvey more than once (15).
• has been under a nervous strain (15).
• has been depressed (15).
• has been losing sleep (15).
• has lost temper (15).
• has worried (15).
• brought up Elwood’s drinking (21).
• has done the signing and managing for the family (23).
• expressed her disdain for Harvey (28).
• said that if a man jumped her, she would fight (37).
• paid some man to paint a portrait of her mother (43).
• took an art course last winter (44).
• November 2\textsuperscript{nd}, saw and heard Harvey (58).
• November 2\textsuperscript{nd}, told Harvey, “to hell with you” (58).
• there have been no psychopathic members in her family (60).
• had some bad experiences with her father and husband (70).

\textbf{Myrtle}

• likes to exaggerate (2).
• got dressed in a Rancho Rose dress (2).

• has been looking for a man (3).

• her father died (6).

• lived in Des Moines, Iowa (13).

• everyone in her father’s family died (58).

Sanderson

• was one of twelve interviewed for the position at Chumley’s Rest (13).

• was hired to work at Chumley’s Rest (13).

• mentioned Nurse Kelly’s name in his sleep (17).

• observed Nurse Kelly’s flirtatious mannerisms (18).

• studied and trained in psychiatry for years (24).

• respected Chumley’s reputation (47).

• was dancing in the Rose Room at the Frontier Hotel Saturday night (47).

• saw Nurse Kelly and her date at the Frontier Hotel Saturday night (47).

• he and his date bumped into Kelly and date twice (48).

• has used formula 977 in hundreds of psychopathic cases (60).

Chumley

• made a rule against his staff fraternizing (24).

• has had many patients who saw animals (26).

• has known several men named Harvey (26).

• invented Formula 977 for mental illness (26).

• promised to attend Dr. McClure’s cocktail party (27).

• has lost his temper (29).
• has had patients escape before (40).
• was stingy in the presence of Nurse Kelly (52).
• has been to, or has seen pictures of, a cottage camp outside of Akron (62).

Mrs. Chauvenet

• her father was a scout with Buffalo Bill (3).
• has a grandson (3).
• thought Veta was dead (5).
• has “known” Myrtle since she was a baby (6).
• came to see Elwood (6).
• discussed Elwood with Mr. Chauvenet (6).
• it has been years since she has seen Elwood (6).
• has attended horse shows (6).

Kelly

• was dancing in the Rose Room at the Frontier Hotel Saturday night (47).
• saw Sanderson and his date at the Frontier Hotel Saturday night (47).
• had never before worn burnt orange (49).

Lofgren

• lived in Denver all of his life (68).
• has been with Apex Cab Company for fifteen years (68).
• has taken other patients out to Chumley’s Rest to receive medication treatment (69).
• stopped and watched sunsets and birds flying (69).

Judge Gaffney

• put the deed to the Dowd Mansion in his safe (35).
• told Veta that he went for walks (38).
• has played and given up games at the club (70).

Betty Chumley
• promised to attend Dr. McClure’s cocktail party (27).
• at some point, expected her family to like her friends (28).
• hired a cook (33).

Wilson
• has been working at Chumley’s Rest for ten years (41).
• was impressed with Sanderson (46).

Analysis of Dialogue

In his book *Play Directing*, Francis Hodge writes that dialogue’s primary function is to ‘contain the dramatic action’ [sic], to be its primary vehicle.

In addition, although dialogue may appear as a written line on a printed page, its primary intention is to be *heard* [sic] rather than read. It is talk and not writing. (24)

To be in line with Hodge, one must examine dialogue from an oral as well as from an aural perspective. Critical to this examination is an overview of word choice, phrase selection, and sentence structure. A more complete understanding of dialogue should also include, moreover, a study of imagery in the language. It is necessary for the director to be able to mentally visualize the images that are created by the words in order to best communicate this to the actor. Finally, an analysis of any peculiar characteristics and of the structure of language will help the director to have a thorough knowledge of the dialogue because language structure and peculiarities flavor the play, making it unique in its own way.

Mary Chase’s experience in journalism helped her to choose words and phrases for
Harvey that have texture. For instance, her use of expletives, that were probably a bit shocking crepe such as “modish Ranch Rose toned” and “picked up at the girdle with a touch of magenta on emerald” (2). To enhance the word “chat,” Veta utilizes “gay” and “little” (9). Moreover, in describing Veta’s strain, Doctor Sanderson calls it a “nervous strain” (15), hitting Veta’s character on the head of the nail. “Cunning type of psychopath” (16) is how Sanderson defines Veta to Nurse Kelly, and in modifying her reaction to Elwood’s drinking he says that it “was entirely too intense” (21). Later, Elwood illuminates the word “moments” with the adjective “golden” and depicts Harvey as “bigger and grander than anything [other people] offer [him]” (54). Thus, strong adjectives can color a script, making it bigger and grander than it would otherwise be.

The author also provides texture through varied sentence structures. Mrs. Chase’s use of a brief exclamatory sentences, for instance, makes dialogue economical and excited:

   MYRTLE. Now? I should say not! Go on, Mother.
   JUDGE. What did he do, Veta?
   VETA. He took me upstairs and tore my clothes off.
   MYRTLE. Oh—did you hear that, Judge! Go on, Mother.
   JUDGE. By God—I’ll sue them for this!
   VETA. And then he sat me down in a tub of water.
   MYRTLE. Oh! For heaven’s sake! (37)

Mrs. Chase, in this bit of dialogue as well as throughout the script, complies with the rules of good writing by saving words. Lajos Egri writes in his book *The Art of Dramatic Writing*, “Art is selective, not photographic, and your point will carry further if unhampered by unnecessary verbiage” (240). Questions in response to other questions, forming many question
clusters throughout the script help to pique audience curiosity. One such cluster comes in the form of an entrance interview between doctor and potential patient:

SANDERSON. Been losing sleep?
VETA. How could anybody sleep with that going on?
SANDERSON. Short-tempered over trifles? (Chase 15)

Later, Elwood engages Wilson in a question dual, creating a moment of comic ping-pong and rhythmic clash:

ELWOOD. Does he have any?
WILSON. Does he have any what?
ELWOOD. Does he have any affairs?
WILSON. How would I know? (52)

A frantic, choppy sentence pattern, indicated by lots of internal and external dashes, is peppered throughout this play, creating, in turn, a frantic, immediate tonal quality within its dialogue. In a frenzy to track down Elwood, Doctors Sanderson and Chumley both contribute to this tone:

SANDERSON. Main gate—Henry—Dr. Sanderson—
CHUMLEY. Gaffney—Judge Gaffney—
SANDERSON. Henry—did a man in a brown suit go out through the gate a minute ago? He did? He’s gone? (32)

Notably, the series of questions at the end of this sequence further heightens the rhythmic, building frenzy erupting from the circumstances and the will of each character. Also notable, however, is Elwood’s role in preventing the dialogue and action from stumbling into a frenzied style typical of farces:

The differences between those who found the pace at times too slow and those who
felt that it scurried may have stemmed from the fact that the play moves rapidly but constantly restrained from frenzy by the appearances of Elwood Dowd, who can neither be hurried nor rushed. His entrances bring an aura of tranquility that counterbalances the frantic actions of the other characters. (Berger 91)

Images which tie into the other senses, thereby igniting an emotional response, connect author, actor, and audience. In this play, images are created through a wide variety of word combinations, sentence structures, and dialogue segments. Veta Simmons’ language is probably some of the most sense-oriented language in the script. “The minute she’s finished singing we open the dining-room doors and we begin pouring. The parlors and halls are festooned with smilax. Yes, festooned” (Chase 4). Filled with words that sound interesting, this line not only reveals character, but it carries the action as well. “Just as conflict must come from character, and the sense of the speech from both, so must the sound of speech come from all the others” (Egri 243). Almost poetic in his speech, Wilson uses language that is often engaging, stirring both image and emotion. “Slick as a whistle,” Wilson announces about Veta. “She’s comin’ along the path hummin’ a little tune. I jumped out at her from behind a tree. I says ‘Sister—there’s a man wants to see you.’ Shoulda heard her yell! She’s whacky, all right” (Chase 18). Wilson’s language in this bit of dialogue is loaded with sights and sounds, giving the director and actor plenty of images with which to explore.

Repetition of words, phrases, and sentences enhance images within the text providing clarity and creating a peculiar, yet comically interesting, pattern within the dialogue. The term “doctor,” for instance, in both its full and abbreviated forms, is used well over a hundred times in this play. In a few units of action it is spoken as many as fifteen times and sometimes several times in just a couple of lines. Veta Simmons’ dialogue, moreover, is loaded with repetition,
repeating such phrases as, “She’ll do an encore” (2), and “You said that name. You promised you wouldn’t say that name and you said it” (3). Eventually, other characters join Veta in a bath of repetition:

    JUDGE. Get her some tea, Myrtle. Do you want some tea, Veta?
    VETA. I’ll get you some tea, Mother. Get her coat off, Judge.
    JUDGE. Let Myrtle get your coat off, Veta. Get her coat off, Myrtle.
    VETA. Leave me alone. Let me sit here. Let me get my breath.
    MYRTLE. Let her get her breath, Judge.
    VETA. Let me sit here a minute and then let me get upstairs to my own bed where I can let go. (36)

In order to be effective, language in a play ought to lend itself to a dialectical growth. Evidence of this type of growth is revealed in Harvey in the form of comedic development. Misconception, for example, rests heavily upon language and its dialectical growth. Although Elwood believes that Doctor Sanderson is speaking of an affair between Nurse Kelly and himself when he says, “Miss Kelly and I have made a mistake here this afternoon” (20), he is actually referring to the “mistake” of committing Elwood instead of Veta. The climax of this beat is achieved when Doctor Sanderson admits, “Now if I had seen your sister first—that would have been an entirely different story” (20-21). Elwood’s reaction is gentle rather than contradictory. “Now there you surprise me. I think the world of Veta—but I supposed she had seen her day” (21). Within this beat, the conflict rises gradually to end at the apex of comic pleasure. Dialogue, writes Egri, “must work within itself on the principle of slowly rising conflict. When you name several things you must save the most impressive for last” (242). Despite other dramaturgical flaws and a penchant for irritating some critics, Mrs. Chase had a gift for impressive dialogue,
at least as far as audiences have been concerned.
Dramatic Analysis

Act One

Scene One

MYRTLE. Mrs. Simmons? Mrs. Simmons is my mother, but she has guests this afternoon. Who wants her? Oh—wait just a minute. Mother! Psst—Mother!

MYRTLE. Telephone.

VETA. Oh, no, dear. Not with all of them in there. Say I’m busy.

MYRTLE. But, Mother. It’s the Society Editor of the Evening News Bee—

VETA. Oh—the Society Editor. She’s very important. Good
afternoon Miss Ellerbe. This is Veta Simmons. Yes—a tea and
reception for the members of the Wednesday Forum. You
might say—program tea. My mother, you know—the late
Marcella Pinney Dowd, pioneer cultural leader she came
here by ox-team as a child and she founded the Wednesday
Forum. Myrtle—how many would you say?

MYRTLE. Seventy-five, at least. Say a hundred.

VETA. Seventy-five. Miss Tewksbury is the soloist,
accompanied by Wilda McCurdy, accompanist.

MYRTLE. Come on! Miss Tewksbury is almost finished with
her number

VETA. She’ll do an encore.

MYRTLE. What if they don’t give her a lot of applause?

VETA. I’ve known her for years. She’ll do an encore. You
might say that I am entertaining, assisted by my daughter.

What color would you call that?

MYRTLE. Rancho Rose, they told me.

VETA. Miss Myrtle Mae Simmons looked charming in a modest
Rancho Rose toned crepe, picked up at the girdle with a
touch of magenta on emerald. I wish you could see her,

Miss Ellerbe.

MYRTLE. Mother—please—she’s almost finished and where’s
the cateress?
VETA. Everything’s ready. The minute she’s finished singing we open the dining-room doors and we begin pouring. The parlors and halls are festooned with smilax. Yes, festooned.

That’s right. Yes, Miss Ellerbe, this is the first party we’ve had in years. There’s a reason but I don’t want it in the papers. We all have our troubles, Miss Ellerbe. The guest list? Oh, yes—

MYRTLE. Mother—come. 

VETA. If you’ll excuse me now, Miss Ellerbe. I’ll call you later. 

MYRTLE. Mother—Mrs. Chauvenet just came in!

VETA. Mrs. Eugene Chauvenet Senior! Her father was a scout with Buffalo Bill.

MYRTLE. So that’s where she got that hat!

VETA. Myrtle, you must be nice to Mrs. Chauvenet. She has a grandson about your age.

MYRTLE. But what difference will it make, with Uncle Elwood?—Mae!

VETA. Myrtle—remember! We agreed not to talk about that this afternoon. The point of this whole party is to get you started. We work through those older women to the younger group.

MYRTLE. We can’t have anyone here in the evenings, and that’s when men come to see you—in the evenings. The only reason we can have a party this afternoon is because Uncle Elwood
is playing pinochle at the Fourth Avenue Firehouse. Thank
God for the firehouse!

VETA. I know—but they’ll just have to invite you out and it  
won’t hurt them one bit. Oh, Myrtle—you’ve got so much

V reveals

to offer. I don’t care what anyone says, there’s something

sweet about every young girl. And a man takes that sweetness,  

V wards

and look what he does with it! But, you’ve got to meet somebody,

Myrtle. That’s all there is to it.

MYRTLE. If I do they say, That’s Myrtle Mae Simmons! Her uncle  

M anguishes

is Elwood P. Dowd—the biggest screwball in town. Elwood

P. Dowd and his pal—

VETA. You promised.

V stifles

MYRTLE. All right—let’s get them into the dining-room.

M allows

VETA. Now when the members come in here and you make  

V amplifies

your little welcome speech on behalf of your grandmother—

be sure to do this.

MYRTLE. And then after that, I mention my Uncle Elwood and  

M chucks

say a few words about his pal Harvey. Damn Harvey!

VETA. Myrtle Mae—that’s right! Let everybody in the Wednesday  

V crunches

Forum hear you. You said that name. You promised you

wouldn’t say that name and you said it.

MYRTLE. I’m sorry, Mother. But how do you know Uncle Elwood  

M pleads

won’t come in and introduce Harvey to everybody?
VETA. This is unkind of you Myrtle Mae. Elwood is the biggest heartache I have. Even if people do call him peculiar he’s still my brother, and he won’t be home this afternoon.

MYRTLE. Are you sure?

VETA. Of course I’m sure.

MYRTLE. But Mother, why can’t we live like other people?

VETA. Must I remind you again? Elwood is not living with us—we are living with him.

MYRTLE. Living with him and Harvey! Did grandmother know about Harvey?

VETA. I’ve wondered and wondered about that. She never wrote if she did.

MYRTLE. Why did she have to leave all of her property to Uncle Elwood?

VETA. Well, I suppose it was because she died in his arms. People are sentimental about things like that.

MYRTLE. You always say that and it doesn’t make sense. She couldn’t make out her will after she died, could she?

VETA. Don’t be didactic, Myrtle Mae. It’s not becoming in a young girl, and men loathe it. Now don’t forget to wave your hand.

MYRTLE. I’ll do my best.

VETA. Oh, dear—Miss Tewksbury’s voice is certainly fading!
MYRTLE. But not fast enough.

VETA. Lovely, Miss Tewksbury—perfectly lovely. I loved it.

ELWOOD. Excuse me a moment. I have to answer the phone.

Make yourself comfortable, Harvey. Hello. Oh, you’ve got the wrong number. But how are you, anyway? This is Elwood P. Dowd speaking. I’ll do? Well, thank you. And what is your name, my dear? Miss Elsie Greenawalt? Harvey, it’s a Miss Elsie Greenawalt. How are you today, Miss Greenawalt? That’s fine. Yes, my dear. I would be happy to join your club. I belong to several clubs now—the University Club, the Country Club and the Pinochle Club at the Fourth Avenue Firehouse. I spend a good deal of my time there, or at Charlie’s Place, or over at Eddie’s Bar. And what is your club, Miss Greenawalt? Harvey, I get the Ladies Home Journal, Good Housekeeping and the Open Road for Boys for two years for six twenty-five. It sounds fine to me. I’ll join it. How does it sound to you, Harvey. Harvey says it sounds fine to him also, Miss Greenawalt. He says he will join, too.

Yes—two subscriptions. Mail everything to this address.

... I hope I will have the pleasure of meeting you some time, my dear. Harvey, she says she would like to meet me.

When? When would you like to meet me, Miss Greenawalt?

Why not right now? My sister seems to be having a few E cures
friends in and we would consider it an honor if you would come and join us. My sister will be delighted. 343 Temple Drive—I hope to see you in a very few minutes. Goodbye, my dear. She’s coming right over. Harvey, don’t you think we better freshen up? Yes, so do I.

VETA. I can’t seem to remember where I put that guest list. I must read it to Miss Ellerbe. . . . Have you seen it, Miss Johnson?

MAID. No, I haven’t, Mrs. Simmons.

VETA. Look on my dresser.

MYRTLE. Mother—Mrs. Chauvenet—she’s asking for you.

Here’s Mother, Mrs. Chauvenet. Here she is.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Veta Louise Simmons! I thought you were dead.

VETA. Aunt Ethel! Oh, no—I’m very much alive—thank you—

MRS. CHAUVENET. —and this full-grown girl is your daughter—

I’ve known you since you were a baby.
MRS. CHAUVENET. What’s your name, dear?

VETA. This is Myrtle—Aunt Ethel. Myrtle Mae—for the two sisters of her father. He’s dead. That’s what confused you.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Where’s Elwood?

VETA. He couldn’t be here, Aunt Ethel—now let me get you some tea.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Elwood isn’t here?

VETA. No—

MRS. CHAUVENET. Oh, shame on him. That was the main reason I came. I want to see Elwood.

VETA. Come—there are loads of people anxious to speak to you.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Do you realize, Veta, it’s been years since I’ve seen Elwood?

VETA. No—where does the time go?

MRS. CHAUVENET. But I don’t understand it. I was saying to Mr. Chauvenet only the other night—what on earth do you suppose has happened to Elwood Dowd? He never comes to the club dances anymore. I haven’t seen him at a horse show in years. Does Elwood see anybody these days?

VETA. Oh, yes—Aunt Ethel. Elwood sees somebody.

MYRTLE. Oh, yes.
MRS. CHAUVENET. Your Uncle Elwood, child, is one of my favorite people. Always has been.

VETA. Yes, I remember.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Is Elwood happy, Veta?

VETA. Elwood’s very happy, Aunt Ethel. You don’t need to worry about Elwood—Why there’s Mrs. Frank Cummings—just came in. Don’t you want to speak to her?

MRS. CHAUVENET. My—but she looks ghastly! Hasn’t she failed though?

VETA. If you think she looks badly—you should see him!

MRS. CHAUVENET. Is that so? I must have them over. She looks frightful. I thought she was dead.

VETA. Oh, no.

MRS. CHAUVENET. Now—what about tea, Veta?

VETA. If you will forgive me, I will precede you—

MRS. CHAUVENET. Elwood! Elwood Dowd! Bless your heart.

ELWOOD. Aunt Ethel! What a pleasure to come in and find a beautiful woman waiting for me!

MRS. CHAUVENET. Elwood—you haven’t changed.

VETA. Come along, Aunt Ethel—you mustn’t miss the party.

MYRTLE. There’s punch if you don’t like tea.

MRS. CHAUVENET. But I do like tea. Stop pulling at me, you two. Elwood, what night next week can you come to dinner?
ELWOOD. Any night at all, Aunt Ethel—I would be delighted.

VETA. Elwood, there’s some mail for you today. I took it up to your room.

ELWOOD. Did you, Veta? That was nice of you. Aunt Ethel—I want you to meet Harvey. As you can see he’s a Pooka.

Harvey, you’ve heard me speak of Mrs. Chauvenet? We always called her Aunt Ethel. She is one of my oldest and dearest friends. Yes—yes—that’s right. She’s the one. This is the one. He says he would have known you anywhere.

You both look lovely. Come on in with me, Harvey—We must say hello to all of our friends—I beg your pardon, Aunt Ethel. If you’ll excuse me for one moment—

MRS. CHAUVENET. What?

ELWOOD. You are standing in his way—Come along, Harvey. Uh-uh! Go right on in, Harvey. I’ll join you in a minute. Aunt Ethel, I can see you are disturbed about Harvey. Please don’t be. He stares like that at everybody. It’s his way. But he liked you. I could tell. He liked you very much.

VETA. Some tea—perhaps—?

MRS. CHAUVENET. Why, I—not right now—I—well—I think I’ll be running along.

MYRTLE. But—

VETA. I’m so sorry—
MRS. CHAUVENET. I’ll—I’ll be talking to you soon. Goodbye—CH propels and M pull CH]
goodbye—
a. mood adjectives

1) sight: clean
2) sound: pop
3) touch: cold
4) taste: tart
2) smell: acrid

__________________________

U

b. Metaphor: trapped bird

MYRTLE. Oh, God—Oh, my God!

VETA. Myrtle—where are you going?

MYRTLE. Up to my room. He’s introducing Harvey to everybody. M shrinks

I can’t face those people now. I wish I were dead.

VETA. Come back here. Stay with me. We’ll get him out of there V grasps

and upstairs to his room.

MYRTLE. I won’t do it. I can’t. I can’t.

VETA. Myrtle Mae! Now—pretend I’m fixing your corsage. V possesses

MYRTLE. Oh, Mother!

VETA. We’ve got to. Pretend we’re having a gay little chat. V glistens

Keep looking. When you catch his eye, tell me. He always comes when I call him. Now, then—do you see him yet?

MYRTLE. No—not yet. How do you do Mrs. Cummings. M mirrors

VETA. Smile, can’t you? Have you no pride? I’m smiling— V poses

and he’s my own brother!
MYRTLE. Oh, Mother—people get run over every day. Why M skewers can't something like that happen to Uncle Elwood?

VETA. Myrtle Mae Simmons, I'm ashamed of you. This thing V points is not your uncle's fault.

MYRTLE. Ouch! You're sticking me with that pin! M curls


MYRTLE. Mrs. Cummings is leaving. Uncle Elwood must have M curdles told her what Harvey is. Oh, God!

VETA. Hello—this is Mrs. Simmons. Should you come in the V shuns clothes you have on—What have you on? Who is this? But (Medium) 8. The Humiliation I don't know any Miss Greenawalt. Should you what?—May [M antagonizes V, M spies and V scolds M]

I ask who invited you? Mr. Dowd! Thank you just the same, a. mood adjectives but I believe there has been a mistake.—Well, I never!

MYRTLE. Never what? M spies 1) sight: sheer

VETA. One of your Uncle Elwood's friends. She asked me if V smashes 2) sound: shrill she should bring a quart of gin to the Wednesday Forum! B 3) touch: elastic

MYRTLE. There he is—he's talking to Mrs. Halsey. M scours 4) taste: sticky

VETA. Is Harvey with him? V admits 5) smell: clean

MYRTLE. What a thing to ask! How can I tell? How can M collars b. Metaphor: melted anybody tell but Uncle Elwood?

VETA. Oh, Elwood, could I see you a moment, dear? I promise V beckons you your uncle has disgraced us for the last time in this

house. I'm going to do something I've never done before. V pounds B
MYRTLE. What did you mean just now when you said this was not Uncle Elwood’s fault? If it’s not his fault, whose fault is it?

VETA. Never you mind. I know whose fault it is. Now lift up your head and smile and go back in as though nothing had happened.

MYRTLE. You’re no match for Uncle Elwood.

VETA. You’ll see.

MYRTLE. Mother’s waiting for you.

VETA. Elwood! Could I see you for a moment, dear?

ELWOOD. Yes, sister. Excuse me, Harvey.

VETA. Elwood, would you mind sitting down in here and waiting for me until the party is over? I want to talk to you. It’s very important.

ELWOOD. Of course, sister. I happen to have a little free time right now and you’re welcome to all of it, Veta. Do you want Harvey to wait too?

VETA. Yes, Elwood. I certainly do.

ELWOOD. Ah—Jane Austen. Sit down, Harvey. Veta wants
to talk to us. She said it was important. I think she wants
to congratulate us on the impression we made at her party.

Jane Austen—De Luxe Edition—Limited—Grosset and
Dunlap—The usual acknowledgements. Chapter One—

Scene Two

KELLY. Mrs. O. R. Simmons, 343 Temple Drive, is that right?

VETA. We were born and raised there. It’s old but we love it. It’s our home.

KELLY. And you wish to enter your brother here at the sanitarium for treatment. Your brother’s name?

VETA. It’s—oh—

KELLY. Mrs. Simmons, what is your brother’s name?

VETA. I’m sorry. Life is not easy for any of us. I’ll have to hold my head up and go on just the same. That’s what I keep telling Myrtle and that’s what Myrtle Mae keeps telling me. She’s heart-broken about her Uncle Elwood—Elwood P. Dowd. That’s it.
KELLY. Elwood P. Dowd. His age? K expedites 1) sight: steep

VETA. Forty-seven the 24th of last April. He’s Taurus—Taurus V scatters 2) sound: lapping
the bull. I’m Leo, and Myrtle is on a cusp. 3) touch: tight

KELLY. Forty-seven. Is he married? K exacts 4) taste: nutty

VETA. No, Elwood has never married. He stayed with mother. V harks 5) smell: fresh

He was always a great home boy. He loved his home. B

KELLY. You have him with you now? K implies

VETA. He’s in a taxicab down on the driveway. I gave the driver V leans a dollar to watch him, but I didn’t tell the man why. You V hushes can’t tell these things to perfect strangers.______________________U

KELLY. Mr. Wilson, would you step down to a taxi in the K scoops {Medium}
driveway and ask a Mr. Dowd if he would be good enough 12. The Escort
to step up to Room number 24—South Wing G? W startles K, and

WILSON. Ask him? W jerks K hints to W

KELLY. This is his sister, Mrs. Simmons. K dices a. mood adjectives

1) sight: crowded
2) sound: rumble
3) touch: prickly
4) taste: peppery
5) smell: choking

b. Metaphor: burnt popcorn

WILSON. How do—why, certainly—be glad to escort him. W bends U

VETA. Thank you. V resigns
KELLY. The rates here, Mrs. Simmons—you’ll find them printed on this card.

VETA. That will all be taken care of by my mother’s estate. The late Marcella Pinney Dowd. Judge Gaffney is our attorney.

KELLY. Now I’ll see if Dr. Sanderson can see you.

VETA. Dr. Sanderson? I want to see Dr. Chumley himself.

KELLY. Oh, Mrs. Simmons, Dr. Sanderson is the one who sees everybody. Dr. Chumley sees no one.

VETA. He’s still head of this institution, isn’t he? He’s still a psychiatrist, isn’t he?

KELLY. Still a psychiatrist! Dr. Chumley is more than that. He is a psychiatrist with a national reputation. Whenever people have mental breakdowns they at once think of Dr. Chumley.

VETA. That’s his office, isn’t it? Well you march right in and tell him I want to see him. If he knows who’s in here he’ll come out here.

KELLY. I wouldn’t dare disturb him, Mrs. Simmons. I would be discharged if I did.

VETA. Well, I don’t like to be pushed off onto any second fiddle.

KELLY. Dr. Sanderson is nobody’s second fiddle. He’s young,
of course, and he hasn’t been out of medical school very long, but Dr. Chumley tried out twelve and kept Dr. Sanderson. He’s really wonderful—to the patients.

VETA. Very well. Tell him I’m here.

KELLY. Right away. Oh dear—oh dear.

ELWOOD. Veta—isn’t this wonderful—!

VETA. Thank you. I hope you don’t think I’m jumpy like that all the time, but—

SANDERSON. Of course not. Miss Kelly tells me you are concerned about your brother. Dowd, is it? Elwood P. Dowd?
VETA. Yes, Doctor—he’s—this isn’t easy for me, Doctor.  

SANDERSON. Naturally these things aren’t easy for the families of patients. I understand.

VETA. It’s what Elwood’s doing to himself, Doctor—that’s the thing. Myrtle Mae has a right to nice friends. She’s young and her whole life is before her. That’s my daughter.

SANDERSON. Your daughter. How long has it been since you began to notice any peculiarity in your brother’s actions?

VETA. I noticed it right away when Mother died, and Myrtle Mae and I could see that he—that he—

SANDERSON. That he—what? Take your time, Mrs. Simmons. Don’t strain. Let it come. I’ll wait for it.

VETA. Doctor—everything I say to you is confidential? Isn’t it?

SANDERSON. That’s understood.

VETA. Because it’s a slap in the face to everything we’ve stood for in this community the way Elwood is acting now.

SANDERSON. I am not a gossip, Mrs. Simmons. I am a psychiatrist.

VETA. Well—for one thing—he drinks.

SANDERSON. To excess?

VETA. To excess? Well—don’t you call it excess when a man never lets a day go by without stepping into one of those

15. The Switch
cheap taverns, sitting around with riffraff and people you
never heard of? Inviting them to the house—playing cards
with them—giving them food and money. And here I am
trying to get Myrtle Mae started with a nice group of young
people. If that isn’t excess I’m sure I don’t know what
excess is.

SANDERSON. I didn’t doubt your statement, Mrs. Simmons.  
I merely asked if your brother drinks.

VETA. Well, yes, I say definitely Elwood drinks and I want
him committed out here permanently, because I cannot
stand another day of that Harvey. Myrtle and I have to
set a place at the table for Harvey. We have to move over
on the sofa and make room for Harvey. We have to answer
the telephone when Elwood calls and asks to speak to Harvey.

Then at the party this afternoon with Mrs. Chauvenet there—
We didn’t even know anything about Harvey until we came
back here. Doctor, don’t you think it would have been a little
bit kinder of Mother to have written and told me about Harvey?

Be honest, now—don’t you?

SANDERSON. I really couldn’t answer that question, because

VETA. I can. Yes—it certainly would have.

SANDERSON. This person you call Harvey—who is he?
VETA. He is a rabbit. V explores

SANDERSON. Perhaps—but just who is he? Some companion— S speculates

someone your brother has picked up in these bars, of whom you disapprove?

VETA. Doctor—I’ve been telling you. Harvey is a rabbit—a big V accelerates

white rabbit—six feet—or is it six feet and a half? Heavens knows I ought to know. He’s been around the house long enough. B

SANDERSON. Now, Mrs. Simmons, let me understand this— S narrows you say—

VETA. Doctor—do I have to keep repeating myself? My brother V dumps

insists that his closest friend is this big white rabbit. This rabbit is named Harvey. Harvey lives at our house. Don’t you understand? He and Elwood go every place together. Elwood buys railroad tickets, theatre tickets, for both of them. As I told Myrtle Mae—if your uncle was so lonesome he had to bring something home—why couldn’t he bring home something human? He has me, doesn’t he? He has Myrtle Mae, doesn’t he? I’m going to tell you something I’ve never told anybody in the world before. Every once in a while I see that big white rabbit myself. Now isn’t that terrible? I’ve never even told that to Myrtle Mae. B

SANDERSON. Mrs. Simmons— S bumps

VETA. And what’s more—he’s every bit as big as Elwood V flushes
says he is. Now don’t ever tell that to anybody, Doctor.

I’m ashamed of it.

SANDERSON. I can see that you have been under a great nervous strain recently.

VETA. Well—I certainly have.

SANDERSON. Grief over your mother’s death depressed you considerably?

VETA. Nobody knows how much.

SANDERSON. Been losing sleep?

VETA. How could anybody sleep with that going on?

SANDERSON. Short-tempered over trifles?

VETA. You just try living with those two and see how your temper holds up.

SANDERSON. Loss of appetite?

VETA. No one could eat at a table with my brother and a big white rabbit. Well, I’m finished with it. I’ll sell the house—be appointed conservator of Elwood’s estate, and Myrtle Mae and I will be able to entertain our friends in peace. It’s too much, Doctor. I just can’t stand it.

SANDERSON. Of Course, Mrs. Simmons. Of course it is.

You’re tired.

VETA. Oh, yes I am.

SANDERSON. You’ve been worrying a great deal.
VETA. Yes, I have. I can’t help it.  
VETA. Oh, Doctor . . . .  
VETA. I'll just go down to the cab and get Elwood's things.

SANDERSON. And now I'm going to help you.  
SANDERSON. Just sit there quietly, Mrs. Simmons. I'll be right back.  

SANDERSON. Why didn’t someone answer the buzzer?  
KELLY. I didn’t hear you, Doctor—  

WILSON. She’s mad with a getaway, huh, doc?  

SANDERSON. Her condition is serious. Go after her.  

16. Relief  

17. The Getaway
KELLY. I can’t believe it.

SANDERSON. Main Gate. Henry, Dr. Sanderson. Allow no one out of the main gate. We’re looking for a patient. I shouldn’t have left her alone, but no one answered the buzzer.

KELLY. Wilson was in South, Doctor.

SANDERSON. What have we available, Miss Kelly?

KELLY. Number 13, upper West R., is ready, Doctor.

SANDERSON. Have her taken there immediately, and I will prescribe preliminary treatment. I must contact her brother. Dowd is the name. Elwood P. Dowd. Get him on the telephone for me, will you please, Miss Kelly?

KELLY. But Doctor—I didn’t know it was the woman who needed the treatment. She said it was for her brother.

SANDERSON. Of course she did. It’s the oldest dodge in the world—always used by a cunning type of psychopath. She apparently knew her brother was about to commit her, so she came out to discredit him. Get him on the telephone, please.

KELLY. But, Doctor—I thought the woman was all right, so I had Wilson take the brother up to No. 24 South Wing G.
He’s there now.

SANDERSON. You had Wilson take the brother in? No gags, please Kelly. You’re not serious, are you?

KELLY. Oh, I did, Doctor. I did. Oh, Doctor, I’m terribly sorry.

SANDERSON. Oh, well then, if you’re sorry, that fixes everything.

Oh—no!

KELLY. I’ll do it, Doctor. I’ll do it. Dunphy—will you please unlock the door to Number 24—and give Mr. Dowd his clothes and--?

SANDERSON. Ask him to step down to the office right away.

KELLY. Ask him to step down to the office right away. There’s been a terrible mistake and Dr. Sanderson wants to explain—

SANDERSON. Explain? Apologize!

KELLY. Thank heaven they hadn’t put him in a hydro tub yet.

She’ll let him out.

SANDERSON. Beautiful—and dumb, too. It’s almost too good to be true.

KELLY. Doctor—I feel terrible. I didn’t know. Judge Gaffney called and said Mrs. Simmons and her brother would be out here, and when she came in here—you don’t have to be sarcastic.

SANDERSON. Oh, don’t I? Stop worrying. We’ll squirm out of it some way.
KELLY. Where are you going?

SANDERSON. I’ve got to tell the chief about it, Kelly. He may want to handle this himself.

KELLY. He’ll be furious. I know he will. He’ll die. And then he’ll terminate me.

SANDERSON. The responsibility is all mine, Kelly.

KELLY. Oh, no—tell him it was all my fault, Doctor.

SANDERSON. I never mention your name. Except in my sleep.

KELLY. But this man Dowd—

SANDERSON. Don’t let him get away. I’ll be right back.

KELLY. But what shall I say to him? What shall I do? He’ll be furious.

SANDERSON. Look, Kelly—he’ll probably be fit to be tied—but he’s a man, isn’t he?

KELLY. I guess so—his name is Mister.

SANDERSON. Go into your old routine—you know—the eyes—the swish—the works. I’m immune—but I’ve seen it work with some people—some of the patients out here.

Keep him here, Kelly—if you have to do a strip tease.

KELLY. Well, of all the—oh—you’re wonderful, Dr. Sanderson! You’re just about the most wonderful person I ever met in my life.
Hendrixson 62

a. mood adjectives

1) sight: bright
2) sound: harsh
3) touch: warm
4) taste: spicy
5) smell: fragrant

b. Metaphor: dry flint

WILSON. Yeah—but how about giving me a lift here just the same?

KELLY. What?

WILSON. That Simmons dame.

KELLY. Did You catch her?

WILSON. Slick as a whistle. She was comin' along the path hummin' a little tune. I jumped out at her from behind a tree. I says "Sister—There's a man wants to see you."

Shoulda heard her yell! She's whacky, all right. 

KELLY. Take her to No. 13 upper West R.

WILSON. She's there now. Brought her in through the diet kitchen. She's screamin' and kickin' like hell. I'll hold her if you want to come and undress her.

KELLY. Just a second, Wilson. Dr. Sanderson told me to stay here till her brother comes down—

WILSON. Make it snappy—
KELLY. You’re Mr. Dowd?

ELWOOD. Elwood P.

KELLY. I’m Miss Kelly.

ELWOOD. Let me give you one of my cards. If you should want to call me—call me at this number. Don’t call me at that one. That’s the old one.

KELLY. Thank you.

ELWOOD. Perfectly all right, and if you lose it—don’t worry, my dear. I have plenty more.

KELLY. Won’t you have a chair, please, Mr. Dowd?

ELWOOD. Thank you. I’ll have two. Allow me. B

KELLY. Dr. Sanderson is very anxious to talk to you. He’ll be here in a minute. Please be seated.

ELWOOD. After you, my dear.

KELLY. Oh I really can’t, thank you. I’m in and out all of the time. But you mustn’t mind me. Please sit down.

ELWOOD. After you.

KELLY. Could I get you a magazine to look at? B

ELWOOD. I would much rather look at you, Miss Kelly, if you don’t mind. You really are very lovely.

KELLY. Oh—well. Thank you. Some people don’t seem to think so.

ELWOOD. Some people are blind. This is often brought to
my attention. And now, Miss Kelly—I would like to have
you meet—__________________________

SANDERSON. Mr. Dowd?

ELWOOD. Elwood P. Let me give you one of my cards. If you
should want—

SANDERSON. Mr. Dowd—I'm Dr. Lyman Sanderson, Dr.
Chumley's assistant out here.

ELWOOD. Well, good for you! I'm happy to know you. How
are you, Doctor?

SANDERSON. That's going to depend on you, I'm afraid. Please
sit down. You've met Miss Kelly, Mr. Dowd?

ELWOOD. I have had that pleasure, and I want both of you to
meet a very dear friend of mine—

SANDERSON. Later on—be glad to. Won't you be seated,
because first I want to say—

ELWOOD. After Miss Kelly—

SANDERSON. Sit down, Kelly—Is that chair quite comfortable, Mr. Dowd?

ELWOOD. Yes, thank you. Would you care to try it?

SANDERSON. No, thank you. How about an ashtray there?
Could we give Mr. Dowd an ashtray? Is it too warm in
here for you, Mr. Dowd? Would you like me to open a
window?

22. The Apology

[S kisses E, and E turns S]
KELLY. Mr. Dowd—Dr. Sanderson wants to know if he should open a window?

ELWOOD. That’s entirely up to him. I wouldn’t presume to live his life for him.

SANDERSON. Now then, Mr. Dowd, I can see that you’re not the type of person to be taken in by a lot of high-flown phrases or beating about the bush.

ELWOOD. Is that so, Doctor?

SANDERSON. You have us at a disadvantage here. You know it. We know it. Let’s lay the cards on the table.

ELWOOD. That certainly appeals to me, Doctor.

SANDERSON. Best way in the long run. People are people no matter where you go.

ELWOOD. That’s very often the case.

SANDERSON. And being human are therefore liable to mistakes. Miss Kelly and I have made a mistake here this afternoon, Mr. Dowd, and we’d like to explain it to you.

KELLY. It wasn’t Dr. Sanderson’s fault, Mr. Dowd. It was mine.

SANDERSON. A human failing as I said.

ELWOOD. I find it very interesting, nevertheless. You and Miss Kelly here? This afternoon—you say?

KELLY. We do hope you’ll understand, Mr. Dowd.
ELWOOD. Oh, yes. Yes. These things are often the basis of a long and warm friendship.

SANDERSON. And the responsibility is, of course, not hers—but mine.

ELWOOD. Your attitude may be old-fashioned, Doctor—but I like it.

SANDERSON. Now, if I had seen your sister first—that would have been an entirely different story.

ELWOOD. Now there you surprise me. I think the world and all of Veta—but I had supposed she had seen her day.

SANDERSON. You must not attach any blame to her. She is a very sick woman. Came in here insisting you were in need of treatment. That’s perfectly ridiculous.

ELWOOD. Veta shouldn’t be upset about me. I get along fine.

SANDERSON. Exactly—but your sister had already talked to Miss Kelly, and there had been a call from your family lawyer, Judge Gaffney—

ELWOOD. Oh, yes, I know him. Know his wife, too. Nice people.

SANDERSON. Is there something I can get for you, Mr. Dowd?

ELWOOD. What did you have in mind?
SANDERSON. A light—here—let me give you a light. Your sister was extremely nervous and plunged right away into a heated tirade on your drinking.

ELWOOD. That was Veta.

SANDERSON. She became hysterical.

ELWOOD. I tell Veta not to worry about that. I'll take care of that.

SANDERSON. Exactly. Oh, I suppose you take a drink now and then—the same as the rest of us?

ELWOOD. Yes, I do. As a matter of fact, I would like one right now.

SANDERSON. Matter of fact, so would I, but your sister's reaction to the whole matter of drinking was entirely too intense. Does your sister drink, Mr. Dowd?

ELWOOD. Oh, no, Doctor. No. I don't believe Veta has ever taken a drink.

SANDERSON. Well, I'm going to surprise you. I think she has and does—constantly.

ELWOOD. I am certainly surprised.

SANDERSON. But it's not her alcoholism that's going to be the basis for my diagnosis of her case. It's much more serious than that. It was when she began talking so emotionally about this big white rabbit—Harvey—yes, I believe she
called him Harvey—

ELWOOD. Harvey is his name.

SANDERSON. She claimed you were persecuting her with this Harvey.

ELWOOD. I haven't been persecuting her with Harvey. Veta shouldn't feel that way. And now, Doctor, before we go any further I must insist you let me introduce—

SANDERSON. Let me make my point first, Mr. Dowd. This trouble of your sisters didn't spring up overnight. Her condition stems from trauma.

ELWOOD. From what?


ELWOOD. That's the one we never get over—

SANDERSON. You have a nice sense of humor, Dowd—

hasn't he, Miss Kelly?

KELLY. Oh, yes, Doctor.

ELWOOD. May I say the same about both of you?

SANDERSON. To sum it all up—your sister's condition is serious, but I can help her. She must however remain out here temporarily.

ELWOOD. I've always wanted Veta to have everything she
needs.

SANDERSON. Exactly.

ELWOOD. But I wouldn’t want Veta to stay out here unless she liked it out here and wanted to stay out here.

SANDERSON. Of course. Did Wilson get what he went after?

KELLY. Yes, Doctor.

SANDERSON. What was Mrs. Simmons’ attitude, Miss Kelly?

KELLY. Not unusual, Doctor.

SANDERSON. Mr. Dowd, if this were an ordinary delusion—something reflected on the memory picture—in other words, if she were seeing something she had seen once—that would be one thing. But this is more serious. It stands to reason nobody has ever seen a white rabbit six feet high.

ELWOOD. Not very often, Doctor.

SANDERSON. I like you, Dowd.

ELWOOD. I like you, too, Doctor. And Miss Kelly here.

SANDERSON. So she must be committed here temporarily. Under these circumstances I would commit my own grandmother.

ELWOOD. Does your grandmother drink, too?

SANDERSON. It’s just an expression. Now will you sign these temporary commitment papers as next-of-kin—just a formality?
ELWOOD. You’d better have Veta do that, Doctor. She always does all the signing and managing for the family. She’s good at it.

SANDERSON. We can’t disturb her now.

ELWOOD. Perhaps I’d better talk it over with Judge Gaffney?

SANDERSON. You can explain it all to him later. Tell him I advised it. And it isn’t as if you couldn’t drop in here any time and make inquiries. Glad to have you. I’ll make out a full visitor’s pass for you. When would you like to come back? Wednesday, say? Friday, say?

ELWOOD. You and Miss Kelly have been so pleasant I can come back right after dinner. About an hour.

SANDERSON. Well—we’re pretty busy around here, but I guess that’s all right.

ELWOOD. I don’t really have to go now. I’m not very hungry.

SANDERSON. Delighted to have you stay—but Miss Kelly and I have to get on upstairs now. Plenty of work to do. But I tell you what you might like to do.

ELWOOD. What might I like to do? ________ B

SANDERSON. We don’t usually do this—but just to make sure in your mind that your sister is in good hands—why don’t you look around here? If you go through the door—and turn right just beyond the stairway you’ll find the
occupational therapy room down the hall, and beyond that
the conservatory, the library and the diet kitchen.

ELWOOD. For Veta’s sake I believe I’d better do that, Doctor.  
SANDERSON. Very well, then. It’s been a great pleasure to
have this little talk with you, Mr. Dowd.

ELWOOD. I’ve enjoyed it too, Doctor—meeting you and
Miss Kelly.

SANDERSON. And I will say that for a layman you show an
unusually acute perception into psychiatric problems.

ELWOOD. Is that a fact? I never thought I knew anything
about it. Nobody does, do you think?

SANDERSON. Well—the good psychiatrist is not found
under every bush.

ELWOOD. You have to pick the right bush. Since we all seem
to have enjoyed this so much, let us keep right on. I would
like to invite you to come with me now down to Charlie’s
Place and have a drink. When I enjoy people I like to stay
right with them.

SANDERSON. Sorry—we’re on duty now. Give us a rain-check.  
Some other time be glad to.

ELWOOD. When?

SANDERSON. Oh—I can’t say right now. Miss Kelly and I
don’t get off duty till ten o’clock tonight.
ELWOOD. Let us go to Charlie’s at ten o’clock tonight.

SANDERSON. Well—

ELWOOD. And you, Miss Kelly?

KELLY. I—

SANDERSON. Dr. Chumley doesn’t approve of members of the staff fraternizing, but since you’ve been so understanding perhaps we could manage it.

ELWOOD. I’ll pick you up out here in a cab at ten o’clock tonight and the four of us will spend a happy evening. I want you both to become friends with a very dear friend of mine. You said later on—so later on it will be. Goodbye,

now.__________________________

KELLY. Whew—now I can breathe again!

SANDERSON. Boy, that was a close shave all right, but he seemed to be a pretty reasonable sort of fellow. That man____B

is proud—what he has to be proud of I don’t know. I played up to that pride. You can get to almost anybody if you want to. Now I must look in on that Simmons woman.

KELLY. Dr. Sanderson—! You say you can get to anybody if you want to. How can you do that?

SANDERSON. Takes study, Kelly. Years of specialized training. S erupts

There’s only one thing I don’t like about this Dowd business.

KELLY. What’s that?
SANDERSON. Having to make that date with him. Of course the man has left here as a good friend and booster of this
sanitarium—so I guess I’ll have to go with him tonight—but you don’t have to go.

KELLY. Oh!

SANDERSON. No point in it. I’ll have a drink with him, pat him on the back and leave. I’ve got a date tonight, anyway.

KELLY. Oh, yes, by all means. I didn’t intend to go anyway.

The idea bored me stiff. I wouldn’t go if I never went anywhere again. I wouldn’t go if my life depended on it.

SANDERSON. What’s the matter with you, Kelly? What are you getting so emotional about?

KELLY. He may be a peculiar man with funny clothes, but he knows how to act. His manners were perfect.

SANDERSON. I saw you giving him the doll-puss stare. I didn’t miss that.

KELLY. He wouldn’t sit down till I sat down. He told me I was lovely and called me dear. I’d go to have a drink with him if you weren’t going.

SANDERSON. Sure you would. And look at him! All he does is hang around bars. He doesn’t work. All that corny bowing and getting up out of his chair every time a woman makes a move. Why, he’s as outdated as a cast-iron deer. But you’d
sit with him in a bar and let him flatter you.—You’re a wonderful girl, Kelly.

KELLY. Now let me tell you something—you—

CHUMLEY. Dr. Sanderson! Miss Kelly!

KELLY AND SANDERSON. Yes, Doctor?

CHUMLEY. Tell the gardener to prune more carefully around my prize dahlias along the fence by the main road. They’ll be ready for cutting next week. The difficulty of the woman who has the big white rabbit—has it been smoothed over?

SANDERSON. Yes, Doctor. I spoke to her brother and he was quite reasonable.

CHUMLEY. While I have had many patients out here who saw animals, I have never before had a patient with an animal that large.

SANDERSON. Yet, Doctor. She called him Harvey.

CHUMLEY. Harvey. Unusual name for an animal of any kind. Harvey is a man’s name. I have known several men in my day named Harvey, but I have never heard of any type of animal whatsoever with that name. The case has an interesting phase, Doctor.

SANDERSON. Yes, Doctor.

CHUMLEY. I will now go up stairs with you and look in on this woman. It may be that we can use my formula 977 on her.
I will give you my advice in prescribing the treatment, 

Doctor.

SANDERSON. Thank you, Doctor.

B  S clicks

CHUMLEY. And now—may I ask—what is that hat and coat doing on that table? Whose is it?

SANDERSON. I don’t know. Do you know, Miss Kelly? Was it Dowd’s?

KELLY. He had his hat on, Doctor. Perhaps it belongs to one of the patients.

CHUMLEY. There may be some kind of identification—

Here—what’s this—what’s this? Two holes cut in the crown of this hat. See!

KELLY. That’s strange!

CHUMLEY. Some new fad—put them away. Hang them up—

C discards

get them out of here.

_________________________ U

WILSON. Hello, Dr. Chumley.

W props  {Medium-Slow}

CHUMLEY. Oh, there you are.

C fondles 25. The Puppy

WILSON. How is every little old thing?

W prances  [C pets W, and W cuddles C]

a. mood adjectives

1) sight: portly

2) sound: snappy

3) touch: tepid
Hendrixson 76

4) taste: cool
5) smell: sweet

b. Metaphor: a boy and his

CHUMLEY. Fair, thank you, Wilson, fair. B C putters pet

WILSON. Look—Somebody’s going to have to give me a W frazzles

hand with this Simmons dame—order a restraining jacket

or something. She’s terrible. Forget me, didn’t you? Well,

I got her corset off all by myself.

CHUMLEY. We’re going up to see this patient right now, C points Wilson.

WILSON. She’s in a hydro tub now—my God—I left the water W whips

running on her! U

BETTY. Willie—remember your promise—. Hello, Dr. B gobbles {Fast}

Sanderson. Willie, you haven’t forgotten Dr. McClure’s

cocktail party? We promised them faithfully.

CHUMLEY. That’s right. I have got to go upstairs now and

look in on a patient. Be down shortly— C steals C delays B]

a. mood adjectives

BETTY. Give a little quick diagnosis, Willie—we don’t want B nibbles 1) sight: crinkled

to be late to the party. I’m dying to see the inside of that

house. Good evening.

2) sound: screen
3) touch: sharp
4) taste: ripe
5) smell: fresh

b. Metaphor: migraine
ELWOOD. Good evening. E stills {Medium}

BETTY. I am Mrs. Chumley. Doctor Chumley's wife. B waddles 27. The Lift

ELWOOD. I'm happy to know that. Dowd is my name. Elwood E yammers [E raises B, and B P. Let me give you one of my cards. If you should want to call me—call me at this one. Don’t call me at that one, because that’s—the old one.

BETTY. Thank you. Is there something I can do for you? B titters 2) sound: raspy

ELWOOD. What did you have in mind? E grabs 3) touch: uneven

BETTY. You seem to be looking for someone. B halts 4) taste: savory

ELWOOD. Yes, I am. I'm looking for Harvey. I went off E peeks 5) smell: musty without him.


ELWOOD. Oh, no. Nothing like that. E settles

BETTY. Does he work here? B pries

ELWOOD. Oh no. He is what you might call my best friend. E envelops

He is also a pooka. He came out with me and Veta this afternoon.

BETTY. Where was he when you last saw him? B tips

ELWOOD. In that chair there—with his hat and coat on the table. E reflects

BETTY. There doesn’t seem to be any hat and coat around here now. Perhaps he left? B agitates

ELWOOD. Apparently. I don’t see him anywhere. E scours
BETTY. What was the word you just said—pooka?

ELWOOD. Yes—that’s it.

BETTY. Is that something new?

ELWOOD. Oh, no. As I understand it. That’s something very old.

BETTY. Oh, really? I had never happened to hear it before.

ELWOOD. I’m not too surprised at that. I hadn’t myself, until I met him. I do hope you get an opportunity to meet him.

I’m sure he would be quite taken with you.

BETTY. Oh, really? Well, that’s very nice of you to say so, I’m sure.

ELWOOD. Not at all. If Harvey happens to take a liking to people he expresses himself quite definitely. If he’s not particularly interested, he sits there like an empty chair or an empty space on the floor. Harvey takes his time making his mind up about people. Choosey, you see.

BETTY. That’s not such a bad way to be this day and age.

ELWOOD. Harvey is fond of my sister, Veta. That’s because he is fond of me, and Veta and I come from the same family.

Now You’d think that feeling would be mutual, wouldn’t you? But Veta doesn’t seem to care for Harvey. Don’t you think that is rather too bad, Mrs. Chumley?

BETTY. Oh, I don’t know, Mr. Dowd. I gave up a long time
ago expecting my family to like my friends. It's useless.

ELWOOD. But we must keep on trying.

BETTY. Well, there's no harm in trying, I suppose.

ELWOOD. Because if Harvey has said to me once he has said

to me a million times—"Mr. Dowd, I would do anything

for you." Mrs. Chumley—

BETTY. Yes—

ELWOOD. Did you know that Mrs. McElhinney's Aunt Rose is

going to drop in on her unexpectedly tonight from Cleveland?

BETTY. Why, no I didn't—

ELWOOD. Neither does she. That puts you both in the same

boat, doesn't it?

BETTY. Well, I don't know anybody named—Mrs.—

ELWOOD. Mrs. McElhinney? Lives next door to us. She is a

wonderful woman. Harvey told me about her Aunt Rose.

That's an interesting little news item, and you are perfectly

free to pass it around.

BETTY. Well, I—

ELWOOD. Would you care to come downtown with me now,

my dear? I would be glad to buy you a drink.

BETTY. Thank you very much, but I am waiting for Dr. Chumley

and if he came down and found me gone he would be liable

to raise—he would be irritated!
ELWOOD. We wouldn't want that, would we? Some other time, maybe?

BETTY. I'll tell you what I'll do, however.

ELWOOD. What will you do, however? I'm interested.

BETTY. If your friend comes in while I'm here I'd be glad to give him a message for you.

ELWOOD. Would you do that? I'd certainly appreciate that.

BETTY. No trouble at all. I'll write it down on the back of this. What would you like me to tell him if he comes in while I'm still here?

ELWOOD. Ask him to meet me downtown—if he has no other plans.

BETTY. Meet Mr. Dowd downtown. Any particular place down-town?

ELWOOD. He knows where. Harvey knows this town like a book.

BETTY. Harvey—you know where. Harvey what?

ELWOOD. Just Harvey.

BETTY. I'll tell you what.

ELWOOD. What?

BETTY. Doctor and I are going right down-town—to 12th and Moneview. Dr. McClure is having a cocktail party.

ELWOOD. A cocktail party at 12th and Montview.
BETTY. We’re driving there in a few minutes. We could give your friend a lift into town.

ELWOOD. I hate to impose on you—but I would certainly appreciate that.

BETTY. No trouble at all. Dr. McClure is having this party for his sister from Wichita.

ELWOOD. I didn’t know Dr. McClure had a sister in Wichita.

BETTY. Oh—you know Dr. McClure?

ELWOOD. No.

BETTY. But—

ELWOOD. You’re quite sure you haven’t time to come into town with me and have a drink?

BETTY. I really couldn’t—but thank you just the same.

ELWOOD. Some other time, perhaps?

BETTY. Thank you.

ELWOOD. It’s been very pleasant to meet you, and I hope to see you again.

BETTY. Yes, so do I.

ELWOOD. Goodnight, my dear. You can’t miss Harvey. He’s very tall—Like that—

CHUMLEY. That Simmons woman is uncooperative, Doctor. She refused to admit to me that she has this big white rabbit. Insists it’s her brother. Give her two of these at 28. The Hint [B briefs C, and C]
nine—another at ten—if she continues to be so restless.

Another trip to the hydro room at eight, and one in the
morning at seven. Then we’ll see if she won’t cooperate

tomorrow, won’t we, Doctor?

SANDERSON. Yes, Doctor.

CHUMLEY. You know where to call me if you need me.

Ready, pet?

BETTY. Yes, Willie—and oh, Willie—

CHUMLEY. Yes—

BETTY. There was a man in here—a man named—let me see—

Oh, here is his card—Dowd—Elwood P. Dowd.

SANDERSON. That’s Mrs. Simmons’ brother, Doctor. I told

him he could look around, and I gave him full visiting

privileges.

CHUMLEY. She mustn’t see anyone tonight. Not anyone at

all. Tell him that.

SANDERSON. Yes, Doctor.

BETTY. He didn’t ask to see her? He was looking for someone—

some friend of his.

CHUMLEY. Who could that be, Dr. Sanderson?

SANDERSON. I don’t know, Doctor.

BETTY. He said it was someone he came out here with this
SANDERSON. Was there anyone with Dowd when you saw him, Miss Kelly?

KELLY. No, Doctor—not when I saw him.

BETTY. Well, he said there was. He said he last saw his friend sitting right in that chair with his hat and coat. He seemed quite disappointed.

KELLY. Dr. Sanderson—

BETTY. I told him if we located his friend we’d give him a lift into town. He could ride in the back seat. Was that all right, Willie?

CHUMLEY. Of course—of course—

BETTY. Oh, here it is. I wrote it down on the back of this card. His friend’s name was Harvey.

KELLY. Harvey!

BETTY. He didn’t give me his last name. He mentioned something else about him—pooka—but I didn’t quite get what that was.

SANDERSON and CHUMLEY. Harvey!

BETTY. He said his friend was very tall—. Well, why are you looking like that, Willie? This man was a very nice, polite man, and he merely asked that we give his friend a lift into town, and if we can’t do a favor for someone, why are we living?
Hendrixson 84

SANDERSON. Where—where did he go, Mrs. Chumley? How long ago was he in here?

CHUMLEY. Get me that hat! By George, we'll find out about this! U

BETTY. I don’t know where he went. Just a second ago.

SANDERSON. Main gate—Henry—Dr. Sanderson— S presses

CHUMLEY. Gaffney—Judge Gaffney— C smacks

SANDERSON. Henry—did a man in a brown suit go out through S reaches

the gate a minute ago? He did? He’s gone?

CHUMLEY. Judge Gaffney—this is Dr. William Chumley— C balances {Fast}

the psychiatrist. I’m making a routine checkup on the spelling of a name before entering it into our records. Judge—you telephoned out here this afternoon about having a client of yours committed? How is that name spelled? With a W, not a U—Mr. Elwood P. Dowd. Thank you, Judge—Dr._______ B

Sanderson—I believe your name is Sanderson?

SANDERSON. Yes, Doctor. S clinches 3) touch: hard

CHUMLEY. You know that much, do you? You went to medical school—you specialized in the study of psychiatry? C sizzles 4) taste: harsh

You graduated—you went forth. Perhaps they neglected to tell you that a rabbit has large pointed ears! That a hat for a rabbit would have to be perforated to make room for those ears?
SANDERSON. Dowd seemed reasonable enough this afternoon, Doctor.

CHUMLEY. Doctor—the function of a psychiatrist is to tell the difference between those who are reasonable, and those who merely talk and act reasonably. Do you realize what you have done to me? You don’t answer. I’ll tell you. You have permitted a psychopathic case to walk off these grounds and roam around with an overgrown rabbit. You have subjected me—a psychiatrist—to the humiliation of having to call—of all things—a lawyer to find out who came out here to be committed—and who came out here to commit!

SANDERSON. Dr. Chumley—I—

CHUMLEY. Just a minute, Wilson—I want you. I will now have to do something I haven’t done in fifteen years. I will have to go out after this patient, Elwood P. Dowd, and I will have to bring him back, and when I do bring him back, your connection with this institution is ended—as of that moment! Wilson, get the car. Pet, call the McClures and say we can’t make it. Miss Kelly—come upstairs with me and we’ll get that woman out of the tub—

KELLY. Yes—Doctor—
BETTY. I’ll have to tell the cook we’ll be home for dinner. She’ll be furious. Wilson—

WILSON. Yes, ma’am.

BETTY. What is a pooka?

WILSON. A what?

BETTY. A pooka.

WILSON. You can search me, Mrs. Chumley.

BETTY. I wonder if it would be in the Encyclopedia here? They have everything here. I wonder if it is a lodge, or what it is! Oh, I don’t dare to stop to do this now. Dr. Chumley won’t want to find me still here when he comes down. He’ll raise—I mean—oh, dear! P-o-o-k-a. “Pooka. From the old Celtic mythology. A fairy spirit in animal form. Always very large. The pooka appears here and there, now and then, to this one and that one at his own caprice. A wise but mischievous creature. Very fond of rumpots, crack-pots,” and how are you, Mr. Wilson. How are you Mr. Wilson? Who in the encyclopedia wants to know? Oh—to hell with it!
Character Analysis

In his book *The Art of Dramatic Writing*, Lajos Egri writes that:

A human being is a maze of seeming contradictions. Planning one thing, he at once does another; loving, he believes he hates. Man oppressed, humiliated, beaten, still professes sympathy and understanding for those who have beaten, humiliated and oppressed him. (50)

Because of these contradictions, several of the characters in Mary Chase’s *Harvey* lend themselves to an interesting collage of conflict. However, only a few of these characters are dense enough to be considered complex. “The density of a character—how simple or complex he may be—is determined from how much he participates in the action of a play and from the quality of the participation and what kind it is” (Hodge 40). Thus, Elwood P. Dowd and his sister Veta Louise Simmons, by Hodge’s definition, are the most complex, dense, and important characters in this play. They both are on stage more than any other character, and they both drive much of the action, conflict, climax, and resolution. All the other characters’ actions revolve around, and depend upon, the actions of Elwood and Veta.
Elwood P. Dowd

It could easily be argued that one of Elwood Dowd’s strongest desires is that of peace. This is evident in his enjoyment of reading a good book with a stiff drink in his hand. His appreciation of alcohol does not prove, however, that he is an alcoholic. For Elwood, it is mostly a social connection. Alcohol does not bring him peace. A focus on the here and now seems to be his goal. Unfortunately, the here and now for Elwood really isn’t the here and now. It is thirty years prior to the action of the play, before either great war affected the world and especially America. Peace is then achieved by ignoring these changes.

Nonetheless, Elwood is in the present with people. His human contacts tend to be peaceful and peacemaking. He, for instance, pays Dr. Chumley’s bar tab in order to prevent a clash between him and the bartender. Even with Wilson, the sanitarium’s attendant, Elwood attempts to politely maintain a peaceful relationship. Elwood does not strike out or become aggressive when Wilson verbally assaults and physically attacks him. When Dr. Chumley tells Elwood that Veta tried to have him committed, Elwood creates his own tranquility by striving to avoid interfering in the lives of others. He is not opposed to giving advice, but he encourages others to make their own choices. Realizing that being a busy body only causes stress and discontentment, he, for example, allows Dr. Sanderson the choice of opening the window or not. Also, he advises Dr. Chumley to allow his fantasy woman to speak yet ultimately guides him to control his own life. This whole approach helps Elwood to retain his peace of mind. Other than freedom and love, Elwood is willing to sacrifice everything for the sake of tranquility.

Most people enjoy a certain amount of freedom. For Elwood, freedom takes a very high priority. He is even willing to sacrifice peace to maintain his personal freedom. Initially,
Elwood realizes that much of his freedom lies in his ownership of the Dowd Mansion. It is a place for him to relax, enjoy reading, and invite friends. He, furthermore, enjoys his freedom to go to the firehouse, the granary, and Charlie’s Place. Moreover, Elwood resists Wilson’s insistence on retaining him for longer than he wishes to stay, even if it makes for an unpeaceful situation. Elwood dislikes Wilson’s insults and assaults so much that he does begin to press his buttons a bit with corrections of his inappropriate and improper use of language. He views Wilson as someone who is directly imposing on his freedom.

Elwood’s freedom has been secured by his mother’s estate. He has few responsibilities and, seemingly, a large cash flow. Since he does not have a job, he does not have to spend his time at work. Pinney Dowd, Elwood’s mother, and her parents have paid for his version of freedom. He has not earned it. His way of life, although pleasant, has come easy to him. Reading, drinking, and talking to people can be the focus of his time spent. Even Chumley’s Rest offers more freedom than the awful state facilities his poor countrymen must face because of their dementia or schizophrenia. It is not inherently bad to enjoy these freedoms, but shouldn’t there be some sort of responsibility attached?

More important than peace and even freedom to Elwood is his desire to love and be loved. Judge Gaffney confirms, as he instructs Myrtle, that Elwood had his time when both men and women loved him. They loved him, most likely, because he showed love to them. He is so effective at making people feel good about themselves. Specifically, he has a way of helping people to open up. Mrs. Chauvenet, for instance, loves Elwood, stating that he is one of her favorite people (Chase 6). His mother had good reason, furthermore, for leaving the estate to him. It is likely that she knew the goodness of his heart and his commitment to retain the
Dowd Mansion’s turn-of-the-century appeal. Betty Chumley, additionally, basks in Elwood’s charming politeness and seeming interest in all the minute details of people’s lives. Although she is startled by his offbeat insights, she responds to him with kindness and generosity, even offering Harvey a ride into town. Another woman who warms to Elwood’s charm and kindness is Nurse Kelly. Elwood is polite, respectful, and complimentary. This old-fashioned chivalry is a major aphrodisiac for Ruth Kelly. Whether they admit it or not, many women yearn for this kind of attention.

Men also love Elwood. Dr. Sanderson, who at first is very formal in his treatment of Dowd, eventually becomes almost sensitive and personable, sometimes needing to catch himself. When he is not present, Sanderson speaks harshly about Dowd as a case study and an old-fashioned relic, but when it comes down to it, Sanderson, as stilted as he is, begins to personalize his relationship with Elwood by the third act of the play. Judge Gaffney and Doctor Chumley love Elwood also. Gaffney admits his regret for committing him, and Chumley appreciates him for his understanding of human kindness and the basic need for fantasy. Likewise, Elwood talks about the “golden moments” he enjoys in his relationships with people at Charlie’s Place. Even the bartender appreciates Elwood well enough to allow him in the establishment, though he probably and permanently chases some customers away. Finally, Lofgren, the cabbie, and Elwood connect on a personal level because Elwood simply displays a specific interest in him and invites him to the Dowd Mansion.

Although Elwood loves Myrtle and could love Wilson, neither of these two characters return that sentiment. They, notably, are the only two characters who fall into this category. This is very likely true because of each character’s single-mindedness and narrowness of focus. For example, Myrtle loves herself and her way of life. Nothing can stand in the way of
that. She would rather be dolled up in fancy dresses and going on vacations than making contact with regular, working-class people. Myrtle is self-centered, greedy, and immature. As a result, it is difficult for her to love anyone but herself, and it is impossible for her to see any good in someone like her Uncle Elwood. Although not to the extent that Myrtle is, Wilson is also self-serving. He has “seen a lot of nutcases in [his] time” and has had to deal with them on a regular basis and in a very close way. Ten years at Chumley’s Rest have made him callous and angry, particularly with “wackos.”

Elwood Dowd has a strong will when it comes to meeting and fulfilling his desires. He will only compromise his want for peace for freedom or love. Further, Elwood only sacrifices freedom for love. His love for Veta, for instance, overrides his desire to do as he chooses. Ultimately, he gives into Veta’s request to take the formula that is meant to cure his mental illness even though it violates his free will and will probably bring him nothing but misery and discontentment. This is not to say that he would surrender his freedom for just anyone’s love. But it does give considerable weight to his love for Veta. And, in the end, Veta reciprocates by accepting her fate with Harvey rather than harm her brother in any way. Alternatively, Elwood is not about to surrender to Wilson, Dr. Sanderson, or Dr. Chumley, rejecting Wilson’s demands, Dr. Sanderson’s prescriptions, and Dr. Chumley’s insistence. It is only Veta who can get Elwood to surrender his free will.

Even though Elwood Dowd lacks measurable social responsibility in a grander sense, he does behave in a responsible way with his daily interactions. Not only is he polite, but he also maintains a respect for the free will of others. Refreshingly, Elwood has a live and let live attitude, yet he also remains honest with himself and with others.

Because Elwood Dowd values his own freedom, he also respects the rights of others
to choose their own destiny. This is clearly articulated when he says that, “I wouldn’t presume to live his life for him” (Chase 20). When Elwood says this, he articulates a major focus of his life philosophy. Later, he advises Dr. Chumley to take whiskey as well as beer on his fantasy trip to Akron, but he does not force the issue, stating that “it is not [his] two weeks” (63).

Part of Elwood’s moral stance is his ethical code of politeness and social grace. For example, he habitually uses phrases such as “excuse me” and “make yourself comfortable” (5). Even with Miss Elsie Greenawalt, a perfect stranger who calls his home to sell magazine subscriptions, Elwood says things like “I hope I will have the pleasure of meeting you some time, my dear” and “we would consider it an honor if you would come and join us” (5).

Honesty is another key to Elwood’s moral code. He states this vividly by proclaiming, “I never lie, Mr. Wilson” (53). Furthermore, honesty for Elwood includes an openness about his viewpoints and preferences. Miss Kelly is the recipient of this kind of honesty in the form of compliments such as “I would much rather look at you, Miss Kelly, if you don’t mind. You really are very lovely” (19). Another woman, Betty Chumley, blessed with Elwood’s brand of honesty is told, “I’m sure [Harvey] would be quite taken with you” (28). Not only is Elwood honest with compliments, but he is also direct about what is possible and what is not. He, for example, tells Wilson, “You suggest I button up my lip and give you some straight answers. It can’t be done” (50).

In Francis Hodge’s book **Play Directing**, he states that “unless a director thinks an actor is capable of getting out the dramatic action, looking like the part will accomplish little” (41). Although appearance, manners, and poise are not the only elements in character, they are important in the director’s initial considerations. In the script, Elwood is described as a
man who is “about 47 years old with a dignified bearing and yet a dreamy look in his eyes” (4). It further states about his expression that it is “benign, yet serious to the point of gravity” (4). It stands to reason that Elwood is probably not much shorter than his pal Harvey who, according to Elwood, is “six feet one and a half” (51). A large height difference would be unreasonable because Elwood “brushes off the head of the invisible Harvey” (8). Additionally, one can conclude that Elwood is probably lean; this is true, in part, because Elwood walks most places. The text admits this only inferentially. Cars were very common in Denver in 1943, even with gas rationing and stops in production. Hence, through inference, one can surmise that Elwood is fairly tall and lean, that he moves with grace and comfort, and that he is physically unimposing as the flow of his dialogue suggests. About decorum, Hodge also notes that:

    Such a projection of the outward appearance of a character is superficial because what a person looks like is not a prediction of what he is. Nevertheless, it can be of some value if only to help project the character into the society in which he lives. It is also possible that his physical makeup may be closely related to his mental and emotional temperaments. (40)

Thus, an examination of Elwood’s decorum can help one to understand, at least in some way, why this particular character behaves in the way that he does.

Polar Attitudes

- Start: I like being content and irresponsible.

- End: My love for my sister and my wish to please her outweighs my desire for contentment.

Philosophical Statements
• “Some people are blind. That is often brought to my attention” (19).

• “[Birth is the trauma] we never get over” (22).

• “I never thought I knew anything about [psychiatric problems]. Nobody does do you think?” (24).

• “If he’s not particularly interested, he sits there like an empty chair or empty space on the floor” (28).

• “As you grow older and pretty women pass you by, you will think with deep gratitude of these generous gifts of your youth” (49).

• “Doctor, I wrestled with reality for forty years, and I am happy to state that I finally won out over it” (49).

• “You suggest that I button up my lip and give you some straight answers. It can’t be done” (50).

• “Their hopes, their regrets, their loves, their hates. All very large because nobody ever brings anything small into a bar” (54).

• “There’s a little bit of envy in the best of us—too bad, isn’t it?” (54).

• “An element of conflict in an discussion is a good thing. It means everybody is taking part and nobody is left out” (61).

• “Harvey has overcome not only time and space—but any objections” (62).

• “I always have a wonderful time just where I am, whomever I’m with” (62).

• “For years I was smart. I recommend pleasant” (64).

• “Veta, one can’t have too many friends” (69).

Veta Louise Simmons
Societal position is Veta Louise Simmons’ vital lie. It is her primary flaw and the lie that leads her to make what could be tragic mistakes if this play were to end differently. The desire to maintain some sort of societal position leads Veta into a false sense of honor. However, what saves Veta in the end and what helps to make this play a comedy rather than a tragedy is her want for the love of her family and her need for human kindness and compassion.

Being the protagonist in this play, Veta begins the sequence of events that lead to the story’s climax. The decision to begin this sequence takes place early in the first act when Veta declares that “Uncle Elwood has disgraced us for the last time in this house. I’m going to do something I’ve never done before” (Chase 9). In the big picture, disgrace for Veta is like a strong Victorian embarrassment or social humiliation. Many people, tragically, have mistaken this humiliation as a loss of honor. Yet, the essence of honor is the act of doing something because it is the right thing to do regardless of social disgrace. Thus, true honor can be diametrically opposed to maintaining high social status. Unfortunately, Veta’s wish to “entertain [her] friends” (15) is a stumbling block for Veta and an obstacle in her way to realizing things that are actually more important to her. She says, unfortunately, about Elwood’s bunny friend, “it’s a slap in the face to everything we’ve stood for in this community” (14). Later, Veta reiterates this concern in a very life and death fashion. “Our friends never come to see us—we have no social life; we have no life at all. We’re both miserable. I wish I were dead—but maybe you don’t care” (66).

Veta Simmons has a vigorous want to love, and be loved by, her family, especially by her brother Elwood. This higher, truer, purer goal is suppressed as Veta allows pride and social position to blind her to more important ideals. Even if Elwood causes Veta grief, is her “biggest heartache, and even if people do call him peculiar, he’s still [her] brother” (4).
Clearly, Veta has an inclination to defend her brother at some level. Maybe, in part, it is because Veta believes that Elwood’s Harvey Complex is “not [his] fault” (9). Sadly, Veta’s own harrowing experience at the sanitarium is not enough to convince her to change her mind about placing Elwood there. And it is only when she realizes that Elwood would become a completely different, awful person as a result of taking the esteemed formula that she does a complete turn about on the need for treatment and institutionalization for Elwood. Veta’s ultimate reversal is both evidence of the love for her brother and proof that she desires human kindness and compassion.

As Myrtle insists on, even in the very end, trying to force Elwood to take the formula, Veta quickly and harshly scolds her with, “You shut up! I’ve lived longer than you have. I remember my father. I remember your father” (70). The implication here is that her husband and father both acted like bastards, lacking in kindness and compassion. Veta loves Elwood because he, with all of his faults, is everything they were not. It is a tremendous confession that is at the root of Veta’s struggles. Social status and acceptance are merely things to fill the void; it provides safety, security, and comfort in her seemingly otherwise loveless, and certainly sexless, life. Most important to the credibility of Veta’s character is that she changes. In his book The Art of Dramatic Writing, Lajos Egri agrees that change is essential. He writes, “So we can safely say that any character, in any type of literature, which does not undergo a basic change is a badly drawn character” (61).

“Veta is certainly a whirlwind” (Chase 64), Elwood declares to Dr. Chumley. His declaration is easy to visualize as a metaphorical representation of Veta’s will in this play. The primary concentration of Veta’s will is on meeting the desire of social status. And, it seems to her that Elwood’s freedom and behavior are imposing upon that status. Hence, she
does everything in her power to get Elwood permanently committed. For example, even though she admits to having seen Harvey herself, Veta insists to Dr. Sanderson that Elwood is dangerous and that he needs to be institutionalized. She asserts that, “there is no help for him. He must be picked up and locked up and left” (45). It is far easier for Veta and others like her to put such problems out of sight and out of mind, taking away the embarrassment and relieving some of the guilt. If such people are considered dangerous, then we awaken people’s hunger for safety and security. This hunger is what encourages friends, relatives, and the state to lock up people like Elwood and is the underlying element driving Veta’s will in this play. In one day, Veta acquires the judge’s signature for commitment, packs Elwood’s belongings, arranges for a taxi, takes Elwood to the sanitarium, fills out the necessary paperwork, is committed and released herself, and nearly changes Elwood’s personality with medication all on the same day as her Wednesday forum. Indeed, Veta is a whirlwind.

Morally, Veta has some issues. She is one of those people who seems to be moral because of her prudish disdain for alcohol and sex urges. However, this is just a façade. It is an illusion which replaces true moral fabric. Deep down, Veta’s moral struggle goes back to her childhood. Her lack of self-honesty is a defense mechanism to protect her from the angst of the relationships with her father and now deceased husband. A hint of this struggle is revealed as Veta advises Myrtle that, “there’s something sweet about every young girl. And a man takes that sweetness, and look what he does with it” (3). “What he does with it” is definitely not a positive thing. Veta, ultimately, is as honest with others as she can be considering her present struggle with self-honesty. As a result of this struggle, Veta is easy to read. Furthermore, Veta maintains honesty with Dr. Sanderson, Dr. Chumley, Myrtle, Judge Gaffney, and Elwood. To Dr. Sanderson, she confesses to having seen Harvey once or twice.
Later, Veta instructs Dr. Chumley in the fine points of art appreciation, guides Myrtle in the art of social graces and etiquette, exposes to Judge Gaffney her naughty experience at the sanitarium, and expresses to Elwood her dislike of Harvey’s presence. Unfortunately, due to her current value shift, Veta holds back the one piece of information that might get her a permanent stay at Chumley’s Rest. Sanderson, a perfect stranger and the one person to whom she does open up, acts to do just that. In her core then, Veta is fundamentally truthful and genuine, and this is proven when Veta self-actualizes. Veta is an example of an essentially good person who is struggling with honesty as a result of unkempt, old baggage.

It is difficult to imagine anyone other than Josephine Hull successfully playing Veta; however, it is possible. Veta’s personality exudes short, stocky, feisty, and somewhat nervous. This nervousness is, in part, due to her current internal conflict, but it is, nonetheless, real and consistent throughout the play. For example, short, choppy sentences often lace Veta’s dialogue:

VETA. We’ve got to pretend we’re having a gay little chat. Keep looking. When you catch his eye tell me. He always comes when I call him. Now, then—do you see him yet? (Chase 1.1. 9)

Polar Attitudes

- Start: Elwood needs to be controlled, and I can control him.
- End: Elwood is uncontrollable and does not need to be controlled

Philosophical Statements

- “I don’t care what anyone says, there’s something sweet about every young girl. And a man takes that sweetness, and look what he does with it” (3).
- “Don’t be didactic...It’s not becoming in a young girl, and men loathe it” (4).
• “I always thought that what you were showed on your face” (37).

• “And those doctors came upstairs and asked me a lot of questions—all about sex urges—and all that filthy stuff” (38).

• “Close-set eyes. They’re always liars” (38).

• “You can’t trust anybody” (38).

• “They’re not interested in men at places like that” (39).

• “The difference between a fine oil painting and a mechanical thing like a photograph is simply this: a photograph shows not only the reality but the dream behind it” (44).

• “It’s our dreams that keep us going. That separate us from the beasts. I wouldn’t want to live if I thought it was all eating and sleeping and taking off my clothes” (44).

• “I wish I were dead” (66).

Myrtle Mae Simmons

Myrtle has inherited, from her father, her mother’s need for kindness. This is Myrtle’s basic desire. Her want of leisure, materialism, and social status are dominant but are merely placebos to Myrtle’s true happiness. Often times people allow trivial, temporal things to get in the way of understanding themselves, and thus, have difficulty finding a long-lasting happiness. The essence of Myrtle’s struggle lies in this very idea.

Her mother’s diligent, militant attack to remedy her current state of singleness reinforces Myrtle’s belief that she needs a man to make her happy. Veta tells her daughter that “the point of this whole party is to get you started. We work through those older women to the younger group” (3). Repressed sexual desires further impede Myrtle’s happiness. For her, there seems to be some confusion between sex and kindness. When Veta tells her that her clothes had been torn off at the sanitarium, she becomes naïve and childlike with an exaggerated interest.
This condition spills over into her actual contact with a man, Wilson, the asylum attendant. Oddly, Myrtle becomes shy and girl-like as Wilson flirts to gain her attention. Brief and apologetic responses mark her behavior in this rendezvous. Moreover, she apologizes to her mother for even showing an interest in Wilson.

Leisure, materialism, and social status are high on Myrtle’s wish list. Her hope of leisure becomes clear as she longs for a trip to Pasadena when Elwood is finally locked up and out of her life. Additionally, Myrtle, like many people, enjoys possessions a great deal. Her passion for frilly dresses is symbolic of this hedonistic approach to life. While her uncle is facing a life-altering medical treatment, Myrtle is checking out the draperies in the sanitarium for a possible house-coat material. Furthermore, she asks the selfish question, “Why did [grandmother] have to leave her property to Elwood?” (4). As a result, Myrtle begins to line up possible buyers for her plans to cut up the Dowd Mansion into buffet apartments on the very day Elwood is to be committed. It is evident that Myrtle is centered upon the acquisition of wealth; however, social position is Myrtle’s ultimate candy.

Myrtle has a nagging sweet tooth for high society posh. From the beginning, Myrtle sets her place in the community by being extra polite to the Society Editor of the Evening News Bee. How people view her is so important to her that she is easily embarrassed to the point of humiliation when Elwood introduces Harvey to all the rich, snooty women at the Wednesday Forum. Her death wish for Uncle Elwood only magnifies Myrtle’s determination to get everything she wants. “Oh mother—people get run over by trucks every day. Why can’t something like that happen to Elwood?” (9). Myrtle’s weaknesses, however, help to spark the main action of this play. “Some weakness which seems inconsequential may easily provide the starting point of a powerful play” (Egri 80).
An intensely driven woman, Myrtle is almost entirely will power by nature. For instance, Myrtle begins the play focused upon Elwood’s deficiencies and upon the fact that he is in her way. The obstacle is made clear right from the start. When it becomes Myrtle’s goal, additionally, to sell the Dowd Mansion, she persists vehemently. Even when Judge Gaffney is trying to help her mother, Myrtle has her attention on acquiring the deed to the mansion. Quickly changing the subject from something completely different, she asks him, “Have you got the deed to the house?” (Chase 35). Furthermore, Myrtle has the will to taste affection even if it is vicariously through Veta’s strangely sexual sanitarium experience. When Gaffney tells her to leave the room, she protests, “Now, I should say not” (37). By insisting that Elwood be locked up no matter what, Myrtle displays her will throughout the play. Up to the very end, Myrtle tries to get her way by controlling her mother, screaming, “Mother—Stop this” and, her last line in the play, “Do something with her, Judge—Mother, Stop it” (70). All of this is Myrtle’s desperate attempt to manipulate people around her in order to attain possessions and status.

Most people would consider Myrtle to be an evil character although she is much like a great many individuals. Integrity for Myrtle is not a major value. Also, she is not very honest with herself and others. Two-faced and manipulative are words that easily describe Myrtle. Veta contributes to this description by insisting upon a smile from Myrtle as they “pretend to have a gay, little chat” (9). Pretend, then, is what Myrtle does. In this way, she is Elwood’s opposite. Most significantly, though, Myrtle is dishonest with herself, convincing herself that possessions, status, and sexual kindness are most important to her; but, in reality, Myrtle needs genuine kindness and compassion. Veta helps the audience to connect with this idea when she exposes her own naked desires. She, like Myrtle, wants to be loved.
If one can envision a determined weasel, one can better grasp the character that is Myrtle. Physically, by most American standards, she is no beauty. If she were beautiful in this way, men would probably not be able to see past it long enough to realize her negative personality traits. Thus, she would not need to be set up with grandsons and nephews of high society elitists. Her manner and poise are quick, devious, and sharp. Myrtle’s features, as a result, are sharp, lean, and sneaky like a weasel. Wilson says about Myrtle that she has “a nice build.” If Wilson is the typical American male, as he seems to be, Myrtle is probably lean like a weasel as well.

Polar Attitudes

• Start: The only way to meet a man is through mother’s friends.
• End: I’m not so choosy. I can lure a man on my own.

Philosophical Statements

• “Thank God for the firehouse” (3).
• “I wish I were dead” (8).
• “There’s nothing funny about me. I’m like my father’s family—they’re all dead” (58).

Ethel Chauvenet

Mrs. Chauvenet is like a peacock. The author describes her as “a woman of about 65, heavy, dressed with the casual sumptuousness of a wealthy Western society woman—in silvery gold and plush, and mink scarf even though it is a spring day” (5). Physically, her weight is carried up in the chest and shoulders. She has a showy air about her that demands attention. Her strut is graceful, and her manner is big and bold.

Highly important to Ethel Chauvenet is gaining and sustaining the regard and attention of others. Thus, her greeting, “Veta Louise Simmons! I thought you were dead” (5),
takes the focus away from the greeted and places it upon the greeter, Mrs. Chauvenet. If other people are dead, then she becomes the center of attention. If others look bad, then she looks good. Referring to Mrs. Cummings, Chauvenet declares, “My—but she looks ghastly! Hasn’t she failed though?” (7). Furthermore, Chauvenet tells Myrtle that she has known her since she was a baby but then immediately turns and asks, “What is your name, dear?” (6). This is an obvious ploy to draw regard to herself and away from Myrtle. As a result of Elwood’s attentive doting over her, in addition, Mrs. Chauvenet generously likes him. She waits for his praise, and he willingly heaps it upon her when he says, “What a pleasure to come in and find a beautiful woman waiting for me” (7). The peacock is overjoyed with indulgent pleasure. It is no wonder why Elwood is one of her favorite people.

Not only does Chauvenet appreciate being the center of attention, but she also enjoys a certain amount of status within her sphere. Ethel Chauvenet likes being the matriarch who attends club dances and horse shows. Therefore, her manner and decorum reflect this status of sumptuous wealth and prestige. However, security inevitably drives Ethel Chauvenet away. When she becomes uncomfortable, confused, and unsafe, she withdraws in a hurry. Once Chauvent realizes that Elwood has an imaginary pooka pal, all else goes out the proverbial window.

This peacock, Mrs. Chauvenet, is highly determined to get what she wants. When she enters a room, she controls it by using her space liberally and boldly. Even when she speaks of others, Chauvenet draws attention to herself. At all times, she guides and leads the discussion and is, most of the time, in charge of her own condition. Specifically, when it comes time for her to protect her security and stability by fleeing the scene, she does not hesitate. Within moments, she is gone.
Although Chauvenet is bold, showy, and demanding, she is genuinely so. Audience members and the actor playing this role should not mistake Ethel Chauvenet for someone who is pretentious. She is a true diva, through and through. Furthermore, Chauvenet likes to get the goods on people. When Veta tells her that Mr. Cummings looks worse than his failing wife, she replies, “Is that so? I must have them over” (7). Seemingly getting more attention if other people are either sick or dead, Chauvenet feels better when others feel worse, not because she simply wants harm to come to others but because it adds to her matriarchal power if she outlasts everyone. Surprisingly, she is not a bad person but, instead, is one who is almost completely honest with herself and others. Such honesty is truly a redeeming quality in almost any person.

Judge Omar Gaffney

The author of the text writes that Omar Gaffney is an elderly, white-haired man, and it implies that he is probably lean in appearance since he is able to convince Veta that his daily regimen consists of long walks. Further, much incidental evidence exits within the script that suggests that Gaffney is vertically challenged or, at least, thinks he is. It is likely the reason why Wilson and Doctor Chumley do not take him seriously and why he overcompensates by being so demanding and declarative. Moreover, Gaffney’s constant threats to sue people are also a form of overcompensation. He can be likened to a hostile chipmunk, demanding the return of its nuts.

Among Gaffney’s many desires, is his want to get back to his precious game at the club. He seems to place a great deal of importance upon this game, preferring to be doing that than most anything else. Regardless, he does drop his game to meet the needs of others and does appear to be a just and fair man. For instance, Gaffney wants Myrtle to be fair to Elwood. Liking and respecting Elwood a great deal, Gaffney is bothered that Myrtle has no
regard for him or his well being. When Myrtle reveals her plan to sell the mansion, Gaffney declares, “Now see here, Myrtle Mae. This house doesn’t belong to you. It belongs to your Uncle Elwood” (35). Furthermore, Judge Gaffney attempts to exact justice for Veta as she tries to recover from her disastrous experience at the sanitarium. Elwood, Judge Gaffney believes, is of good character because he is willing to share everything with his sister.

In harmony with his Napoleon complex, Gaffney has a desire for power and control. In this way, Judge Gaffney is determined to control everything in order to compensate for some perceived deficiency. Specifically, he battles for control over Myrtle:

JUDGE. Get her some tea, Myrtle. Do you want some tea, Veta?

MYRTLE. I’ll get some tea, Mother. Get her coat off, Judge.

JUDGE. Let Myrtle get your coat off, Veta. Get her coat off Myrtle. (Chase 2.1. 36)

In addition, Judge Gaffney uses his judicial power to gain control over the circumstances of others. Initially, one power play is his authorization to place Elwood in Chumley’s Rest even against his better judgement. Another way that Gaffney initiates control is by touting his weapon of legal action at his own caprice. Gaffney, furthermore, uses commanding language in order to help wield his gavel of domination. “Chumley—well, well, well—I’ve got something to say to him” (40). He has no problem ordering people around or telling Veta to “sit down there, girl” (59).

In the big picture, Judge Gaffney is most driven by his love for Veta and a deeply seeded wish that she might someday return that love. Unfortunately, Veta has an abundance of past baggage, and, as a result, she is in no way prepared to love anyone in this romantic, sensual way. Although Judge Gaffney intellectually understands Veta’s limitations, he is not
emotionally able to grasp the weight and durability of her baggage. Thus, Gaffney does all that he can to please Veta, including the authorization of commitment papers for a man who he believes to be good, kind, honest, and safe. He knows that Elwood poses no real danger to his family and community, yet he still follows Veta’s wishes. The Judge’s actions do give him a chance to exercise his judicial muscles, but it is love that is the primary catalyst behind Gaffney’s actions in this play. Comforting her, coddling her, and coming to her rescue, Omar Gaffney is Veta Simmons’ knight in shining armor who will always be just a good friend and nothing more.

One of Gaffney’s strengths is his determination to achieve his professional goals, consistently seeking to be fair and honest, perpetually insisting on being in charge, and continuously making efforts to control even the smallest of circumstances with threats of suits and with demanding language. However, Gaffney lacks the will to acquire his most sought after prize, Veta’s love. He, instead, carefully works his way around it by doing everything for her without being completely honest with Veta and with his feelings for her.

Generally, Judge Gaffney has a strong sense of integrity. He is forthright with others in his speech and manner. Yet, sadly, it is not beyond Gaffney to lie in order to impress Veta. Specifically, it is likely that he lied to Veta about his long walks, which is evident when he hastily changes the subject after Veta brings it up. Another possible reason might be that she had mentioned these as a remedy for sex urges, something about which the Judge would rather not think for fear of losing self-control with Veta and possibly of losing her friendship as well. In the long run, Gaffney probably knows that Veta is unable to love him, so he decides not to pursue action on his true feelings, choosing, instead, to settle for something that is as close to what he wants without losing everything.
Polar Attitudes

• Start: Harvey only exists in Elwood’s mind.

• End: Maybe Harvey does exist, but it’s not worth giving up my game to find out.

Nurse Ruth Kelly

Mary Chase writes that “Miss Kelly is a very pretty young woman of about twenty-four. She is wearing a starched white uniform” (11). Elwood confirms Kelly’s beauty when he says, “You really are very lovely” (19). Also, Doctor Sanderson is evidently taken with her since he admits to having said her name in his sleep and since he eventually and specifically calls her “beautiful” (17) and “baby” (59). Ruth Kelly has smooth, porcelain skin, dark hair, and deep, blue eyes. Furthermore, she is stunning, lean, yet well endowed in all the right places.

Most human beings seek some kind of affirmation and approval from others. Ruth Kelly is no exception to this. Positively, she strives for professional approval, as do many people, by being efficient, concise, and pleasant. Maintaining a professional demeanor, Kelly requests that Wilson “ask a Mr. Dowd if he would be good enough to step up to room number 24—South Wing G” (12). When Wilson quickly questions the word “ask,” she promptly introduces Veta, his sister. For this character, Doctor Chumley is also another source of needed approval. After realizing that committing Elwood may have been a mistake, she says about Doctor Chumley, “He’ll be furious. I know he will. He’ll die. And then he’ll terminate me” (17). Finally, though, Ruth Kelly struggles with her need for approval from a good looking guy, Doctor Lyman Sanderson. Unfortunately, she thinks “he’s really wonderful” (13). This line of thinking does not help matters when he begins, chauvinistically, to berate her. Kelly just fumbles around and apologizes, barely realizing that she has been called
dumb. Happily, she eventually does stand up for herself, but this need for approval continues to repress and oppress her.

“Oh, no—tell him it was all my fault, Doctor” (17), insists Ruth Kelly, exposing a piteous need to take abuse and blame. Instead of taking some of the responsibility for a perceived mistake, Doctor Sanderson humiliates Kelly with sarcasm and patronizing. She, in turn, responds like a wounded puppy. “I’ll do it, Doctor. I’ll do it” (17), she grovels. Kelly continues to take blame by saying how terrible she feels, beginning a series of mistakes. “When a person makes one mistake, he always follows it up with another. Usually, the second mistake grows out of the first and the third from the second” (Egri 62). Furthermore, when Sanderson all but calls her a prostitute, she does not confront him directly. Instead, she displaces her anger by yelling at a closed door. Later, even as Kelly begins to show courage in the face of Sanderson’s abuse, she continues to escape and displace by telling him to leave her alone when given the opportunity to finish an argument and by yelling on the phone at an innocent person. Physical beauty will not be enough to help Ruth Kelly deal with these issues.

Above all, Nurse Kelly wants to love and be loved. Although she is not romantically attracted to Elwood, she does enjoy his, albeit old fashioned, romantic language and manners. About Dowd, she says, “He may be a peculiar man with funny clothes, but he knows how to act. His manners were perfect” (Chase 25). Further, she states that “he wouldn’t sit down till I sat down. He told me I was lovely and he called me dear” (25). Although it is not the only important ingredient for a loving relationship, it is still a desirable one for most women. Kelly, like most women, wants the romance and the sensual attraction. Their heated arguments provide fuel for the latter, while the former never really surfaces for Sanderson and Kelly. In the end, Ruth Kelly and women like her may just settle for what they can get.
Regretfully, this may only lead to a lifetime of abuse, guilt, and blame.

Clearly motivated to attain what she needs, Ruth Kelly works very hard to gain the approval of others, accept blame and abuse for everyone’s mistakes, and find love in a sharing, balanced relationship. As important as all these are to Kelly, however, she does compromise on all three of these needs. That she compromises on the first two needs is to her credit, but compromising on the third, most fundamental, need may, outside the confines of the script, lead to her demise. Because she is a character that grows by gradually rejecting the need for Doctor Sanderson’s approval and by standing up to his abuse, Kelly has strength of will. But, because she compromises her need for romantic love, her endurance will continue to be challenged.

With her employer and patients, Nurse Kelly maintains a high degree of integrity. Specifically, she demonstrates loyalty to Doctor Chumley by defending him as “a psychiatrist with a national reputation” (12). Also elevating Doctor Sanderson, she states that he “is nobody’s second fiddle” (12). Moreover, Kelly shows kindness rather than intolerance when Elwood finally returns to Chumley’s Rest. In contrast, she is not able to be as honest with Doctor Sanderson, nor is she prepared to be completely honest with herself. Only taking her honesty with Doctor Sanderson so far, Kelly opens herself up to further abuse and blame. She, likewise, restricts her choices by not being completely honest with herself about her willingness to accept fault for all mistakes and about what she needs in a potential life partner.

Polar Attitudes

- Start: Meeting a man who is gentle and kind is of primary concern.
- End: Pushy, abusive, and good looking are more important traits in a man than kindness.
Duane Wilson

The author of the script describes Duane Wilson as “the sanitarium strongarm. He is a big burly attendant, black-browed, about 28” (12). Purely by the nature of his job, Wilson is physical in his presence. Since he is able to, without help, forcefully restrain and carry a fighting Veta Simmons upstairs to a room, remove her clothes and corset, and place her into a hydro-tub, Wilson probably has significant upper body strength and mass. Hence, he is like a bear, slowly lumbering around its territory in a protective pattern. When he walks, Wilson is heavy footed, and when he sits, he makes an impression.

Using his physical presence and strength to control the patients, Wilson gains satisfaction by successfully controlling his work environment. In fact, he becomes quite angry when things start to get out of his control. For instance, when Nurse Kelly forgets to assist him with Veta’s strip and soak, he becomes hostile. “Forgot me, didn’t you” (27), he asks, trying to produce a bit of guilt in the young nurse. Wilson is so furious that he forgets that he left the water running in Veta’s hydro-tub. Later, he loses control of Elwood, so he threatens with violence. “With your permission I’m gonna knock your teeth down your throat” (53), Wilson exclaims after being pushed to his brink. It is sound advice to avoid making a bear angry.

Getting down to basics, Wilson’s desires also revolve around meeting his sex urges. Since he relies a great deal on his physical instincts, this is definitely a high priority. By no stretch of the imagination is Wilson the romantic type, so he gets right down to business with Myrtle Mae. Shaking off old traditions in a hurry, Wilson, within moments of meeting her, flirts heavily with Myrtle and within hours is asking for a Saturday night date. Of course, Wilson is everything Veta does not want for her daughter; he is angry, forceful, driven by his
sex urges, and, worst of all, of the working class.

Probably more than anything, Wilson wants trust and respect from his employer. It is obvious that he has a fondness for Doctor Chumley. “Hello, Dr. Chumley. How is every little old thing?” (26), he asks in a way that he speaks to no one else. In addition, Wilson looks out for Doctor Chumley. When he returns to the sanitarium from his night on the town with Harvey, Wilson is there to greet him and ask, “Are you all right?” (56). Also, Wilson patiently obeys Doctor Chumley when he can not make up his mind whether he wants him to stay or go. And, when he asks Wilson to apologize to Elwood, he obediently does so with only minimal resistance. Significantly, Wilson wants Doctor Chumley to trust him. After Doctor Chumley questions Wilson’s integrity in front of the others, Wilson reminds him that he has been with him for ten years. Wilson strongly believes that Chumley should believe him over Judge Gaffney or Veta and is genuinely hurt from this slight.

Regardless of his obvious flaws, Duane Wilson is a man of integrity and strength of will. Knowing what he wants and how he plans to get it, Wilson is honest and direct with everyone in this play. No evidence exists that he lies or is deceitful on his own accord. Only when he is cued to speak gently in front of Veta about Elwood’s admission routine is Wilson slightly misleading. This aside, Wilson proves himself to be up front with everyone he meets. If he does not like you, he tells you. When Wilson is happy, sad, glad, or mad, he hides nothing. Not only is he honest, but Wilson is determined to get what he wants when he wants it. Fortunately, he is not very choosy. For instance, his pursuit of Myrtle is direct and quick. When a bear wants something, it is usually faster than one thinks. Like a bear, Wilson is intensely protective of his loved ones. Thus, he acts as a sort of bodyguard for Doctor Chumley:
WILSON. What’s your name? Let’s have it.

JUDGE. I am Judge Gaffney—where is Chumley?

WILSON. The reason I asked your name is the Doctor always likes to know who he is talkin’ to. (Chase 2.1.40)

One thing in Wilson’s favor is that he is honest with himself about what he wants and who he is. It is this fact that makes Wilson’s life simple and unencumbered with internal conflict.

Doctor Lyman Sanderson

Doctor Sanderson, as described by the author, is “a good-looking man of 27 or 28. He is wearing a starched white coat over dark trousers” (13). Other than making him the character most physically suited to match Ruth Kelly, the information from this description is vague to say the least. However, the dialogue of the script does help the reader to gain some insight into Lyman Sanderson. His demeanor is most often stiff and professional. Also, Sanderson’s appearance and movements are robotic and intense. An eagle is the animal most like Doctor Sanderson.

Feeling like he is better than everyone else is Sanderson’s primary motivation. For example, he uses his psychiatric knowledge as a way to manipulate people into believing that he knows their psyches better than they do. Sanderson, furthermore, manipulates Veta by gaining her trust and then using her confession against her. His superiority complex causes Sanderson to believe that he understands Elwood’s weakness when all he sees is his own flaw. “That man is proud,” he says of Elwood, “what he has to be proud of I don’t know. I played up to that pride” (24). This character, Sanderson, believes that his years of specialized training make him better than Elwood or most anyone for that matter. He is a prideful elitist. A major criticism of the mental health community is found in the irony of Sanderson’s
diagnosis of Elwood. The criticism is that psychiatrists are in their field of study to deal with their own problems, not necessarily the problems of others. While abusively analyzing Ruth Kelly, Sanderson, in fact, stumbles upon some of his own weaknesses, such as a “flippant hard shell,” “compensating for something,” and “inflated ego” (48). With sarcasm and psycho-babble, Sanderson tries to bully other people into feeling weak and dependent, a mark of a truly professional psychiatrist. After all, if their patients were to become strong and independent, all of the psychiatrists would be out of business.

Although Sanderson wants his patients to be dependent upon him, he also wants easy answers for them. Interestingly, in this way, he represents a large portion of the mental health community. While questioning Veta, Sanderson almost immediately goes for easy conclusions, drawing quick assessments. All of this makes one wonder about the validity of mental institution entrance evaluation procedures. Later, Sanderson quizzes Elwood in a similar fashion, assuming that Harvey was a name from his past. “Wasn’t there someone, somewhere, some time, whom you knew by the name of Harvey? Didn’t you ever know anybody by that name?” (55), Sanderson doggedly asks Elwood. In the end, Sanderson recommends the use of a violent drug to solve Elwood’s problem. If that is not the easy answer, what is?

Without question, Lyman Sanderson has a strong will toward superiority. Only Doctor Chumley is the lucky recipient of Sanderson’s full respect. Nonetheless, it is Sanderson’s strength of will that provides a healthy sense of competition for the scenes in which he plays:

There is no sport if there is no competition; there is no play if there is no conflict.
Without counterpoint there is no harmony. The dramatist needs not only characters who are willing to put up a fight for their convictions. He needs characters who have
strength of stamina, to carry this fight to its logical conclusion. (Egri 77)

Luckily, he is quite focused upon his goal. Yet, he is not honest with himself. Sadly, with all of his psychoanalyzing of everyone else, he fails to recognize his own flaws. Sanderson does not see his own pride, his superiority complex, and his need to demoralize other people with name calling, sarcasm, and patronizing condescension. Also, rather than being honest with Ruth Kelly about his feelings toward her, he, instead, berates, belittles, and analyzes her. Doctor Lyman Sanderson may be intelligent, good looking and well-paid, but he has a lot of unresolved issues and is probably not ready for a stable, happy relationship.

Polar Attitudes

• Start: I know everything. My training and schooling make me better than everyone else.

• End: Maybe I do not know everything, and I am not better than everyone else.

Philosophical Statements

• “People are people no matter where you go” (20).

• “Well—the good psychiatrist is not found under every bush” (24).

• “You can get to almost anybody if you want to” (24).

Doctor William R. Chumley

Mary Chase describes Doctor Chumley as “a large, handsome man of about 57. He has gray hair and wears rimless glasses which he removes now and then to tap on his hand for emphasis. He is smartly dressed. His manner is confident, pompous and lordly. He is good and he knows it” (Chase 25). A walrus is the animal one thinks of when considering Chumley. Like the walrus, Chumley has a loud bark and long, sharp teeth, metaphorically speaking, but this is merely a defense mechanism to protect the weak, uncertain inner self. When Chumley walks and speaks, it is slow and deliberate. Chumley is large but not tall, so he
uses his space to make himself even bigger.

Like many people in a high social position, Chumley thoroughly enjoys the prestige that comes along with it. From Nurse Kelly’s defense of Doctor Chumley, it is plain that he has impressed his importance upon his staff. “Still a psychiatrist! Dr. Chumley is more than that. He is a psychiatrist with a national reputation. Whenever people have mental breakdowns they at once think of Dr. Chumley” (12). Moreover, Chumley finds it important to keep a respectable reputation in the community. After discovering Doctor Sanderson’s blunder, he shouts, “You have subjected me—a psychiatrist—to the humiliation of having to call—of all things—a lawyer to find out who came out here to be committed—and who came out here to commit” (32). Thinking very highly of his reputation, Doctor Chumley tries to pave over Sanderson’s blunder by offering to “take charge of [Elwood’s] case personally” (41). Further, he says that the case interests him. “And my interest in a case is something no amount of money can buy. You can ask any of them” (41), Chumley announces.

More important than prestige to William Chumley is his power. Like the bull walrus, Chumley is already in charge of his rock. However, he believes that he must be ever vigilant in order to protect his territory. Constantly on the look out for possible saboteurs, Chumley uses his voice, body, and language to remind people of who is in charge. When Chumley enters the sanitarium for the first time in this play, he enters shouting the names of his employees and giving orders about his prize dahlias. This kind of attention to something external and insignificant without attention to the weightier matters of helping patients is indicative of a mental health institution with its priorities out of whack and its patients out of luck. Specifically, Chumley is eager to prescribe his shock medication for Veta without even having laid eyes on her or spoken to her. Such a practice is like salting one’s food without
having tasted it first. Bossing people around is the foundation of Chumley's management style. Unfortunately, he doesn't realize that one can be the boss without being bossy and that positive results will abound if people feel like they have a bit of autonomy. After discovering Harvey's hat, but without realizing its significance, Chumley orders, "put them away. Hang them up—get them out of here" (26). It is Chumley's demanding nature, then, that prevents him from humbling himself enough to stop and consider possible alternative explanations. On a personal level, furthermore, he uses his angry, boisterous manner to intimidate and lord his power over his wife Betty. She clues the reader into this when she says that, "if he came down and found me gone he would be liable to raise—he would be irritated" (29). Thus, Chumley maintains the difficult task of trying to hold on to power in all aspects of his life.

Because it is so difficult to be always on the look out and always on the defensive, William Chumley sublimates and, therefore, regresses into a childish need to be protected and pitied. After his evening of socializing with Elwood and Harvey, Chumley retreats to the sanitarium and begs Wilson for protection, demanding three times that he not leave his side:

CHUMLEY. I went out through my window. Wilson—don't leave me!

WILSON. No, Doctor.

CHUMLEY. Get that man Dowd out of here.

WILSON. Yes, Doctor.

CHUMLEY. No—don't leave me!

WILSON. But you said—

CHUMLEY. Don't leave me!

These are not the words and actions of a secure person. To Elwood, Chumley later reveals his deepest fantasy. Rather than his fantasy fling being about companionship or sex, it is about a
strange woman stroking his head and saying, “Poor thing! Oh, you poor, poor thing” (63). This revelation is clear evidence that Chumley’s deepest need is pity, but it is also proof that people who attempt to maintain an omnipotent façade, often lose balance and self control. Consequently and ironically, such people frequently lose control of the very power and prestige they are trying desperately to protect.

A weak will and feeble sense of integrity mark the essence of Chumley’s character. He is powerful and determined on the exterior yet sad and frightened on the interior, much as the institution he has built. Chumley does, however, demonstrate that he is willing to surrender any integrity to get what he wants. “To hell with decency! I’ve got to have that rabbit,” he declares to himself. All other desires now take a back seat to meeting his need for pity. But even this effort dies as he surrenders his will to the responsibility of compliance with the law. Chumley frequently compromises throughout this play because he fails to be honest with himself and others for fear that honesty might shatter the illusions he has created for himself.

Polar Attitudes

• Start: I am in control of everything, and I like it.
• End: Control involves too much pressure. I need escape and fantasy.

Philosophical Statements

• “I suppose if you have the money to pay people, you can persuade them to do anything” (43).
• “To hell with decency” (65).

Betty Chumley

Doctor Chumley’s wife, Betty, is like a pheasant; “she is a good-natured, gay, bustling woman of about 55” (27), is what the author says of her. Her physical appearance is well-kept and pampered like a well-groomed pet. Betty’s jewelry is elegant but not too showy. The
doctor’s wife moves with kindness but also with a bit of aloofness. It is noticeable that she has been trained as a youth in manners, etiquette, and behavior. Like the female pheasant, her appearance and mannerisms must compliment but never outshine her husband’s presence.

Wanting to live a life removed from the negative things of the world, Betty appreciates social status and wealth. Her appreciation for such things becomes clear when she tells Chumley to “give a little quick diagnosis...we don’t want to be late for the party. I’m dying to see the inside of that house” (27). For Betty, the party is more important than any diagnosis. This may, unfortunately, be true for Doctor Chumley as well. On the positive side, Mrs. Chumley’s manners are excellent, making her well-prepared to attend horse shows, art exhibits, and cocktail parties.

Deep down, though, Betty Chumley wants kindness more than anything. When Elwood compliments her, offers to spend time with her, and gives her some attention, Betty receives something she probably rarely gets from her own husband. Sadly, Betty compromises this need for the frills of status and wealth. She is a good person, but her will is weak. Too many people, unfortunately, willingly sacrifice kindness and joy for more temporal things. Impressed with Elwood’s kindness, Betty returns it by offering Harvey a ride into town. When kindness is given, it often catches on. Although Betty fails, ultimately, to go after what she wants, she is largely genuine and honest. Yet, she fails to be honest with her husband because she has decided that integrity is not worth sacrificing her world of status and wealth.

Philosophical Statements

• “[Choosy] is not such a bad way to be in this day and age” (28).
• “I gave up a long time ago expecting my family to like my friends. It’s useless” (28).
• “…if we can’t do a favor for someone, why are we living?” (31).
E.J. Lofgren

Since Lofgren calls Veta little and short, he is probably at least average height and maybe a bit stocky around the middle from driving a cab for fifteen years. He is like a crow, persistent and loud, but down-to-earth. His stride is confident and sure, and when he speaks, everyone can hear him. Much like a crow, Lofgren’s manner is generally friendly, but when it comes to protecting what is his, he becomes angry and aggressive.

This character, E.J. Lofgren wants both fairness and respect. Fairness is what motivates Lofgren to enter Chumley’s rest in the first place. He wants what is his, the cab fare of two dollars and seventy-five cents, because that is what is fair. The money is important, but the principle is even more so. Lofgren also seems to want what is fair for Elwood, taking the time to tell of his awful experiences with people who had taken Chumley’s shock medicine. In addition to fairness, Lofgren wants a little respect. In his line of work, he is used to being treated as a second class citizen, but Elwood shows him respect by asking about the details of his life. Elwood, significantly, not only asks, but genuinely listens to the answers. Also, Elwood invites Lofgren to his house for dinner. It is not merely a general invitation, but, instead, Elwood specifically sets a date around Lofgren’s work schedule. Because Elwood shows Lofgren such high regard, Lofgren stands up for him and probably becomes a life-long friend. Consequently, Lofgren becomes a pivotal character in this play. Although his part is brief, his impact is great. “The pivotal character can match the emotional intensity of his adversaries, but he has a smaller compass of development” (Egri 109).

Without compromise, Lofgren is focused on his desire for fairness and respect. Also, he is centered upon this goal without sacrificing his integrity. Specifically, he takes charge and openly confronts Veta for the money that belongs to the Apex cab company. Furthermore, he
honestly shares his story in order to protect Elwood. Likewise, Lofgren honestly reflects Veta’s attitude of rudeness for making him wait without payment by giving a little persistent rudeness back to her. Ultimately, it is Lofgren’s honesty that helps Veta to express the contents of her own baggage and to change her mind about committing or medicating Elwood. It is true that a little honesty can change lives.

Philosophical Statements

• “After this, he’ll be a perfectly normal human being and you know what bastards they are” (69).

Ideas of the Play

For thousands of years, people have tried to intellectualize some definable way to distinguish between reality and illusion. Some philosophers suggest that reality is what each individual makes of it. Other thinkers reason that reality is purely scientific and measurable with the five senses. In her Pulitzer Prize winning play Harvey, Mary Chase delves into some ideas that help audiences to consider and explore a variety of thoughts regarding reality and illusion. One such idea is the illusion of social status and wealth. Often, people fool themselves into believing that such things will bring them happiness. The belief that the past was a better, happier place for everyone is another illusion examined by the author. Some characters in this play romanticize pioneer days or times before the automobile and the aircraft. This excessively romantic view frequently lends itself to the illusion that the world is still as it was in some perceived happier time. Another illusion considered is the belief that people who try to control everything in their world will remain in control and sane. Interestingly, sanity itself is highly illusive. And, it is this conclusion that is at the core of Mary Chase’s play. One must pensively consider, most importantly, the validity of the tools by which people measure between sane and
insane, between safe and dangerous.

Within wealth and social status are the seeds of their own destruction. This is one of the main reasons that they are temporal and illusive by nature. Wealth can be gained or lost in the blink of an eye. It was not too many years before Harvey was written and produced that many wealthy Americans realized the harsh realities of an economic downturn. Mrs. Chauvenet and all of her high society cronies obviously did not feel the real pinch of the Great Depression, and she enjoys flaunting her wealth by wearing heavy fur on a spring day. Chauvenet’s approach to wealth suggests that she really is not all that happy with it. Likewise, Myrtle Mae Simmons is not very content with her wealth either. She uses it, unfortunately, to compensate for her true wishes of affection and kindness. Creating her own illusion, Myrtle hides behind the Dowd family wealth to protect her from the evils of the world. Veta, her mother, has fostered this illusion by protecting her like a little doll. Wealth has distorted Myrtle’s view of reality and has rendered her helpless and dependent. Betty Chumley, likewise, has been crippled by her wealth, making her dependent upon a man who treats her like a pet. For Betty, though, wealth is really a means to an end. She likes the parties and social affairs of the wealthy most of all. These illusions of happiness help protect her from the realities of poverty, racial tension, and war.

It seems that most people are dissatisfied with their position in society. In the past, it was nearly impossible in any society to move to a higher social station. If a person’s father was a chimney sweep, so was he; if one’s mother was a saloon girl, then her daughter would likely follow in this way. Even today, many cultures promote a social system that is no better than feudalistic England or the caste system of India. However, technology and a more fluid flow of wealth in some nations has made it more possible for people to move up the status ladder.
Yet, this easier access to higher rungs has only made people greedier for the next rung. Veta Simmons, for instance, loves the status that comes with holding forums and social events at the Dowd Mansion. With this, comes the importance of maintaining an illusion of happiness even when a big white rabbit has taken over her brother’s life. In truth, Veta is miserable and frustrated with Harvey. “I never want to see another tomorrow. Not if Myrtle Mae and I have to live in the house with that rabbit. Our friends never come to see us—we have no social life; we have no life at all. We’re both miserable. I wish I were dead” (Chase 66). It is also important for Veta to ensure that her daughter is the recipient of high status, making certain that she meets the grandsons or nephews of some wealthy old dowagers. Myrtle, in turn, responds to Elwood’s oddities as her mother does. “He’s introducing Harvey to everybody. I can’t face those people now. I wish I were dead” (8).

Those people who are of the higher status group in a community usually strive to keep that position and are often times threatened at any hint that their place might be taken. Veta Simmons, for example, feels threatened by her brother Elwood, fearing that his odd behavior will create scandal and gossip amongst the community elite. People like Mrs. Chauvenet or the Society Editor of The Evening News Bee might ignore her, acting as if she were dead. Mrs. Chauvenet is a friendly person as long as people behave properly and fit within her definition of normal. Rather than confronting her fears, she, instead, flees in order to protect her privileged view of the world. Without hesitation, Chauvenet declares, “Well, I—not right now—I—well—I think I’ll be running along” (8). Likewise, Betty Chumley wishes to protect her status and view of the world as well, even if she has to live with a man who is controlling and temperamental. An angry manner and manipulation of other people is William Chumley’s method of maintaining his status at work and in the community. Hence, Chumley’s pompous,
lordly manner is all an illusion, meant to disguise his true insecurities and instabilities. In contrast, Elwood Dowd is not impressed with position, nor is he concerned with status. He treats all human beings with kindness, warmth, and hospitality. The idea behind all of this is that people, whether rich or poor, who obsess over wealth or power will never be happy and may end up losing both due to circumstances out of their control or specifically as a direct result of the obsession itself.

In any era, one can always find people who have longed for the so-called good old days. This longing is often rooted in a strong discontentment of the present. For such people, everything is always worse than it was; the work is harder, the children are ruder, and the line is longer. Even bad times, in the olden days, were better for a person. They built character. As she describes her mother’s trek to Colorado, dramatically pointing to the portrait of Pinney Dowd above the fireplace, Veta Simmons looks to her heritage for strength and security. She also finds security in the tradition of the Wednesday Forum, an event that symbolizes the romantic illusion of days gone by. However, the days gone by were not always that golden, especially for people like Marcella Pinney Dowd. Life on the trail and on the homestead was both exhausting and tedious. Women, in particular, were sentenced to a sometimes brutal lifestyle. Many of these women had a low life expectancy rate primarily due to the risks of childbirth. Finding rustic circumstances, many single women had ventured to Colorado:

It is a myth that young women traveling alone is a modern phenomenon. In the early 1900s, the plains of eastern Colorado were speckled with the soddies or tar paper shacks of single women. They were not like some mountain heroines who achieved fame—or were at least appreciated—by taking washing, kicking up their heels in a saloon, or shooting a fatherless lover. These were single, respectable
women living far from a town in the most primitive of conditions. (Propst 1)

By the turn into the twentieth century, many Denverites had begun to enjoy a community atmosphere similar to their Midwestern counterparts. “Girls came west to visit relatives or friends and found a bustling, optimistic world” (5). Much like the Midwest, however, Colorado was also experiencing troubles related to racial diversity. It’s difficult to honestly perceive such a time of violence, oppression, and hatred as any better than our own time. Black people were lynched, women couldn’t vote, and young children worked long hours in dangerous factories. Even Elwood, for that matter, avoids mention of the war or any social ill. His clothing and manners remind the audience that he too desires the illusion of a happier time. However, unlike the others, Elwood relishes in every present moment.

In order to feel secure, some people try to control, not only their own lives, but the lives of others as well. Unlike Elwood, who politely allows people to make decisions for their own lives, his sister Veta tries to control her own life, Elwood’s life, and Myrtle’s life. This is a huge burden for anyone to bear. It is a good thing to try to have control over certain things in one’s own life, but one must realize that even here not everything is within control. Some things just happen. Veta was not able to keep her mother from dying; she is not able to keep people from gossiping about Elwood or Myrtle, and she is not able to change the ways of her father and deceased husband by controlling her own sex urges. The drive to control everything has been passed on from mother to daughter, from Veta to Myrtle. As much as women resist and insist, so many of them become their mothers, as men become their fathers. The cycle can be broken, but it takes significant determination. Proving herself a control freak, Myrtle lines up buyers for the Dowd Mansion within hours of Elwood’s intended departure. Of all the characters in this play, Doctor William Chumley is probably under the greatest illusion of control. Through
domination and fear, Chumley keeps up an illusion for himself and others. Unfortunately, he fools himself into believing that if people do what he says that he controls them and that they somehow respect him. As a matter of fact, the opposite is usually true. For Chumley the pressure of trying to maintain this illusion is too great. An escape into a fantasy of pity is what Doctor Chumley secretly desires. Many people struggle as Chumley does; some of them lose total control and end up permanently committed into a mental health facility.

Mental institutions are filled with people who are considered to be crazy. However, sanity is so difficult to define and measure. One might conclude that it too is an illusion:

A man or woman considered “insane” in one community or social setting may be regarded as just queer or eccentric in another. Any psychiatrist will tell you that many inmates of mental hospitals are less disturbed than many people on the outside, including some who have achieved outstanding success in social, economic, and artistic life. (Deutsch 27)

Maybe the people making the assessments and decisions over the lives of those who have been defined as mentally ill are the nut cases. Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, a devoted German scientist, once wrote, “A man can never really know whether he isn’t sitting in a madhouse” (Brandt 1). Doctor Sanderson, for example enjoys taunting people and has an obsession with trying to analyze everyone’s motives and psychological problems. He is also carried away with his own ego so much that his diagnoses of people are reflections of his own weaknesses. Some experts might consider this to be obsessive-compulsive. By taking her aggressions for Sanderson out on the door and the phone, Nurse Kelly sublimates and transfers. Both of these reactions are considered by the profession to be neurotic. Another professional, Doctor Chumley, is compulsively controlling and regressive. His pity fantasy is merely a plea to return to a childlike
state. Maybe these are the people who should be locked up. They are not somehow immune.

“The possibility of insanity exists in us all” (11).

Mental health care in the 1940s had come a long way since the nineteenth century, but it was still not anywhere near modern. Private institutions like Chumley’s Rest did indeed offer more to its patients. “In nearly all sanatoriums the treatment includes hydrotherapy, some measure of occupational therapy, and periodic personal interviews with the physician in charge” (Grimes 82). General mental health care for the vast majority of the population, however, was lonely, oppressive, and sometimes harmful. Common treatments were extremely questionable. Shock treatment, for instance, was quite popular. “Without doubt, the rapid acceptance of shock therapy was facilitated by the vast publicity in the popular media. Magazines and newspapers, as well as the radio, disseminated information about the new therapy, suggesting it was a major breakthrough” (Grob 299). Later on the same page, Gerald Grob writes in his book Mental Illness in American Society, 1875-1940, “By 1940 virtually every mental hospital had introduced insulin and metrazol therapy. Yet for many psychiatrists the new therapies posed serious theoretical as well as practical difficulties” (299). Lobotomies also became common practice during this period. “By 1940 some hospitals were beginning to use the operation on more than an occasional basis. During the early months of 1940, 64 major intracranial operations were performed at State Hospital No. 4 in Missouri, the majority of which were prefrontal lobotomies” (305). Also, Diabetics and victims of senile dementia were institutionalized and left alone and lonely. Treatments, unfortunately, were still cruel, and the experts of the time were searching in the dark for answers in very unknown territory. As a result, many patients became increasingly dependent upon the system, leading to a state that is known as “institutionalized.” For this condition, no cure exists:
Sooner or later many chronic mental patients in good contact are accused or censured for being too dependent upon the protective environment of the hospital. When others speak of this dependency, it is almost implied that these attitudes are necessary and unnatural. Perhaps in the final analysis this is true. But it has been my experience that most professional personnel, like the majority of the people in the community, seem loath to recognize the possibility that this dependency could be fostered and perpetuated in the artificial and highly structured social milieu of the hospital. (Szasz 267-268)

The health care professionals portrayed in Harvey represent the real industry in a variety of ways. Duane Wilson, for instance, is physically and mentally aggressive with the patients, treating them as inanimate objects rather than as human beings. Symbolizing the aloof and lordly attitude of the entire community, Doctor Chumley has removed himself from helping patients on a regular basis. He, like the entire industry, has become too important to directly help the patients who are truly in need. Doctor Sanderson, conversely, tries to help patients because he is new. However, he is so locked into theories that he fails to truly see things as they are. The theories are constantly shifting and changing. “This shift in the character of psychiatric work has led to new contradictions for psychiatry as a profession” (Busfield 367). Sanderson represents the intellectuals of the psychiatric field who have not yet learned how to adapt their theories to actual people. Interestingly, none of these people can prove that beings like Harvey the pooka do not exist. The mind is a powerful thing, and it can imagine things that are not there as there and things that are there as not. Hence, maybe Harvey is, indeed, physically present, but most people have fooled themselves into believing that he is not. It is possible, furthermore, that all the tools with which experts measure sanity are inaccurate because the standard by which those tools are
made is completely distorted. Since sanity is illusive and “crazy is the name we give to behavior we don’t understand and can’t or won’t deal with” (Brandt 8), how do we know that they are the crazy ones?

Previous Reviews Summary

Mary Chase’s Harvey has been praised and criticized; it has been applauded and panned. Some critics protest that Chase’s play elevates drinking and an un-American value system of apathy and ignorance. While others defend it as a whole lot of fantastic fun. Pacing was a major concern for a few columnists, a minor issue for some, and completely irrelevant for many. Critics hailed the producer, director, and set designer for their high achievements on the long-lasting Broadway production. Conversely, some commentators were not impressed enough to override their feelings about the script, criticizing it for uneven characters, immoral premise, and flimsy plot. Several respected analysts of drama believed that choosing Harvey for the Pulitzer Prize over Williams’ The Glass Menagerie was one of the committee’s biggest blunders ever. Yet, even those writers who strongly disliked this script, liked Frank Fay and Josephine Hull. The other actors, in contrast, were liked by some people but not by others. In the long run, the play has proven its worth, including solid revivals, one of which starred Jimmy Stewart and Helen Hayes.

People who lack understanding of Mrs. Chase’s script often believe that Harvey is about an irresponsible, pathetic lush. In quoting John L. Toohey, Yvonne Shafer notes in her book American Women Playwrights, 1900-1950 that:

the educational value of Harvey [sic] consists ‘in the instruction that it is far more contributive to human happiness to be good and drunk, and to stay good and drunk, than it is to be dismally sober. The play is the biggest intemperance document
that the American stage has ever offered.' Paradoxically, Chase was an alcoholic, but she may have realized this only later when she faced her own problems and gave up drinking for good. (349)

This kind of conclusion is not only narrow minded but also lacks insight and thoughtful analysis. The author frankly denies this simplified perspective, and other writers agree with her:

In 1971 she refuted the comments of the critics to the effect that Elwood was a "happy drunk" or a "gentle tippler." She said most of the critics missed the message she intended, "It is not a play about an amiable drunk. It is a spiritual play written in farce terms. I never intended Elwood to be a drunk. Some people live in a different world than other people, and Elwood is such a man." (349)

In addition, it is difficult to fathom the idea that so many people went to see Harvey in over 1700 performances thinking that Elwood was just a friendly alcoholic. As quoted in New York Theatre Critics' Reviews, John Chapman notes that "[Elwood] drinks quite a bit but is never out of line—as remote from being a drunk as the late Carrie Nation, but more fun" (95). Certainly, they did not take with them the message that it is acceptable to be utterly irresponsible. Trying to encourage dreams without promoting alcoholic escapism, Mrs. Chase was merely passing on the idea that a certain amount of fantasy is normal and even healthy for the human psyche. No heroes reside in this story, just people with their own personal sets of problems.

The earliest of Harvey's Broadway critics gave a variety of responses about the overall pacing, stemming from objections to play structure rather than concerns about directing or acting. Reviews typically charged that the first act is too long and that the third act fails to keep up with the pace of the second:

By most standards of effective dramaturgy—a consistent style, careful construction,
and orderly progression of events, together with uniformly developed characters—
Harvey should soon have collapsed. It mixes realism with fantasy, interspersed with farce, plus more than a little satire. Its lopsided, hysterical first act is overweighted with wild improbabilities; thereafter the play proceeds at a moderate walking pace, abandoning along the way an incipient and uninteresting love affair. Some characters are wonderfully rounded, while other characters are sketchily outlined.

(Miller 245)

A few of these reviews condemn Chase’s hit as a dramaturgical disaster:

Walter Kerr, for instance, “felt that the play had a special appeal, but wrote, “As a dramatist, Mrs. Chase is loaded with faults. It is perfectly possible that she is the sloppiest scenarist now delighting the professional theatre.” In a staggering statement of male chauvinism, he concluded that the weakness in the structure was because she was a woman, “There never was a more feminine playwright, every bureau drawer is left open.” (Shafer 352-353)

However, others had only minor misgivings regarding the script’s shortcomings. Regardless, audiences did not care, and Mary Chase never wrote for the critics. In an interview for his doctoral thesis, Mary Coyle Chase: Her Battlefield of Illusion, Maurice Berger quotes Mrs. Chase as having said, “I never argue with the judgment of the audience” (43). Berger then writes about the author on the same page that “she sees the audience as sitting in final judgment, so one must write to please the audience, not the critics” (43).

Although many writers have snubbed Mary Chase’s script, most applauded Brock Pemberton for producing it, hailed Antoinette Perry for directing it, and praised John Root for designing it. This was not the first time that the team of Pemberton and Perry had worked with
a Chase script. It was, however, the first successful combination. Reviewers were pleased with the direction and design. One journalist commented in The New York Times on November 2, 1944 that “Antoinette Perry has directed the play so that it runs easily and John Root has designed the setting suitable for a home or rabbit hutch—whichever” (qtd. in Gilder 96).

Viewing Harvey as an assault on all the rules of dramaturgy, as an attack on the American value system, and as an offensive against everything that is right and moral, a few reviewers seemed to be utterly repulsed by everything about it. Without insight into the not-so-literal spirit of Chase’s play, a number of people dismissed Harvey as having little worth. Thomas Adler in his book Mirror on the Stage points out that, “Many critics...not only judge Harvey as ‘utterly lacking in artistic merit,’ but also generally question its theatrical merit as a farce” (25). New York Post columnist Wilella Waldorf concurs when she states, “How any playwright could have invented Elwood P. Dowd and make the fatal error of involving him in a farce so lacking in subtlety and taste, we can not imagine” (qtd. in Gilder 97). Other journalists take this one step further by slamming Harvey for being un-American. “Even some critics—excessively outraged by the libertarian emphasis and not recognizing the farcical exaggerations of an essentially harmless play...[argue] that to accept Elwood’s escapist approach to life threatens the American system of values” (Adler 26). During the 1940s, probably nothing was more of an insult, nor was there anything more effective at discrediting a play, than to call it un-American. Yet, some writers tried to top even this by accusing the Chase hit of being immoral. One analyst, for example, Lillian Horstein reasons:

To glamorize neuroses, psychoses, and even murders and to make them subject of light laughter by means of dramatic art and clever stage business indicate a moral shallowness and intellectual futility...the first signs of decadence. (26)
Unfortunately, this kind of thinking permeates critical writing about all kinds of art in every type of community.

Both *Harvey* and *The Glass Menagerie* are plays about illusion; while the former is a comedy, the latter is a serious drama. Although each of these scripts merit recognition, it is difficult to say why Mary Chase’s work was selected over Williams’ masterpiece, but maybe *Harvey*’s overwhelming popularity with audiences had something to do with the committee’s decision. Some writers of the time and since, nonetheless, have not been swayed by public admiration. “Though *Harvey* [sic] finally ran for 1,775 performances, its winning the Pulitzer must rank as very nearly the least defensible in the history of the prize, since that year the jury passed over Williams’ now-classic *Glass Menagerie* [sic]” (Adler 24-25). Adler adds weight to his position by stating that “many of the Pulitzer plays, including some of the earliest winners, are, however, decidedly more substantial than Chase’s” (26).

Despite concerns over Pulitzer worthiness, most critics of the original Broadway run applauded the talents of the actors as one of the primary reasons for *Harvey*’s popular and financial success. A few of these commentators lauded Frank Fay and Josephine Hull as the centerpiece for the play’s big win on Broadway. Robert Garland of the *New York Journal-American*, for example, panned *Harvey* but praised Fay. “To tell you the truth,” he wrote, “I can imagine Frank Fay getting along without “Harvey,” but, for the life of me, I can’t imagine “Harvey” getting along without Frank Fay” (qtd. in Gilder 97). “Fay has here a role,” Burton Rascoe of the *New York World-Telegram* proclaimed, “which should make him the Frank Bacon of his day” (96). *New York Times* writer Lewis Nichols absolutely loved Josephine Hull’s creative talents. “Josephine Hull also is no beginner on the stage, and her portrait of the woman who is trying to bring up her daughter in such a bizarre household is a masterpiece” (96).
Having played the role of Elwood Dowd for seven weeks on Broadway and for the 1950 Universal Pictures film version, Jimmy Stewart reflected that Josephine Hull had to “create a sort of in-between feeling,” and that she did so with “such wonderful imagination and talent” (1990). The rest of the cast was given some credit also by a few critics. Specifically, journalist for The New York Sun Ward Morehouse wrote, “There is good casting too in other roles. Jane Van Duser, Janet Tyler, Fred Irving Lewis, Tom Seidel and certainly Jesse White contributed to the fun” (96). Louis Kronenberg gave specific approval to the young woman who played Myrtle Mae Simmons, Jane Van Duser, saying that she, “does a good job too” (95). Detesting the play but loving Frank Fay and Josephine Hull, Robert Garland offered respects to the actor who played Duane Wilson, the sanitarium attendant. “The others, all 10 of them, leave me where they found me—except, perhaps, Jesse White as Wilson…” (97).

Successful professional and amateur productions since its Broadway release have proven Harvey to be a popular play with a large variety of audiences, still providing a timeless message. In assessing the 1995 San Jose Repertory Theatre revival, Steven Winn commented that “the play sheds years and feels newly minted” (Shafer 350). Consequently, despite a wide range of critical viewpoints about Harvey, it continues to entertain and instruct Mary Chase’s primary target, the audience.

Playwright Research and Other Works

From 1930 to 1970 women became, more and more, a powerful force in American theatre with each passing decade:

A pattern emerged from the playwriting efforts of selected American women playwrights which indicated that women have been a vital, contributive force in the American theatre and that throughout the past forty years they were gradually
obtaining freer expression of a variety of themes and characters in spite of critical abuse and disregard. The pattern seemed to coincide with the changing role of women in society from one decade to another. (Olauson 173)

Specifically, in the 1940s with the outbreak of war came many opportunities for female playwrights. While the federal relief programs of the 1930s provided funding to the Federal Theatre, by the 1940s women were stepping out into the work force and into the pages of serious, professional script writing. However, the war did place limitations upon women playwrights. “. . .the works of the early 1940s offered few opportunities for women to be central figures mainly because of the preoccupation of the playwrights with the war and its consequences” (175). Much of the writing during the war focused upon democracy and the strengthening of American values, but a few contrary examples stand out, The Glass Menagerie and Harvey, one play about the drawbacks of excessive dependence upon illusions and the other about an extreme reliance upon reality. Mary Chase, author of Harvey and product of a new working world for women, explored illusions through her work in a variety of ways. This interest in both writing and the fantastic has its roots in Chase’s childhood and grows into a powerful drive due to her work as a journalist and social activist.

Mary Chase’s vigorous approach to life stemmed from her rough and tumble Denver childhood. Raised by her parents Mary and Frank Coyle, Mary and her brothers did not have much in the way of luxuries, but they lived life with a special energy. “What Mary Chase’s life lacked in ready cash,” wrote Wallace M. Reef, “was made up probably by warmth, pride of family, a talent for fighting and a nature, common in the Irish, which is given to both gaiety and melancholy” (qtd. in Drewry 52). Their mother, formerly Mary McDonough, immigrated from Ireland to help her brothers in their attempt to strike it rich in the Colorado Gold Rush of the late
nineteenth century. They were not successful. Frank Coyle was also not successful in his attempts to acquire wealth in the Oklahoma land rush. Consequently, Mary Coyle Chase was not destined to grow up wealthy. She did, however, earn good grades in school and loved to read, write, and attend the theater at an early age. Good behavior, nonetheless, was an entirely different story for Mary, sustaining a reputation for planning pranks and for coaxing other children into mischief as well. In recalling her childhood, Chase confesses, “I got the highest grades for studies and the lowest for deportment. I had a reputation for physical daring and some notoriety for getting other children into mischief” (53). Although Chase got into trouble, she was still encouraged to be sensitive to people who were different. Her mother, for example, instructed her to “never be unkind or indifferent to a person others say is crazy. Often they have a deep wisdom. We pay them a great respect in the old country, and we call them fairy people, and it could be, they are sometimes” (53). This advice obviously had a lasting impact on Chase’s memory, for Elwood Dowd is a character of such qualities.

Scraping up enough money to attend the University of Denver at age fifteen and later the University of Colorado in Boulder, Mary Chase earned no degree but acquired enough knowledge and confidence to land a job as a columnist for the Rocky Mountain News. Along the way, she gained an appreciation for theatre, frequently attending the many theaters in the Denver area. One struggle for Chase came through the actions of one of her rowdy bothers. Caught by a zealous police officer shaking a gum machine with some other reckless boys, he ran and was shot, although not fatally. The incident damaged the Coyle family’s reputation and led to gossip and ostracism. “Probably the tragedy made Mary spend more time with books than ever; in any case, the quality of reading and studying she did was amazing for a pretty, quickly intelligent child in an American town” (Drewry 54). Another of Chase’s personal struggles surfaced during
her studies at the University of Denver. This was an outright rejection of the Catholic Church:

It was studying the history of the Renaissance and the history of the Reformation that made me question the church, and I could no longer be a Catholic. . . . I was no longer interested in being one. It has not caused me a trauma, though I think it did the members of my family. (Berger 12)

Torn between the roots of her Irish-Catholic family traditions and her own ideas about sin, guilt, and redemption, she inevitably rejected the authority of papal control and church doctrine.

Although she rejected Catholicism, Mary Chase did not leave behind her roots as a determined, energetic woman of Irish descent. Her determination spilled over into her work as a journalist and professional writer. Fitting in with the vigorous lifestyle of reporters, Mary Chase was, “curious, dressed in the flapper styles of the period, had good-looking legs and a fine face, and possessed, too, the bland, amoral effrontery of a good, aggressive, cityside reporter” (Drewry 55). Not only was Mary Chase determined to get her story, but she was also willing to take risks:

Once, in the later stages of her newspaper career, she took truth serum at a public demonstration. The then chief of police tried to make her confess an incident of years before when she had tossed a rock through a window of a house, climbed inside, and beat detectives to a picture of a couple wanted for murder. This was one time the truth serum failed. Mary didn’t confess. (56)

Eventually, Chase was fired from her job at the Rocky Mountain News for pulling a phone prank on the managing editor. When the editor tried to hire her back, she refused, preferring to spend more time, “bearing children, reading plays, writing, seeing people and fighting for causes of the moment” (56).
When she was engaged in script writing, Chase had the ability to concentrate and shut everything out. This was true when she wrote flops as well as hits like *Bernadine*, *Mrs. McThing*, and, of course, *Harvey*:

For two years she wrote at the dining room table, moving empty spools around a miniature stage as she envisioned the action of the play. Her idea was to treat the subject of a woman who takes up with a pooka—a large mischievous fairy spirit in animal form. Again, Chase drew on Irish folklore. At first she conceived the pooka as a large canary! After several drafts, she changed the central figure from a woman to the gallant Elwood P. Dowd, the pooka to a giant rabbit, and the title from *The White Rabbit* to *Harvey* [sic]. (Shafer 347)

Although she could shut things out while she wrote, Chase was unable to shut out the problems associated with the stress of immediate success. It is a common misconception to believe that with fame and fortune automatically comes joy and happiness. Unhappy with New York parties and social affairs, Mary Chase dreaded leaving her family and friends. This issue merely compounded her problems with alcohol, stifled her writing creativity, and built a wall between Chase and her old friends. “Chase told a reporter in 1971 that the success of the play had been a painful experience, traumatic and actually frightening” (350).

Deviating from her formula and realm of comfort, Chase wrote an unsuccessful melodrama entitled *The Next Half Hour*, running forty-three performances and receiving a decided pounding by the critics. However, Chase made a comeback with *Mrs. McThing* and an additional punch of fantastic comedy, sticking to familiar themes like fairies and compassion. It starred Helen Hayes and Brandon deWilde and was well received by audiences and critics alike. Although “the reviewers generally liked the play, [they] pointed out that it was weak in
construction, several using the phrase ‘ramshackle’ construction” (352). Regardless of this view, Mrs. McThing was selected as runner-up for the Drama Critics Circle Award in 1952. Even though its first act was considered by some writers to be “slow and disappointing,” many of the same writers defended Bernadine as “an amusing and moving theatrical piece” (352). The play reconnected with themes that were close to Chase’s heart, focusing upon beauty, laughter, and illusion. Nonetheless, some journalists like Al Werthiem commented, “Where Bernadine [sic] falls short is in its ability to recapture the adolescent world” (qtd. in Chinoy 170). Years later, Yvonne Shafer writes that, “Although it was amusing in its time, it added little to Chase’s reputation. That was even more true of her next play, [Midgie Purvis]” (353).

Before it got out of the starting gate, Midgie Purvis was stopped, and later Mary Chase plays would never be produced in New York. Lucina P. Gabbard summed up Chase’s ability as a playwright by declaring:

The best of Chase’s work, despite uneven writing, reveals a world of whimsey, good humor, and kindness. Elwood in Harvey [sic] sets the tone with his dignified courtesy and his guileless friendliness in a crass, unacceptable, world. Mrs. McThing [sic] adds a touch of magic as the witch turns into a beautiful fairy to bid farewell to her tearful daughter. Bernadine [sic] carries forth Chase’s humor with the character of Wormy, who, by refusing to obey his mother’s threatening commands, causes her to realize the value of boys as allies. Thus Chase’s vision is complete: love is victorious in a pleasant world of fancy. (qtd. in Shafer 355)

Because Mary Chase viewed playwriting as a tedious chore, she never developed a structure that was consistently acceptable to the critics. The decline in quality of scripts from Chase coincided with the decline of her interest in the activity, preferring, instead, to go home to Denver in order
that she might see friends, spend time with family, and actively participate in new causes.

Interestingly, those causes included increasing rights for Spanish-Americans and improving the lives of alcoholic women by providing shelter and treatment. Despite what critics have said about Mary Coyle Chase and her work, it would be hard to argue against the position that she and her writing have had a lasting impact upon theatre and the world.

Learning Objectives

In high school theatre programs, students are offered so much opportunity for a truly enjoyable experience. Along with enjoyment, comes many learning opportunities as well. Some students who participate in the after school program get a chance to practice the skills they learn in drama class, while others must learn as they are immersed in the production process. Most of these young actors are successful in this process if the leadership is strong, organized, flexible, and creative. If expectations are too rigid or unreasonable, actors will leave, stifle their own creativity, or undermine the entire process. In contrast, if the expectations are too lax, then discipline and creativity break down, accidents increase, student actors get into trouble, actors leave, and the entire production effort is constantly in jeopardy of failure. The goal of this director is to help educate the actors and crewmembers to new ideas, to theatre organization, and to the need for both discipline and creativity in the theatre community.

Cast members will, at the end of the production process, be able to:

- Complete the audition process;
- Identify the elements of plot, themes, and characters;
- Understand the importance of trust and warm-up activities;
- Understand and create stage pictures;
- Perform a believable older character;
Identify the given circumstances of the play including:

- Social;
- Political;
- Religious; and
- Economic.

Analyze the dramatic action;

Analyze dialogue;

Understand the essentials and various techniques of comedy;

Understand attendance and behavioral expectations;

Understand relationships within the play;

Know and understand safety rules;

Understand what is expected of the actor during different aspects of the process including:

- Blocking;
- Memorization;
- Character development;
- Onstage etiquette;
- Backstage etiquette; and
- Performance etiquette.

Perform as an ensemble.

In postproduction discussion, the director will allow cast members to give input regarding the level of success in meeting these objectives.
Works Cited


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Part Three
Production Journal

5 March 2003

With twelve parts to fill, only five students showed up for auditions the first day. I had asked two of my club officers to advertise auditions, but they didn’t follow through. One of the officers came to me today and apologized for her lack of follow through. The other one was either too busy to carry out this task or may be put off by a letter that my wife wrote regarding her and her mother’s part in the anti-Grease campaign. I, instead, placed announcements and put up posters with the help of a few other club members. The strain caused by the alternate production has deeper and more far-reaching implications than we even now know. We like to try to put certain things behind us, but every action or inaction has a ripple effect. The talent that showed up today was respectable. One person who has the ability to play Elwood auditioned today. I hope more students audition tomorrow.

6 March 2003

Encouragingly, more students auditioned today. At first, there were but six students auditioning. I quickly began to figure out who could play Miss Johnson, Mrs. Chauvenet, or Mrs. Chumley, and a male part. I had some ideas, but one student who had earlier told me that he would be arriving later did, in fact, show up at his appointed time. It was he who filled the vacant male spot. One concern I now have is that someone might drop or may fail to meet the attendance requirements. I generally prefer to not cast some students who audition. It heightens the intensity level and privilege of being cast. When cast members sense that they can be replaced, they usually work harder and meet up to expectations more consistently. Ability levels vary amongst this group, but I think that casting won’t be too difficult. Most of my decisions were pretty much made during the auditions this second day.
10 March 2003

The first day of read through, I discovered that some of the cast members have difficulty with reading the text. This may make it difficult to get these actors to connect with the text and use proper emphasis and tone to convey meaning. Yet, with hard work, I believe that even poor readers can meet this challenge. Getting the actors to physicalize the text will help with this, I think. One actor was not present. He went out of town with his family. Since I have worked with this actor before, I am already somewhat concerned with him. He has a tendency to be very immature. Yet, the last time I worked with him, his attendance was not the problem. Although other students have made claims that he has matured a lot since last year, I still can’t forget the conflict he and I had had with respect to his need to follow my direction. He almost quit the musical last year for this very reason. I had told him that he should quit if he felt that he could not take direction from me. I am also concerned about the young man who auditioned late. But, his attendance has been good thus far.

11 March 2003

The second day of read-through is similar to the first. All actors are in attendance today. Morale seems to be good so far, and the actors are enjoying the text and the read through. Most of them are laughing in the right places. Some of the actors are choosing to correct other’s pronunciation. I discourage this by telling the actors that I want the individual to work through the words him or herself. If the actor wants help, he or she can ask. The joy of reading, and for that matter of acting, is often squelched when everyone quickly jumps in to correct. If the actor is not getting it and before bad habits are built, I will gently jump in and help. Ultimately, the words must be pronounced correctly. Yet, I think the discovery process is more important, at first, than is accuracy. We took some time today to talk about the language of the script and the
importance of punctuation in terms of emphasis and meaning. We also spent time discussing expectations and goals of the cast. I mention that we will periodically review and add to these throughout the rehearsal process.

12 March 2003

Although there seems to be significant debate in the theatre community over the subject, I like to give young actors a beginning structure for blocking. I remind the actors that this will probably change throughout the rehearsal time and that my pre-blocking notebook is a living, breathing document. This will just give them a starting point and general frame of reference. Even though this practice is pretty boring for most students, I find that it builds confidence in their director. Young, inexperienced actors want to know early where to go and that the director can and will lead them to that end. Another advantage to pre-blocking sessions is that they give each actor a chance to envision his or her character’s own personal storyline through action. It further helps actors to understand what the director envisions for each character and for the play as a whole. A disadvantage to pre-blocking, other than temporary boredom, is that it may make actors feel restricted and may prevent them from being creative. My experience tells me that the opposite, in fact, is true. This structure actually provides more opportunity for focusing in on creativity rather than technical elements early on.

13 March 2003

A few actors are still having difficulty recording accurate blocking, but it’s getting better as actors feel free to ask questions about their blocking during the session. This condition lends to the idea that oral pre-blocking is better than just handing the actor a written version. I’ve
often thought that the written technique might save time but have come to realize that it probably
would not since the first few walk-through rehearsals would drag in an effort to clear up
questions and confusions. We successfully pre-blocked Act Three and walked through it,
clarifying things as we went along. Morale seems good. Actors have been present, on time, and
open to my direction. It helps that some of these actors have been in my class this year and others
have worked with me before. Most of these actors, though, are very much beginners with zero to
little experience. In a way, this could be an advantage as long as I do not allow them to fall into
bad habits. A few of these actors worked under Paul Lucas, a director who has a more relaxed
approach to directing. Yet, they seem to be adjusting to my style pretty readily. I need to remind
myself that it is important to build trust early on with these actors.

14 March 2003

Ten minutes before rehearsal one actor quit. He said that his family was taking him to
Spokane for the weekend of the performances. I reminded him of his contract also signed by his
parents. I asked him if he had read the schedule. Then, I expressed my disappointment in his
dropping. I told him that he had been doing a great job so far. He would have made a fine Judge
Gaffney. I'm not certain that he was telling me the whole story about why he was quitting. I
considered calling his parents but decided that this may stir up more than I'm willing to invest
in. Putting my energies into finding a replacement would probably be more valuable. This is
often difficult because sometimes you have to settle for anyone who happens to have spare time,
which is not a good criterion for selection. However, I asked for the cast's assistance in finding
a replacement, someone who is hopefully sincerely interested in theatre. I will also bring this up
to a few students in my drama class. Alex Haggerty, the actor playing Dr. Sanderson was absent
today. His attendance in class has also been weak lately. I'm beginning to wonder if he'll make
it. An understudy is needed. The skill level amongst the male actors is pretty good, but they have proven to be irresponsible and immature. I found the walk-through rehearsals difficult because the pre-blocking I had given included directions involving other characters. Two characters were missing. This is particularly challenging in early rehearsals when actors are not familiar with their blocking. I know that I need to give a pep talk on Monday. Morale is easily damaged when people start quitting or not attending. Before it gets away on me, I must get a hold on it now. As for the Gaffney part, I think we’ll find a replacement. With some proactive measures, these things have a way of working themselves out. I just have to remind the cast of the immediacy of our need. Commitment to the role, rehearsal, and performance is the top requirement at this juncture. A properties needs list was passed out to be taken home. We’ve already receive some donations in response to an e-mail I sent out to all district employees. Act One was successfully pre-blocked, and we accomplished a walk-through, making notes and adjustments along the way. The smaller stage is something to which I’ve found it somewhat difficult to adjust. I’m looking forward to working with smaller groupings next week. Student volunteers have been steadily working on the sets. They are much appreciated.

17 March 2003

A male student from my journalism class approached me today about auditioning for the vacant Gaffney part. I gave him audition materials and told him that I would audition him on Wednesday. An administrator approached me today and informed me that the young man playing Sanderson was ineligible according to WIAA rules. He is only taking two classes and has been truant several times to drama class. The search is now on for someone to play Dr. Sanderson. I am confident that we will find someone. I told the actors to not let a few bumps discourage them. They were positive and supportive. Morale still seems strong. Set painting
continues. Most of the construction has already been accomplished. Students continue the search for props. With our tiny budget, borrowing or receiving donations is a must. Our student costumer has found a few costumes on hand. However, we will still need to check Goodwill and the Senior Center. Act One, scene one was the focus for today. The primary goal was to allow students to get comfortable with the language accompanied with movement. In an attempt to get the actors to work on character, I encouraged them to turn up the energy a bit each time we went through the scene, including a topping exercise which challenges actors to top the energy of the previous actor. On the last walk-through, I directed the actors to put their scripts down and improvise the scene. The actors said that this was hard. I agreed. Building confidence, this activity helps to remove the crutch and encourages character work and immediacy. It is so good when actors do not know what to say next. After this, I showed the actors what the stage crew had been working on, helping them to gain confidence in the whole production process.

18 March 2003

The actor who was to play Dr. Sanderson was not at rehearsal today. It is his third and final absence. One of the cast members said that a former student, Noble Brown, might be interested in auditioning for the Sanderson part. I contacted him after rehearsal, and he will come in to see me tomorrow. We need to sew this up soon. Before rehearsal, I overheard the actors discussing some possibilities for Dr. Sanderson. Interestingly, this shows that they are willing to take responsibility for the production and has acted as a stimulus for teamwork and cohesiveness. Almost immediately we started rehearsal. Tomorrow and the next day we rehearse in the choir room due to a band concert on Thursday night. This will work out ok though. Early rehearsals usually do not need a great deal of space. Energy was low today, at first, so I challenged the actors to pick up the energy. As the actor playing Elwood becomes more familiar
with the script, he is beginning to understand meaning through words, tone, and emphasis. I saw the most growth in him today. Once we got past his reading limitations, his skill level became more obvious. Generally, energy picked up through rehearsals. We did a fast forward through the last run-through. I reminded the actors of their upcoming deadline for line memorization. They politely groaned.

19 March 2003

Actors were still concerned about the Sanderson part. I’m still waiting to audition Noble Brown. He’ll do that tomorrow. A new actor was auditioned to play Gaffney. He will start with us tomorrow. The end of Act One was the emphasis today. Actors generally understood and accomplished their blocking. Energy was a bit low. I challenged them by introducing soap opera style and over/under exaggeration. This gave the energy level a boost and offered an opportunity to teach some essential elements of comedy. The actors seemed to thoroughly enjoy this. Morale was lifted, and we all enjoyed the process. I continue to remind actors of memorization deadlines. A few students came in today to work on sets.

20 March 2003

Rehearsal was in the choir room today. Just the assistant stage manager showed up to work on sets. Working with just three actors today was enjoyable. A large part of the focus was upon line, cue, and blocking memorization. The new actor playing Gaffney seems reliable and works hard. The first few times through today’s scene were clumsy, but by the end of the rehearsal period, the actors had much of their lines and cues and all of their blocking down. I gave ten minutes between each cycle for the actors to study lines. This was effective, as study was serious and concentrated during this time. The young lady playing Veta is articulate but will demand significant attention especially in the areas of gesture and vocal expression. She also
has a tendency to race through her lines. This is a demanding role, but she was the best choice for this role. Megan Mason, the actor playing Myrtle, is coming along well. I’ll need to work with her on movement and gesture. However, she understands the text pretty well and has good voice control, so the task won’t be too daunting. Rehearsal was mellow but intense.

21 March 2003

Attendance was good today. The actor who is to play Sanderson will be here on Monday. I announced this to the cast, and they were encouraged. To challenge the actors and to make them aware of the serious nature of our work, we started with Act Three. Actors had no scripts but were prompted. Through experience, I’ve learned that actors study the beginning of the play first. I want them to pay attention to the entire play. Gently reminding actors to stay in character, I encouraged them to be focused even while struggling with their lines. This helps to set a positive, professional atmosphere as well as high expectations. After struggling through the prompted third act, I took advantage of the bigger cast grouping today and had the actors help pull flats out onto the stage and set them up. The library shelves were improperly measured. We will have to see if we can fix them or start over next week. To stay in budget, we need to avoid major mistakes like this. It is difficult to direct on stage and backstage at the same time. The fireplace slot is a bit large, be it can be modified next week.

24 March 2003

At the beginning of rehearsal, we worked together to put walls into place and set furniture. After the first run-through of today’s scene, it was obvious that one of the actors had not studied his lines, cues, or blocking. I needed to be more clear that actors have to know their blocking also at these rehearsals. Blocking was way off and confused. Following this first run-through, I asked the cast what the problem was. Somebody responded that they did not know
their lines very well. I, then, asked them what we should do? They did not have a verbal answer. A little pressure seemed necessary at this point. Some time between scene run-throughs was provided for actors to briefly go over lines. These ten-minute blocks improved scenes dramatically by the end of rehearsal. Sanderson was not in this scene, so I had the actor study his lines with a partner. Morale was pretty good even with today’s struggles. A great deal was accomplished in setting the tone and rehearsal expectations. Our light and sound technicians were in today and accomplished a great deal.

26 March 2003

Chris, the actor playing Wilson, is still struggling with lines. I told him that I know that he is able to memorize lines. He did it yesterday during rehearsal. We reviewed a variety of memorization techniques, and I reminded the actors of the seriousness of our project, insisting that they put more time in on line memorization and/or find more efficient ways of memorizing lines. Chris asked me if he could use his script. I told him that the last actor who used his script after deadlines paid Masque and Gavel ten dollars to use it for one session. He changed his mind about using his script. The script in hand is often a crutch for the actor. Some work can be done with it in hand, but it is very limiting. Actors had two ten minute sessions for memorization work. The first run-through had large chunks of silence. This was more painful for them than it was for me. No pain, no gain. Improvement was made throughout the rehearsal period. I hope to not discourage Chris too much, but I’ve got to hold to this expectation, just as I hold to attendance expectations. Some work was done on the bookshelves. They’re starting to look better.

26 March 2003

At the beginning of rehearsal, we discussed general ideas regarding publicity. All actors
were present and early. When I arrived, they were diligently studying lines and cues together. This is a good sign. Chris Buchman, the actor playing Wilson, had fewer lines to prepare for, but it was obvious that he had studied his lines and cues. He doesn’t know his blocking very well, but progress was made. Movement through the scene was much smoother. Confidence was lifting. On the third time through the scene, we used over-exaggeration to add energy and to begin experimenting with character and comedy. As a result, Chris’ character came alive, and I told him to maintain that energy during all rehearsals. To sharpen their line, cue, and movement retention, we did one final run-through in fast forward, while insisting that actors enunciate properly. The lighting was roughly finished today. Fine-tuning will have to take place later. I submitted my sound list to our sound technician. One scene painter came in today to work on sets. All is slow but sure right now.

27 March 2003

All actors were present, on time, and working on lines before rehearsal. We discussed the importance of memorization for lines, cues, and blocking. I mentioned that we would be working on character in more detail next week. Melissa, the actor playing Veta, struggled with lines and cues the first time through. By the end of rehearsing this segment, all was better. To get the actors to focus upon comedy, energy, and paying attention to the actions of other actors as well as their own actions, we experimented with over-exaggeration, alternating from face, to gesture, to voice. This turned out to be too complex for some of the actors. It almost brought one actor to tears, so I backed away from the technique. We may come back to it later. I need to find a way to build more gradually with these types of things. These actors are much less experienced with this sort of technique than were the actors in my previous position. Remembering this fact will help reduce frustration. Along with the end of the play, we were able to go back and rework Act Two,
Scene One. It was a bit bumpy but a good refresher for the actors. At the end of rehearsal, I reminded actors that we would be walking through the entire play tomorrow, with the exception, probably, of Act Two, Scene One. The sound cues were not completed. I set a new deadline date for April 3rd. Progress was made on the bookshelves. The stage manager and assistant stage manager work diligently on that project. We’re still gathering properties. Some of these are difficult to come by.

28 March 2003

All actors were on time and in attendance. We spent a little time up front filling vacancies in technical areas, assigning people to makeup, costumes, and properties. I reminded actors that if their scene was done for the moment they need to stay and work on lines or in the technical areas. We may come back to any scene during the rehearsal time. We walked through Act Three twice. The second time was better than the first. Technical adjustments were made in Act Three. In Act One, a few memorization problems surfaced, but, overall, things went somewhat smoothly. Yet, this was a good wake up call in preparation for next week, encouraging actors to study diligently lines, cues, and blocking. Next week, I plan to work with students’ written, detailed character analyses. Spencer King, the actor playing Lofgren, left early and without permission. I have not received his signed Guidelines Form and will press him for this next week. I will also tell him that he will be counted absent for today and is on probation. Currently, I only have girls who are willing to take his part. Maybe that is fine with this role. I hate to have to replace another actor, but I will if it is needed. After the rehearsal, I reminded actors that they were obligated to stay the whole time. There were other single scene actors who had stayed and worked on sets or something else related to the play. We also discussed, once again, the importance of line, cue, and blocking memorization in order to make progress.
31 March 2003

Micah Brown, the actor playing Elwood, was not in attendance today. A last minute family outing took him from rehearsal. Needless to say, rehearsal was a bit frustrating. However, I seriously attempted to make this condition into an opportunity. We walked through Act One a couple of times. I encouraged actors to imagine Elwood’s presence. The opportunity was that actors got to use their imaginations. Furthermore, I started to work with actors on objective, trying to get the actors to play to a variety of objectives in the scene. Some improvements were made. We also spent time working with character analysis worksheets. I went over the questions and told them that I wanted them to write in first person. Their character sheets are due this Thursday, the last day of rehearsal before spring break. I’ll just be checking them off on Thursday so that the actors can take them home over the break. We will look at these more closely on their return. I made copies so that I could look at their analyses before break is over.

1 April 2003

Michael Kubosumi, the actor playing Judge Gaffney had a family emergency today and was unable to attend. I continue to seek out opportunities when this happens. On the bright side most of the actors are using up their allowed absence days early on in the process. This will help later. I spoke with Spencer and let him know that he is on a thin line. Also, though, I told him that I wanted him to play the part. However, he won’t if he can’t follow the rules. We rehearsed Act One, Scene One twice and then Scene Two twice. Our focus was on character objectives. I frustrated one of my actors when I gave her a challenging verb to act upon. The verb was “dupe.” When I approached her about it she said that she was a bit of a perfectionist. I tried to tell her that we are just in process. We are just doing our best with what we’re given. Relax.
Melissa is making marked improvement in rate of delivery as well as character, and I told her so. She said that she had started her character analysis last night and that really helped. She’s right. I encouraged her to keep going in that direction. Chris improves with Wilson but is inconsistent when it comes to effort. He drags his feet and is a bit lazy. I need to constantly light a fire under him. Micah’s character is steadily evolving. We need to focus a bit more attention on his line delivery. This will be a focus for tomorrow’s work. At the end of rehearsal, we talked about theme a bit. This led to a discussion about what defines “crazy.” One discovery is that all the characters have their own psychological problems. The finish was pleasant.

2 April 2003

Rehearsal started with a brief discussion of the learning objectives for the play. We then started into Act Three. Spencer was absent, so we worked around his three pages. This was not a major obstacle. Someone, in confidence, told me that Spencer was planning to quit. I had just spoken to him this morning, though, and directly asked him if he wanted the role still. He said that he did. We’ll see. In the mean time, I’ll begin to look for a possible replacement. It may need to be a girl who can play a guy. The first walk through was fine. All the actors knew their lines nearly word perfect. Next, we continued to work with over-exaggeration, slow motion and surprise. I instructed the actors to come on stage with one change. We then discussed the change. On the next time through, I asked the actors to add three surprises. During this run-through, I integrated over and under-exaggeration as well as slow motion. Energy levels were high. Following all of this, actors wrote in their acting journals. I instructed them to write down their new surprises and three more they could add for tomorrow. Also, I told them to write down three discoveries for today. We shared this. At the end, I told them of the young actor who had asked me, “When are we ever going to do these exactly the
way we’ll do them in performance on opening night?” My response was, “On opening night.” My point was that rehearsal is about process and that things should be constantly changing for improvement. In later rehearsals most major decisions will probably have been made, but minor changes should continue to be a part of the process. I think they understood.

3 April 2003

All actors but King were present and on time. King is on his last absence. This one has to be made up. We focused on Acts Two and Three. I instructed the actors to surprise me every time they come on stage. This instruction continues to add energy to rehearsals. I collected the actors’ character analyses. Everyone turned it in completed. Another focus today was enunciation and projection. Most of the actors continue to progress in terms of character. After break, we’ll continue to work on character depth and energy. At the end of rehearsal we talked about the importance of the last four weeks of rehearsal and discussed some technical elements.

14 March 2003

This is the week most people are using up their absences. I’ll take advantage of this by exerting more energy in the technical areas this week. We’ll also spend time working on voice projection, warm-ups, and characterization exercises. We were missing Buchman and McDowall, so we primarily worked around their segments. The second time through, we worked on page eighteen to the end of the act. Before this, though, we worked on warm-ups, both body and voice. Next, we practiced speaking from our center and using the diaphragm. I checked to be certain that they could all be heard from the back of the auditorium. During text and movement rehearsal, we focused on character objectives and obstacles. I had students write down their top three wants for the scene and the obstacles that are in the way of reaching those wants. After sharing those wants, we played them “life or death.” I told the actors that this would bring a
special intensity to rehearsal. We might also discover some important things about our characters this way. After “life or death,” we discussed our discoveries. The actors seemed to get a great deal from the experience. Our newest addition, Noble Brown, did not have his lines completely memorized yet. But, he and I agreed that he would be off-book by this Friday. We had some time at the end of rehearsal, so we did some needed painting.

15 April 2003

Noble was late by ten minutes and Karissa was nearly an hour late. Karissa had an excused emergency. She’ll be gone tomorrow, making that her third and final absence. I need to track down Spencer King to warn him that if he misses any more days he will be replaced. During my lunch time is the best time. Megan Mason will be gone on Thursday and Friday of this week, but her understudy will step in. Karissa and Chris struggled with lines and blocking today. We continued to work on characterization. After the first rough run-through, I instructed the actors to use cartoon-style as the acting style. It was energetic, and the students seemed to enjoy it. Afterwards we debriefed. They shared a few new discoveries. Then, we did soap opera style. The actors struggled a bit more with this one but seemed to learn a great deal. In our debrief session, the actors shared more discoveries. At the end of rehearsal, we started working on character analysis, primarily discussing relationships between characters. All of the actors were actively engaged. We discussed wants, obstacles, and verbs, additionally.

16 April 2003

All but Chris were in attendance. He had a preplanned lateness, however. It will be counted as his second absence. The cast wondered if Spencer was still in the show. I told them that I spoke with him and that he assured me he would have no more absences. He also agreed to make up his third absence. We plan to see him tomorrow. I confirmed with Cassandra, Myrtle’s
understudy, that she would be filling in for Megan in her absence. She agreed. Micah will be
gone the next two days, one day scheduled before auditions and the other not. This will give
Micah two absences. Most of the cast has used two absences now. This should cut down on
absences in the last three, very critical, weeks. It has not been as difficult as I thought it would
be this week. We found some ways to work around and through some absences, encouraging
actors to use their imaginations. I pointed out to the actors that this fits the major theme of the
play. We tried to use these obstacles as opportunities. Rehearsal was a bit stiff at first today. We
had some problems with lines and blocking. During the first run-through, we corrected those
problems. To encourage energy, we worked with exaggerated gestures, soap opera, and cartoon
style. The exaggerated gestures were also meant to help Melissa. She tends to hold back in body
expression. This exercise seemed to help make the point and also encouraged Melissa to open
up a bit. The actors were also instructed to work through a segment with “life or death.” Most
of the actors handled this well. Megan admitted that she struggled with it. I reminded all of the
actors that this approach takes a great deal of energy and commitment and that it helps to
expand possibilities for character growth and actor concentration. When Chris arrived we
worked on the scenes that he is in. He continues to struggle with line and blocking memorization.
I reminded him of how much money he owes Masque and Gavel. Further, I reminded him that
everyone is counting on him to get his lines, cues, and blocking perfectly. He agreed. Actors
wrote in their journals, focusing in on character wants, obstacles, and tactics. Most of rehearsal
focused upon these elements.

17 April 2003

I continue to do battle with the front office over facilities scheduling. Their
incompetence annoys me. Today we rehearsed without an Elwood. This was an opportunity
to work our imaginations. Both Harvey and Elwood were invisible to us. Noble was nearly fifteen minutes late. I reminded him that he would be fined. We spent some time discussing the sets, properties, and costumes. When the actors were not on stage, I expected them to be reviewing lines, cues, and blocking, to be working on sets, or to be assisting the costumer in getting measurements. We reviewed scenes that had not been worked on since before spring break. Then, in addition to soap opera, we worked with opera, western, slow motion, exaggerated gestures and facial expression, and ballet styles of acting. Cassandra, the Myrtle understudy, struggled some with lines and blocking. This was an opportunity for the other actors to improvise and make do. By the end of rehearsal, she had made significant progress. Early on, she was offered one performance. She’ll get to perform in the Saturday matinee version. Melissa continues, with reminders about speed of delivery, to make steady progress. I’ve got to continue to work with her on making her character bigger. She holds back a great deal. Chris Buchman is a good actor but needs to be reminded to stay focused and to regularly study his lines. Spencer King showed up today and was very focused in rehearsal. He is a skilled but immature young man. I just need to pressure him to be present. The other actors are making fine progress.

18 April 2003

Noble, Micah, and Spencer were absent. Robert left for work at 5:15. On Monday Michael will be gone. By that point, nearly everyone will have used his or her two absences. Next rehearsal, I will insist that the actors only use the third absence for an emergency. All of the actors who were present were on time. Because of the absences, rehearsal was somewhat unfocused. We worked primarily on fine tuning blocking and line precision. Some time was spent on styles and working with character intentions as well as inner-monologue. Today’s
rehearsal was difficult and frustrating, and I failed to energize myself and the actors. Melissa continues to make the most progress with character. At the end of rehearsal, we had a brief discussion on priorities and focus during rehearsal.

21 April 2003

Michael was absent, and Noble was late. I warned him that three more tardies would take him out of the cast. He said that he would be on time from now on. At least, he had his lines memorized today. We filled the cab driver spot with Kris Tanis and Carlos Valdez. Today, we did a run through of the entire play, checking line precision and blocking. Actors painted sets while they were not on stage. Some progress was made. Tomorrow, our focus will be upon Acts Two and Three. We’ll slow things down a bit and work with character and with refining comedy techniques. Melissa continues to improve. She still needs to slow down a bit through some lines. We need to heighten her emotional level even more, though. Micah continues to improve also, but at a slower rate. I need to challenge him more. Erin is a bit too worried about how to do things. Instead, I need to help her focus on why she does things. I worked with Cassie on word emphasis. She tends to emphasize pronouns in the sentence. We had a very serious discussion regarding commitment. Energy was moderately upbeat today.

22 April 2003

Everyone except our stage manager was present and on time today. I was exhausted but tried not to let that affect the cast’s energy. We started rehearsal discussing properties and sets and by reminding everyone of the needed jobs. Both of our cab driver replacements were present today. We worked with Kris today and will work with Carlos tomorrow. Kris worked hard on her character and on sets. Instead of working just Act Two and Three today, we also worked Act One. I need to change this pattern tomorrow. I gave some stop/start notes today. I told Megan to
focus on Myrtle’s concern about Elwood coming home to interrupt her party. This seemed to help. Trying to encourage a focus on inner-monologue, I asked Chris what he was thinking about. He’s first answer was not honest, but he changed his answer and said that he was just waiting for the next line. He was not in the moment. Later, I worked with Erin on her gestures by telling her that her character is a queen butterfly. This instruction improved her overall stage presence. Melissa continues to improve with a slower delivery, but I did tell her that she still rushes sometimes. Yet, I offered her praise for the improvements she has made. We finished rehearsal with some work on set painting.

23 April 2003

All actors were present and on time. Our focus was Acts Two and Three today. Before starting rehearsal, we reviewed technical areas that still need work. I offered time for comments and questions and then challenged the actors to bring three new things to each scene today. Rehearsal was very productive today. We worked on character leads to help the actors physicalize their characters. Tomorrow, we’ll continue with this and begin to work on character center. By accident, we found some great bits of comedy to add into our work. The character leads really brought out some important discoveries for the actors. In our post-discussion, Megan noticed that her lead was similar to Melissa’s. I shared that this was significant because Myrtle is becoming her mother. This is an important part of their relationship. A certain amount of mimicry will help the audience to grasp that element. I told Michael that he has a serious back pain in hopes that he might understand what I mean by “crotchety old man.” With side coaching, this seemed to help him focus. In one scene, I wanted him to comfort Veta while scolding Myrtle. This took several tries for him to understand and apply, but I think he’ll get it. We had an effective post-discussion. A few of the actors had specific questions. My assistant stage
manager expressed that some of the actors were treating her badly because she is a Freshman. This may be somewhat true, but I also have observed that she is a bit hypersensitive at times. After her comments, I reminded the cast that no one is more important than anyone else. We spent the remainder of our time working on sets and properties.

24 April 2003

All but Erin Crouse were present and on time. Erin was also out of school today, and this was her first absence. We spent a good amount of time today discussing publicity and assigning publicity tasks. I reminded the cast that we need to begin publicizing this play next week. Next, we reviewed the areas on sets and props that need work. After this, I announced the auditions for *West Side Story* at Central Washington University. We focused strongly on picturization today, primarily in the first scene of the play, which opened up some healthy dialogue regarding character motivation and emotional intensity. The actors struggled with, but seemed to appreciate, the exercise.

25 April 2003

All but Cassie Gish were present and on time. Cassie had a family emergency, and this was her second absence. Our focus was upon Act Two and Three, with a specific energy upon picturization in Act Two, Scene One. The actors seem to be opening up more to this exercise as we go. Discussions regarding intentions and projection of emotion are going more smoothly as actors think about things on their own. They are beginning to understand the application of verbs within the dramatic action. We tried a character switching activity that seemed to be pretty effective. Some progress was made on sets, costumes, and properties today.

28 April 2003

All actors were present and on time today. We began with some discussion of publicity,
costumes, sets, and properties. A plan was made to spend the last half hour trying on costumes and accessories. Our scene focus was upon Act One. Emphasis was placed upon picturization, focal point, levels, emotional intensity, and character intentions. Additionally, we continued to work with styles in order to challenge students to risk and to keep things interesting. Morale was high, and the actors were focused. During our costuming portion, some of the female actors complained about their hats. We'll look for some new ones.

29 April 2003

Micah and Karissa were both absent, giving them three absences. Actors were a bit frustrated with this, and I reminded them of the importance of attendance. Nonetheless, we worked around the missing actors pretty successfully. Continuing to work on pictures, I challenged actors to strengthen their emotional intensity and heighten the focal points. This exercise helped actors considerably. A few of the actors struggle with creating the emotion without the words. They felt “silly.” I told them that good actors look forward to feeling silly. We spent nearly an hour working on our sets today. Progress was made.

30 April 2003

All but Erin were present. She had a family emergency. Our focus was upon Act One and Act Two, Scene Two. We continued with picturization as well as an emphasis on creating tension through physical contact and resistance. Furthermore, we worked on vocal projection and enunciation. Although she has improved markedly, Melissa continues to require constant coaching in this area. I had the actors get into costume to see what we have and in preparation for the commercial we’re making for our local television station. The last portion of rehearsal was spent filming this commercial. Morale is picking up. A greater seriousness permeates the rehearsal period.
1 May 2003

Everyone was present and on time today. Chris has an important doctor’s appointment and will be taking his third and final absence then. He committed to come in on Saturday to make up his missed time. Rehearsal was strong and focused today. After discussing some technical and publicity elements, we made plans for our field trip to see Bus Stop at the Chapel Theatre this evening and for dinner beforehand. The cast seemed excited. Our focus was upon Acts Two and Three with an emphasis upon picturization in Act Two, Scene Two. We also worked with over-exaggeration of facial expression, gesture, and movement. Morale is high. I hope it lasts. We need to work more on warm-ups and improvisational character development. I never seem to have enough time for it all.

2 May 2003

All actors were present and on time. We started with some vocal and relaxation warm-ups. Then, we discussed sets, props, costumes, makeup, and publicity. Our text focus was Act One, working with picturization and physicalization. I continue to challenge actors to use surprise as well as over and under-exaggeration. Rehearsal time is more intense and productive. Some of the actors are starting to drop the ends of their lines. I coached them to do otherwise and reminded them that in comedy the humor is often at the end of the line. Along with picturization, we work with intentions and obstacles. Most of the actors are showing modest improvement and morale seems to be good. We spent the last part of our rehearsal moving our set so that we can paint the stage black tomorrow.

5 May 2003

All actors but Chris were present. No one was allowed to read his lines. A pause was offered instead. This actually helped maintain the serious tone of rehearsal. After discussing
technical and publicity elements, we warmed up vocally and physically. This is going well so far. Next we focused upon Acts Two and Three with an emphasis upon pictures of the last half of Act Two, Scene Two. Congruently, we continued to discuss and work with intentions, obstacles, and variations in degrees of emotion. We continue to make slow, steady progress on sets and properties. Our work on costumes is pretty much complete. Morale remains pretty high.

6 May 2003

All actors but Cassie were present. She was sick and went home. This was her third absence, so I reminded her that her time must be made up. We rehearsed Acts One and Two with a primary focus of picturizing part of Act One, Scene Two. Also, we worked with vocal projection, enunciation and articulation. Further, we discussed some of the given circumstances of the play as well those of each character, taking time to discuss, through improvisation, character relationships. Moreover, we spent time on sets and publicity. Morale is pretty good.

7 May 2003

All actors were present and on time. Our attention was upon Acts One and Three today. I felt that more attention was needed upon Act One than on Act Two. Picturization was a primary focus with attention on projection, intention, and inner monologue. I continued to encourage actors to work with surprise and exaggeration. We worked on sets and publicity.

8 May 2003

All actors were present and on time. We did a complete run-through with notes afterwards. I reminded the cast of the need to project and to stay in the moment to keep things fresh. I gave specific line notes to actors and asked the cast to give feedback or to ask questions, reminding them to not give notes about other actors. If they have something to say about another
actor, they can say it to me in private. Then, I can give the note, modify it, or ignore it. A few of the actors have complained about the ASM. She’s a Freshman and may be power tripping. I told the actors to try to work with her the best they could. I spoke to the ASM, giving her suggestions on how to get more out of the actors. She admitted that she can be demanding. We continued to work on sets and publicity.

9 May 2003

All actors were present and on time. We did a combined dress and tech rehearsal with notes afterwards. I continued to remind certain actors about projection. We did a few projection exercises. We had some problems with sound and a few lighting errors.

12 May 2003

All actors were present and on time. All technical elements are nearly complete with some minor adjustments needed. We are still trying to work through our sound system, though, to figure out why we can’t use mics and the cd player at the same time. The actors are generally focused but are missing some of their cues. Costumes have added a new complication but have also given extra life to the characters. My notes primarily are focused on property manipulation and line delivery. I reminded the actors to not drop the ends of their lines. We can not afford to get lazy with this now. Morale seems very strong this week.

13 May 2003

All actors were present and on time. We are working with hair and makeup today. Very few of the actors are experienced at makeup, so this was very challenging. Also, they had just ninety minutes to do a three hour job. With some, exceptions, though, they did a pretty nice job for beginners. Notes were still primarily technical. We spent some time talking about allowing the audience to laugh.
14 May 2003

This is our final dress rehearsal. I decided to let the actors go early, so we did no makeup and hair, just costumes. All actors were present and early. We were unsuccessful at putting together “I’m Called Little Buttercup.” Unfortunately, we couldn’t get the lyrics to match the sheet music we have. I think we can go without. All other sound effects and elements seem to be fine. There’s still a low-level hum that we’ve been unable to completely eliminate. Lighting looks better. The actors seem a bit tired but are focused and confident. After the rehearsal, we discussed backstage and onstage etiquette. Also, I felt that we needed to compliment each other, so we spent some time focusing upon positive things. Each of the actors were required to compliment another actor. Next, since many of these actors had never been in a high school production before, we discussed the art of letting the audience laugh. After a final pep talk and cleanup, we dismissed for the evening.

15 May 2003

A few actors were a couple of minutes late to the pre-show meeting at 4:00 p.m. So, we will meet at 4:00 p.m. tomorrow also. At our meeting, we discussed cleanup, objective, focus, relaxation, and energy. I also read a few passages from A Director Prepares by Anne Bogart. I read from the essay on violence, making specific reference to the ideas of intuition and opposition. We met again at 6:45 and discussed Bogart’s idea of stopping the audience in its tracks. After some relaxation and energy exercises, it was time to start the show. The audience was rather small, but it was lively for a Thursday night. The actors were energetic and glad to be finally performing. Melissa had a great deal of trouble keeping character. I will speak with her about this tomorrow after the first pre-show meeting. All of the other actors were at their best. Most of my notes are specific line notes or have to do with timing.
of entrance cues. The actors received lots of praise during the post-show greeting.

16 May 2003

I was extra tense because my advisor, Professor Robinson, was here to see the show. Although, I tried hard not to pass that nervousness to the actors. Some time ago, I made the decision to not tell the actors ahead of time about his visit and the significance of the performance. It is my belief that this would have made them self-conscious or maybe cause them to ham. Just before the start of the show, I noticed an irritating low-level hum over the PA system. Unfortunately, we were never able to eliminate it. Because of the struggle with sound, we missed putting up our curtain warmer. The audience size was small, but it was a receptive group. We had a couple of strange clanking noises backstage during the show. My stage manager apologized profusely after the show. The actors made a few blocking mistakes but recovered. Generally, they were in character and focused. I found out later that some of the camera crew took liberties to exit and enter at the curtain twenty minutes before opening. I had failed to brief the video production teacher ahead of time. After the show, Professor Robinson discussed the play with the actors, giving mostly positive feedback. I’m grateful for that. Later, Professor Robinson and I went to Sheri’s for pie and a post-show conversation. Even though I felt myself getting a bit defensive, his comments were balanced, fair, and insightful. One thing I know about myself is that it is difficult for me to maintain complete objectivity about my work.

17 May 2003

We have two performances today, so it’s going to be a long day. However, I feel more relaxed today, so this will help me. The actors seem tired and a bit lethargic. We talked about last night in our first meeting. The students felt good about their performance. I gave a few
general notes. At our meeting before the matinee, we talked about risk. The audience was small but appreciative. The performance was a bit slow at times, but the actors got into it. We had talked about staying out of lines and semi-circles ahead of time, so the actors made a few necessary adjustments. I noticed that Cassandra, our Myrtle understudy, was a bit quiet during the first act, so I went back and gave her a note. She was much better throughout the rest of the show.

In our pre-show meeting we discussed the idea of making each performance a new one, and we discussed how final performances of a show are often the most memorable. I implored them to make the memories good ones. The final performance was energetic, interesting, and laced with surprises. Our stress was low and enthusiasm was high.
Final Self Evaluation

Strengths and Weaknesses

In closing this chapter of my thesis project it is truly beneficial to consider and analyze both strengths and weaknesses of the production and process. In doing this, I can hopefully retain strong points while learning from weaknesses. After all, a director that does not take time to reflect and adjust becomes dull and lifeless, just as an actor would who follows the same course.

Implementation of Concept Statement into the Direction of the Production

Several key elements in the director’s concept stand out as vital to assessing the director’s strengths and weaknesses in implementation. As Mary Chase balances farce with serious social criticism, so should the director consider this in both artistic direction and in design. This balance should be seen in stage pictures, movement, gestures, expression, colors, shapes, and sizes. It should also be heard in music, sound and vocal pitch, tone, volume, and rate variety. All these elements can be integrated to reflect the change from winter to spring, from old to new, and from warm to cold. Furthermore, the vitality of the imagination should be sparked through various aspects of the production. Pre-show, transitional, and intermission music should all play a role in such a spark. The actor who plays Elwood is also critical in laying a foundation for the exploration of imagination. A devotion to believable mime and convincing sight should be priorities for the young actor. He must see Harvey. Many of the other actors must rise to the occasion of playing characters that are much older. Significantly, this should not be so bizarre as to take from the humor inherent in Chase’s writing. Ideally, no design or acting element should compromise the unity of the production as it focuses upon the central idea.

In terms of acting elements, we worked intensely with picturization and characterization.
 Nonetheless, some of the actors struggled with stage pictures when it came to the actual performance. One reason for this might have been lack of experience from the actors. Most of these actors had never been in a play before. The most experienced actor had been in two high school plays before this one. The young man who played Elwood had been in one play prior to this one but did not have a speaking part. However, I know that I need to be more effective at communicating this very important technique. It is, ultimately, my responsibility to get the message to the actor. Maybe I need to simplify it more.

Movement, gestures, and expression were largely created from improvisation and dialogue between the director and actor and among actors. Most of the actors handled these elements with a certain amount of grace and thoughtfulness. A few of the actors, though, struggled with matching movement and motivation. The actors playing Wilson and Veta had the hardest time, even after discussions and exercises. Melissa, to her credit, did make significant progress throughout the rehearsal process. Chris’s rehearsal effort was sporadic. Sometimes he was focused, and other times he was not. This condition affected his progress. Though, the other actors progressed moderately well, especially considering their experience levels. This is an area in which I continue to look for ideas to improve my direction.

The implementation of design elements such as color, shape, and size are also a significant measure of director success. Areas of strength in this arena include the use of brown and beige laced with spring colors in the flowers and books. Furthermore, choices in costume colors contributed to the desired effect. The set pieces in the library were rounded and comfortable, while the furniture in the sanitarium was stark with sharp corners and edges. Furniture for the sanitarium was a sterile white, and the walls were a cold institutional green. The walls in both locations were, moreover, large and ominous, providing a gentle grandeur for the
library and a towering, oppressive monolith for the sanitarium and all that it represents in the mental health industry. Several weaknesses, however, kept the design portion from being completely actualized. The books, for instance, were too cartoon-like and needed to be toned down, and there were serious weaknesses in the lighting. Some of the things that I wanted to make happen, such as backlighting and uniformity, never materialized. This is a definite weakness in the program that I must begin to address during each of next year’s rehearsal periods. I did provide some training sessions this year, but it was not enough. My goal is to work with a few people from my classes who are interested. An expert from Central Washington University’s Theatre Arts Department may be willing to help us set up a more permanent lighting schematic that will be functional for a variety of plays.

Traditionally, I have tried to stick to period music for pre-show, scene changes, and intermission. This time, however, I took a risk by integrating some modern music as the play progressed. Someone used to the convention of using different styles of music to introduce one act plays may have been startled by this approach. Well, maybe it wasn’t the most effective choice, but I wanted to try something different and to keep people off-guard. The theme of insanity, nonetheless, was maintained, integrating swing music of the 1940s with Pink Floyd and Ozzy Ozbourne. An edge of insanity was also maintained with the use of a few bizarre sound effects such as a cuckoo clock at select Elwood Dowd entrances and exits and a terrifying scream at the right moment.

Through voice the actor can play a vital role in contributing to the idea of balancing farce with serious commentary. Since we experimented a great deal with vocal variety through a stylistic approach, all of the actors were fairly successful at avoiding constancy in pitch, tone, volume, and rate. However, because of the buzz noise over the system and because of vocal
limitations by some of the actors, vocal projection was a concern at times, particularly for patrons sitting in the most distant rows. Yet, truthfully, no one really sat in the very back rows. This, however, is still an area that we need to work on right from the beginning of each rehearsal block. Vocal projection is usually the number one complaint that audience members have of young actors. If we can deal with this issue, we’ll have made tremendous strides in reaching our audiences. At times, both Melissa and Karissa speak too quickly. It was a problem during rehearsals, so we worked on it quite frequently. Nonetheless, it still cropped up a few times for each actor during performances. Speaking rate is the next area of high importance that needs to be addressed and specifically targeted through coaching and exercise. These two elements, vocal projection and enunciation, should not be taken lightly and just thrown in as afterthoughts.

For this show to work on the level of stimulating imagination, the actor playing Elwood must practice his mime skills and his ability to see Harvey. I was pretty successful in both casting the right person for this part and in helping Micah to use his mime skills and his imagination. Likewise, Micah practiced diligently with these elements throughout the rehearsal process. Along with this, he was able to maintain the required steadiness in character demanded by his role. The creation of Elwood P. Dowd through Micah was one of our production’s strengths.

A difficult area for all directors who work with a cast made up of youths is that of creating believable older characters. My original plan was to spend some time early on with makeup workshops. Unfortunately, this did not happen. I allowed other things to bump this out and make it a low priority. Our makeup work was not a disaster, but it was also not as good as it could have been. However, we did spend quite a bit of time on old age character work, from walking to sitting and from visualization to writing. Some of the actors jumped to stereotypes
rather than concentrating on the events that caused the symptoms of old age. To Judge Gaffney, for example, I told to focus on the pain in his back and how he got it. This worked better than telling him to be crotchety. His focus on the pain manifested itself into a believable walk and into angry, demanding facial expressions and gestures. Another successful older character creation was Mrs. Chauvenet. Early on, Erin was worried too much about how she was doing something rather than why. Thus, we spent a great deal of time working on intention and inner monologue. By performance time, Erin was not able to completely rid herself of self-conscious mannerisms, but she made enough progress to serve it up at the end and create a delightful character. Our weakest older character was Betty Chumley played by Cassie Gish. Although she is a marvelous actor for children’s theatre and for young character roles, it was beyond her to play a woman in her fifties. She just comes across as a little girl. Hence, we just pretended that Dr. Chumley married young in order to control her even more. Even though our old age work could have been much better with greater emphasis on makeup and with more intensity in character focus and exercise, it was not so far off as to take away significantly from the wonderful humor written into the play’s dialogue.

Script Appropriateness

*Harvey* was a good choice for these young actors, for their audience, and for this setting. It had some very good challenges with two locations, with making believable characters, and with creating a connection between Elwood and his pooka pal. The actors enjoyed the script and its characters, and those characters were sufficiently challenging for actors with little to no experience. In some cases, these characters were a bit out of reach, but that is one thing that made our work interesting. This stretch helped it to be interesting for our audiences as well. Members of our audiences seemed to understand much of the play’s humor and appreciated the
overall performance. Unfortunately, not many people attended our shows. We advertised this
show more than any since I have been here, but very few responded with their presence. Maybe
Harvey doesn’t have enough name familiarity for this community. I do know that it has
historically been difficult to get members of this community to come and see live theatre,
especially non-musicals. It is my hope that mounting a series of quality productions will help
turn this around. Along with appropriateness for actors and audience, the setting and facilities
were also suitable for this script choice. The stage and seating areas were of adequate size, and
the technology was adequate to meet the demands of the script and the needs of the production.

Other Areas of Consideration

Both strengths and weaknesses were present in the units of action, blocking, and
composition. For the most part, the units of action were delineated pretty well. The actors
understood the units and beats of separation and why they were present. However, they
sometimes found it difficult to match the blocking with their intentions. I know that this is, in
part, due to lack of experience by the actors but is also due to my own inability to communicate
this effectively to the actors. It is my responsibility to help these young actors to be successful
in this area. Although the outcome was not always the same as the original intent, we persistently
worked on composition, examining levels, focal point, use of different planes, and varying the
size and type of triangles. Furthermore, we tried to use the entirety of the stage space, using
distance and height variations to create specific messages and moods.

The unity of production was both helped and hindered by our visual expression of
metaphor and by our use of picturization in storytelling. In terms of visual metaphor, we were
successful in creating size in both the mansion and in the sanitarium. The sanitarium was
sufficiently cold and uninviting; however, the mansion library was not as warm and inviting
as I wanted it to be. Better lighting might have been a big help in this area. We also had some success in creating visual metaphor with costumes. The white, sterility was reflected in the costumes of the hospital staff, and Myrtle Mae’s colors and changes enhanced the doll-like nature of her character. Although we spent a great deal of time with picturization, it was not as sharp and clear as I had hoped. When it came to final dress rehearsals and performances, we began to lose some of that clarity as actors began to question and adjust their blocking. Maybe I need to work with actors on these adjustments earlier on. Also, it is possible that their character’s intentions were not very clear, causing them to be concerned about the pictures we had created. I’m not certain, but I do know that this needs to be an element of my attention in future productions.

The use of voice, body, and characterization also had their strengths and their areas needing improvement in this production. Because of our work with vocal pitch, rate, and volume variety, all of the actors had a measure of success in this area. However, actors can always improve in this way, so I need to continue to look for new and fresh ways to help with vocal variety. A few of the actors, Melissa, Megan, and Karissa, had minor projection problems, but this was due to rate and enunciation as much as it was volume. All three of these ladies made tremendous strides throughout the rehearsal period. As far as character believability, Melissa had the greatest struggle because she had trouble matching action with intention and because she sometimes failed to see before she responded. I could have done a better job working with Melissa on this concept. It was important enough for us to take the time. Strong, believable characters included Elwood, Dr. Chumley, Dr. Sanderson, and Mrs. Chauvenet. These characters were interesting, had purpose, possessed clear intentions, and maintained a strong will. The actors playing these characters understood them.
Alignment of Project Outcomes to Learning Objectives

Cast members were highly successful in the following areas:

- Complete the audition process;
- Understand relationships within the play;
- Know and understand safety rules;

Cast members were moderately successful in the following areas:

- Understand and create stage pictures;
- Perform a believable older character;
- Identify the elements of plot, themes, and characters;
- Analyze the dramatic action;
- Understand the essentials and various techniques of comedy;
- Understand attendance and behavioral expectations;
- Understand what is expected of the actor during different aspects of the process including:
  - Blocking;
  - Memorization;
  - Character Development;
  - On stage etiquette;
  - Backstage etiquette; and
  - Performance etiquette.

- Perform as an ensemble.

Cast members, with the help of the director, need significant improvement in the following areas:
♦ Analyze Dialogue;

♦ Identify the given circumstances of the play including:

◊ Social;

◊ Political;

◊ Religious; and

◊ Economic.

♦ Understand the importance of trust and warm-up activities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>Hendrixson Don</th>
<th>Name of prod:</th>
<th>Harvey</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>date of prod.</td>
<td>May 15-17 2003</td>
<td>location of prod:</td>
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<td>Committee Chair:</td>
<td>Robinson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Committee members:</td>
<td>HubbardLane</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial date approved by department chair</td>
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**Section 1**

- committee option approval form
- copy of proposed script
- parameter of producing organization
- permission of hiring authority
- evaluation of plan as prod. vehicle
- concept statement
- project schedule

**Section 2**

- Given circumstances
- previous action-list
- analysis of dialogue
- analysis of dramatic action
- character analysis
- ideas of the play
- previous reviews
- research on the playwright
- list of learning goals

**Section 3**

- video of reh.
- video of perf.
- prod. journal
- committee 2 evaluation
- committee 3 evaluation
- self evaluation
- other documentation
- present sections 1-3 two weeks before scheduled oral exam

**Section 4**

- Schedule of oral exam
- Exam
The mountain state of Colorado is bordered on the north by Wyoming and Nebraska; on the east by Nebraska and Kansas; on the south by Oklahoma and New Mexico; and on the west by Utah.

- **FULL NAME**: State of Colorado
- **POSTAL ABBREVIATION**: CO
- **INHABITANT**: Coloradan
- **ADMITTED TO THE UNION**: Aug. 1, 1876. 38th state
- **POPULATION** (est. 1987): 3,296,000. Percent of US total: 1.35%. Rank: 26th
- **CAPITAL CITY**: Denver, the largest city in the state, located on the South Platte River in northeastern central Colorado; population 504,566 (est. 1984). Founded in 1860 on the site of a trading post and several gold rush towns; it was incorporated as a city in 1861 and became the state capital in 1867.
- **STATE NAME AND NICKNAMES**: Colorado is the Spanish word for “red,” and describes the waters of the Colorado River, which gave its name to the territory and then to the state. Also known as the Centennial State, the Highest State, and the Switzerland of America.
- **STATE SEAL**: A blue field bearing a heraldic shield, with miner’s tools displayed on the lower part and snow-capped mountains on the upper; above the shield, the fasces, bound by a band of red, white, and blue with the legend “Union and Constitution”; above the fasces, the eye of God in a triangle, from which come golden rays; below the shield, the state motto on a white banner. The red border bears the legend “State of Colorado, 1876.”
- **MOTTO**: Nil Sine Numine (Nothing without providence)
- **SONG**: “Where the Columbines Grow,” lyrics and music by A.J. Flynn.
- **SYMBOLS**
  - Flower: white and lavender columbine
  - Tree: blue spruce
  - Bird: lark bunting
  - Gem: aquamarine
  - Animal: Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep
- **LICENSE PLATE**: White on forest green, with silhouette of a mountain range; white-and-green border.
- **FLAG**: Three horizontal stripes of blue, white, and blue, bearing the letter “C” in red with a yellow disk in its center.
Facts About the States

**GEOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE**

Colorado’s varied terrain can be divided into three zones: the dry, windy high plains to the east; the Colorado Piedmont, a hilly central area containing 80 percent of the state’s population; and the Colorado Rocky Mountains to the west, a complex network of high ranges (up to 14,000 feet) and the main watershed of the western United States.

**MAJOR LAKES AND RESERVOIRS**
- Granby
- Pueblo
- John Martin
- Lake Granby
- Blue Mesa

**LAND USE**
- Urban (1982) 672
- Rural (1982) 41,271
- Cropland (1982) 10,603
- Pastureland (1982) 1,260
- Rangeland (1982) 1,260
- Forestland (1982) 15,218

**AREA**
- 104,091 square miles. Rank: 8th

**INLAND WATER**
- 496 square miles

**GEOGRAPHIC CENTER**
- Park, 30 miles NW of Pikes Peak

**ELEVATIONS**
- Highest point: Mount Elbert, Lake County, 14,433 feet.
- Lowest point: Arkansas River, Prowers County, 3,350 feet.
- Mean elevation: 6,800 feet

**MAJOR RIVERS**
- Colorado, Arkansas, South Platte, Rio Grande

**TEMPERATURES**
- The highest recorded temperature was 118°F on July 11, 1888, at Bennett. The lowest was -61°F on February 1, 1985, at Maybell.

**NATIONAL SITES**

**NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE**
- Bent’s Old Fort

**NATIONAL MONUMENTS**
- Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Colorado Dinosaur, Florissant Fossil Beds, Great Sand Dunes, Hovenweep, Yucca House

**NATIONAL PARKS**
- Mesa Verde, Rocky Mountain National Recreation Areas, Curecanti

**NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES**
- Alamosa-Monte Vista, Arapaho-Barnforth/Hutton Lake/Pathfinder, Browns Park

**HISTORY**

1700 French explorers reach the Rocky Mountains.
1706 Spanish soldiers and their Indian auxiliaries, led by Juan de Uribarri, visit Apache villages near present-day Pueblo.
1739 A party of French travelers led by the Mallet brothers passes through Colorado. Other French merchants follow.
1779 Spanish soldiers, led by Juan Bautista de Anza, subdue Comanche Indians near Pueblo.
1803 The fur trade lures the first American, James Purcell, into the region.
1806 Leading a party of 15 US soldiers from St. Louis, Lieutenant Zebulon Pike attempts to climb the peak that bears his name.
1819 The Adams-Onis Treaty acknowledges most of eastern Colorado as US territory; the rest is recognized as Spanish.
1820 Major Stephen H. Long leads a party exploring the region along the new boundary; Dr. Edwin James scales Pike’s Peak.
1835 Bent’s Old Fort is completed on the Arkansas River near La Junta, serving as a post and rendezvous point for fur trappers and traders.
1842-1853 John C. Fremont leads five expeditions through Colorado while exploring the West.
1848 The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which concludes the Mexican War, cedes the entire Southwest, including Colorado, to the United States.
1851 San Luis, the first permanent non-Indian settlement, is founded in southern Colorado by six Hispanic families.
1858 July 7-8. Gold is found along Cherry Creek on the present site of Denver, touching off a stampede of prospectors hoping to strike it rich.
1859 April 23. The Rocky Mountain News, published in Auraria, is the first Colorado newspaper.
May 6. More gold is struck along Clear Creek in what is now Central City. As many as 40,000 people flock to Colorado.

February 28. Colorado Territory is created within the present state borders. The Cheyenne relinquish the greater part of their Colorado lands.

November 29. Federal cavalry and volunteer militia massacre about 150 residents of a Cheyenne and Arapaho village. The incident revives Indian warfare in Colorado.

Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Sioux kill 40 whites at Julesburg in northeastern Colorado.

By the Treaty of Medicine Lodge, the Cheyenne and Arapaho agree to move to Indian Territory (Oklahoma).

Cheyenne and allied bands resisting removal are defeated at Beecher Island and Summit Springs. Most of western Colorado is reserved for Ute Indians.

Rail connections link Denver to the transcontinental line at Cheyenne and to the east from Kansas City.

The Denver and Rio Grande Railroad reaches Pueblo from Denver.

A treaty detaches the mineral-rich San Juan district from the Ute reservation.

August 1. Colorado is admitted to the Union as the 38th state.

University of Colorado opens in Boulder.

Heyday of the silver boom at Leadville, which sports an opera house and swells to a population of at least 25,000. Silver production in the area reaches a peak value of $11.5 million in 1880.

Twenty-six soldiers and Indian agents killed by Utes in “Meeker’s massacre” in northwestern Colorado.

Ute reservation is again reduced.

Near the end of the open-range system, Colorado has more than a million cattle, many of them driven north from Texas.

Irrigated land totals 890,735 acres, over half the state's improved farmland.

Gold is discovered at Cripple Creek.

Founding by merger of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Corporation, whose holdings include the only integrated steel plant in the West, at Pueblo. It passes under the control of Rockefeller interests in 1903.

Demonetization of silver has a crippling effect on prices and production of the metal.

November 2. Colorado gives women the right to vote.

American Smelting and Refining Company, backed by Rockefeller (and, later, Guggenheim) money, absorbs six of Colorado’s largest plants.

State and National Guard troops break strikes by the Western Federation of Miners.

Colorado is first among states in irrigated area, which totals almost 3 million acres.

Voters approve the adoption of the initiative and referendum.

April 20. Twenty persons, including 12 children, die when National Guardsmen burn a tent colony of striking Colorado Fuel & Iron Corporation miners at Ludlow. More than a thousand miners then take up arms in a 10-day uprising that culminates in the dispatch of federal troops.

Creation of Rocky Mountain National Park, which is to become a great tourist attraction.

Two US Bureau of Reclamation projects since 1902 have doubled the irrigated land in western Colorado to 600,000 acres.

Ku Klux Klan members in Colorado are elected to major state offices, and Klan-endorsed candidates are elected governor and senator.

Prolonged drought and high winds cause tremendous damage in southeastern Colorado through soil erosion.

Voters approve a constitutional amendment promising $45 a month to retired Coloradans over the age of 60.

A relocation center near Granada for West Coast Japanese-Americans has a peak population of 7,567.
Facts About the States

1943 A Denver ordnance plant manufacturing small-arms ammunition is employing 19,500 persons in the World War II effort.
1955 Colorado is first among states in the production of uranium, molybdenum, and vanadium. More than 400 uranium mines are in operation.
1956 Martin Marietta Aerospace Corporation moves to Littleton to build a Titan intercontinental ballistic missiles, employing as many as 17,000 persons.
1957 Completion of the Colorado-Big Thompson water-diversion system, providing water from western Colorado to populous eastern Colorado.
1963 Record oil production of 58 million barrels places Colorado ninth among states.
1964 Colorado receives a record 5.6 million visitors, many attracted by the growing number of skiing resorts.
1967 April 25, Colorado is the first state to approve liberalized abortion laws (i.e.: therapeutic abortions, rape or incest pregnancies).
1974 Six years of bitter resistance to racial integration end in the court-ordered busing of 18,000 schoolchildren.

DEMOGRAPHY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population (est. 1987)</th>
<th>3,296,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (1980)</td>
<td>2,889,735</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population density per square mile (1980)</td>
<td>27.8</td>
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</table>

POPULATION BY RACE (1980)

| American Indian/ Aleut/Eskimo | 18,059 |
| Asian/Pacific Islander        | 29,897 |
| Black                         | 101,702 |
| Hispanic                      | 339,300 |
| White                         | 2,570,615 |
| Other                         | 168,561 |

POPOULATION CHARACTERISTICS (1980) Percent of state population

| Urban                      | 80.6 |
| Rural                      | 19.4 |
| Under 18                   | 28.0 |
| 65 or older                | 8.6 |
| College-educated           | 23.0 |
| Families below poverty line| 7.4 |
| Public-assistance recipients| 3.7 |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per capita personal income (1986)</th>
<th>$15,113</th>
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<tr>
<td>Millionaires per 100,000 residents (1982)</td>
<td>224.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average life expectancy (1980)</td>
<td>75.3</td>
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Marriage rate per 1,000 residents (1986) 10.0
Divorce rate per 1,000 residents (1986) 6.0
Birth rate per 1,000 residents (1985) 17.1
Infant mortality rate per 1,000 births (1985) 10.6
Abortion rate per 1,000 live births (1985) 305
Crime rate per 100,000 residents (1986) 523.6
Violent Property 6,508.3
Federal and state prisoners per 100,000 residents (1984) 102
Alcohol consumption in gallons per capita (1985) 44.2
Deaths from motor vehicle accidents per 100,000 residents (1985) 17.8

MAJOR CITIES 1984 population (est.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Population</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Colorado Springs</td>
<td>247,739</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>504,566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Collins</td>
<td>70,721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeley</td>
<td>54,758</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pueblo</td>
<td>99,967</td>
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GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of US Representatives</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Electoral votes</td>
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**POLITICAL PARTY NOMINEES FROM STATE**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1964 VP</th>
<th>1976 VP</th>
<th>1980 VP</th>
<th>1984 P</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theodore C. Billings</td>
<td>Carl F. Dodge</td>
<td>Carl F. Dodge</td>
<td>Carl F. Dodge</td>
<td>Carl F. Dodge</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Constitution)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(National Statesman)</td>
<td>(National Statesman)</td>
<td>(National Statesman)</td>
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**RESIDENTIAL PRIMARY ELECTION**

In 1988, Colorado sent 51 Democratic delegates and 36 Republican delegates to the national conventions.

**RESIDENTIAL VOTE 1948-1988 (in percents)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>State Winner</th>
<th>Democratic</th>
<th>Republican</th>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Truman (D)</td>
<td>51.9</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Eisenhower (R)</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>60.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Eisenhower (R)</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>59.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nixon (R)</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>54.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Johnson (D)</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>38.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Nixon (R)</td>
<td>41.3</td>
<td>50.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Nixon (R)</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>62.6</td>
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<td>1976</td>
<td>Ford (R)</td>
<td>42.6</td>
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<td>1980</td>
<td>Reagan (R)</td>
<td>31.1</td>
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<td>1984</td>
<td>Reagan (R)</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>63.4</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>Bush (R)</td>
<td>46.0</td>
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**GOVERNORS**

**Territorial Governors**

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<th>1867-1869</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Gilpin</td>
<td>John Evans</td>
<td>Alexander Cummings</td>
<td>A. Cameron Hunt</td>
<td>Edward M. McCook</td>
<td>Samuel H. Elbert</td>
<td>Edward M. McCook</td>
<td>John L. Routt</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Evans</td>
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**State Governors**

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<tr>
<td>John L. Routt</td>
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**CONSTITUTION**

Colorado is using its original constitution of 1876.

**LEGISLATURE**

The General Assembly is divided into the Senate (35 members, 4-year term, minimum age 25) and the House of Representatives (65 members, 2-year term, minimum age 25). In 1987, the annual salary was $17,500.

**JUDICIARY**

The highest court is the Supreme Court, with seven judges serving 10-year terms. In 1987, the annual salary was $72,000.

**EXECUTIVE**

The governor serves a 4-year term; the minimum age for holding office is 30. In 1987, the annual salary was $70,000. There are 6 other elected officials.
Facts About the States

John Vanderhoof (R) 1973-1975
Richard D. Lamm (D) 1975-1987
Roy Romer (D) 1987-1991

MINIMUM AGES
Majority ................. 18
Marriage with parental consent ........ 16
Marriage without parental consent ....... 18
Making a will ............. 18
Buying alcohol ............ 21
Jury duty .................. 18
Leaving school ............ 16
Driver's license ........... 18

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT
Number executed 1976-88: 0
On death row Aug. 1, 1988: 3

MILITARY INSTALLATIONS
Total number: 13
Major bases:
Army: 1
Air Force: 2

FINANCES

GENERAL REVENUE (1985)
Total general revenue .... 4,133,456
Total tax revenue ........ 2,284,417
Sales and gross receipts . 1,081,766
Individual income taxes .. 907,619
Corporate net income taxes 101,654

GENERAL EXPENDITURES (1985)
Total general expenditure 4,251,146
Education .................. 1,833,724
Public welfare ............. 675,957
Health ....................... 117,641
Hospital ..................... 231,662
Natural resources .......... 107,358
Highways ................... 473,537
Police ....................... 31,311
Corrections ................ 81,895

FEDERAL AID (1985) .......... 1,165,999

ECONOMY

About two-fifths of Colorado's land is devoted to agriculture. Cattle is the most valuable farm product; winter wheat is the most important crop, followed by potatoes, beans, onions, lettuce, and tomatoes. Net farm income in 1983 was $334 million.

Mineral and mining products include gold, silver, zinc, and copper (now mostly in low-grade ores), molybdenum, uranium, oil, gravel, sand, and stone. Though mining has decreased in economic importance since the turn of the century, mining equipment is still one of the state's main exports. The manufacturing sector is dominated by food processing, military equipment and defense research and development, aerospace, and electronics. The tourist industry is the third-largest in the state, bringing more than 7 million visitors to Colorado every year.

EMPLOYMENT (1984)

Thousands of persons

Total number of employed workers .......... 1,610
Construction ................... 88.3
Finance, insurance, and real estate .......... 93.3
Government .................... 243.8
Manufacturing ............... 192.3
Mining ......................... 36.0
Services ....................... 305.4
Transportation, communications, and utilities 85.8
Wholesale and retail trade ............. 340.0
Percent of civilian labor force unemployed (1984) .......... 5.6

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE (1985)
Civilian workers employed .......... 14,125
Military personnel ............. 36,914
Contract awards .......... $1.563 billion

ENERGY SOURCES FOR ELECTRIC UTILITIES (1983)

Percent

Coal ............... 88.2
Gas ..................... 1.2
Hydroelectric ........ 7.4
Nuclear .............. 3.0
Petroleum .......... 0.2

TRANSPORTATION

Motor vehicles registered in state (1986) .......... 2,762,952
Miles of roads, streets, and highways (1986) .... 76,318
Miles of Class I railway operated (1986) ........ 3,369
Airports (1983) ............ 321
Major aviation hubs (1983) .......... 2
Largest hub: Denver
CULTURE AND EDUCATION

Native American tribes
Colorado was formerly home to the Apache, Arapaho, Bannock, Cheyenne, Comanche, Kiowa, and Navajo. Groups that continue to live there include the Ute. There are 2 federal reservations in Colorado.

Religions, ethnicities, and languages
Half of the state's population was born in Colorado; immigration is mainly from Europe, Mexico, Canada, and Japan. In 1980, 10.6 percent of the population spoke a language other than English at home.

Major museums and libraries
Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center
Colorado State Museum, Denver
Denver Art Museum
Denver Museum of Natural History
Library and museums of the State Historical Society of Colorado

Major arts organisations
Denver Center Theatre Company
Denver Symphony Orchestra
Opera Colorado, Denver

Colleges and universities
Number public (1986-87) 29
Number private (1986-87) 23
Total enrollment, in full-time equivalent students (1985) 121,800

Public elementary and secondary schools
Expenditure per pupil in average daily attendance (1986-87) $4,107
Pupil-teacher ratio (1987) 18.2
Average teacher salary (1986-87) $28,400

Major league sports teams
Basketball: Denver Nuggets
Football: Denver Broncos

Holidays
Colorado Day. First Monday in August
State Fair, Pueblo. Last week in August

COLORADO IN LITERATURE

Memoir of the fur trade.

Memoir of pioneer life c.1900 by an Oklahoma emigrant.

Harry F. Backus Tomboy Bride (1969, rpt. 1977)
Autobiography of a woman who lived near the Tomboy mine during the boom years.

Edwin Lewis Bennett (ed. Agnes W. Spring) Boom Town Boy (1966)
Memoir of the gold camp of Creede in 1893.

Hassan Bennett Bright Yellow Gold (1935)
Memoirs of the Cripple Creek gold strike.

Isabella Bird (Isabella L. Bird Bishop) A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains (1879, rpt. 1960)
The author, first woman to be elected fellow of the Royal Geographic Society, visited the Rockies in 1873 and climbed Long's Peak.

Hal C. Borland Rocky Mountain Tipi-Talk (1924)
Collection of Indian tales.

High, Wide and Lonesome (1950); Country Editor's Boy (1970)
Autobiography of growing up in the dryland town of Flagler.

Willa Cather The Song of the Lark (1915)
Novel about the musically gifted daughter of Swedish immigrants who grows up in a small town in the 1880s and leaves for Chicago to study.

The author was a member of a small force that attempted to surprise Union garrisons in Colorado and New Mexico in 1862. When the attempt failed, Conner joined the Gold Rush.

Ned J. Cook Hands Ups or, Thirty-five Years of Detective Life in the Mountains and on the Plains (1882, rpt. 1897, 1971)
The chief of police in Denver, and later major-general of militia, describes encounters with desperadoes.

Journal of the trek between Indianapolis and Denver, 1857-1865.

C. C. Davis. Olden Times in Colorado (1916)
Reminiscences of the mining boom by the editor-owner of the Leadville Chronicle.

Memoir of an itinerant preacher.

Anne Ellis The Life of an Ordinary Woman (1929, rpt. 1980)
Plain Anne Ellis: More About the Life of an Ordinary Woman (1984)
Detailed record of life in mining towns, c.1890-1920.


John Fante Dago Red (1940)
Stories of Italian immigrant life in a small town.

Vardis Fisher Mountain Man (1965)
Novel about pioneers in the Rockies in the 1830s.

Mary Hallock Foote Led Horse Claim (1983)
Western variation on the Romeo and Juliet story set in a mining camp.

Cuir d'Alene (1894)
Novel about the struggle between union and nonunion miners in the Cuir d'Alene region.

Gene Fowler Salute to Yesterday (1937)
Picaresque novel about early modern Denver.

Emily French (ed. Janet Lecompton) Emily: The Diary of a Hand-Worked Woman (1877)
Journal of a working-class Denver woman in the 1890s.

Dorothy Gardiner Golden Lady (1936); Sunny Water (1939)
Romantic novels set in mining boom days.

Great Barracuda (1949)
Fictional account of the 1894 Sandy Creek Massacre.

Hamlin Garland They of the High Plains (1916)
Stories of western characters of the Rocky Mountains.
DENVER: THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN METROPOLIS HISTORY

Denver, the capital of Colorado, was established by a party of prospectors on November 22, 1858, after a gold discovery at the confluence of Cherry Creek and the South Platte River. Town founders named the dusty crossroads for James W. Denver, Governor of Kansas Territory, of which eastern Colorado was then a part. Other gold discoveries sparked a mass migration of some 100,000 in 1859-60, leading the federal government to establish Colorado Territory in 1861.

Before the great Colorado gold rush, the Rocky Mountains offered little to attract settlers, except "hairy bank notes," the beaver pelts prized by fur trappers, traders and fashionably hatted gentlemen in Eastern America and Europe. The gold rush changed that, as the rudely dispossessed Cheyenne and Arapaho soon discovered.

The Mile High City's aggressive leadership, spearheaded by William N. Byers, founding editor of the Rocky Mountain News, and Territorial Governor John Evans, insisted that the Indians must go. After dispossessing the natives, Denverites built a network of railroads that made their town the banking, minting, supply and processing center not only for Colorado, but for neighboring states. Between 1870 when the first railroads arrived and 1890, Denver grew from 4,759 to 106,713. In a single generation, it became the second most populous city in the West, second only to San Francisco.

Although founded as the main supply town for Rocky Mountain mining camps, Denver also emerged as a hub for high plains agriculture. Denver's breweries, bakeries, meat packing and other food-processing plants made it the regional agricultural center, as well as a manufacturing hub for farm and ranch equipment, barbed wire, windmills, seed, feed and harnesses.

The depression of 1893 and repeal of the Sherman Silver Purchase Act abruptly ended Denver's first boom. Civic leaders began promoting economic diversity—growing wheat and sugar beets, manufacturing, tourism and service industries. The Denver Livestock Exchange and National Western Stock Show confirmed the city's role as the "cow town" of the Rockies. Denver began growing again after 1900, but at a slower rate. Stockyards, brickyards, canneries, flour mills, leather and rubber goods nourished the city. Of many Denver-area breweries, only Coors has survived, becoming the nation's third largest sudsmaker.

Regional or national headquarters of many oil and gas firms in the Mile High City fueled much of Denver's post-World War II growth and an eruption of 40- and 50-story high-rise buildings downtown, during the 1970s. Denver's economic base has come to include skiing and tourism, electronics, computers, aviation and the nation's largest telecommunications center. As the regional center of a vast mountain and arid hinterland, Denver boasts more federal employees than any city besides Washington, D. C. Since the 1940s, the large federal center, augmented by state and local government jobs, has somewhat stabilized the city's boom-and-bust cycle.

Sited on high plains at the eastern base of the Rocky Mountains, Denver has a sunny, cool, dry climate, averaging 13 inches of precipitation a year. The sun shines 300 days a year, and the usually benign climate and nearby Rocky Mountain playground have made Denver one of the Mile High City's economic mainstays. Warm chinook winds warm the winters between snowstorms.

Visually, Denver is notable for its predominance of single-family housing and its brick buildings. Good brick clay underlies much of the area, while local lumber is soft, scarce and inferior. Even in the poorest residential neighborhoods, single-family, detached housing prevails, reflecting the Western interest in "elbow room" and a spacious, relatively flat, high plains site, where sprawling growth is unimpeded by any large body of water or geographic obstacle.

Denver's 1970s energy boom spurred a proliferation of suburban subdivisions, shopping malls and a second office core in the suburban Denver Tech Center. Denver's traditional dependence on non-renewable natural resources returned to haunt the city during the 1980s oil bust. When the price of crude oil dropped from $39 to $9 a barrel, Denver sank into a depression, losing population and experiencing the highest office vacancy rate in the nation.
7. DENVER'S UPS AND DOWNS

During the 1920s, Denver flew into the air age with construction of Denver Municipal Airport. Mayor Benjamin Franklin Stapleton encountered shrill opposition led by The Denver Post, which ridiculed "Stapleton's Folly" and dubbed the proposed Sand Creek site in northeast Denver "Simpleton's Sand Dunes." Why build an airport so far away from downtown when there were better, closer sites? If God meant for men to fly, he would have given them wings. This boondoggle, fumed the Post, had been conceived to allow the mayor to squander municipal money buying out landowners, most notably the mayor's crony, H. Brown Canon of Windsor Farm Dairy, at inflated prices.

"Rattlesnake Hollow," as other cynics called the site at East 32nd Avenue and Quebec Street, was blasted as a taxpayer subsidy for a few rich kids who liked to play with airplanes. Sure enough, the power-elite, whose offspring flocked to the new sport of aviation, endorsed the plan. Denver's first families swamped the grand opening celebration, October 17-20, 1929 — one week before the stock market crash. The city paid $143,013 for the 640-acre site and another $287,000 to build the airport with four gravel runways, one hangar, a tiny terminal, and a wind sock.

Three days of dedication festivities drew crowds estimated at 15,000 to 20,000. Rubberneckers watched the climbs and dives, the loops and rolls of airplanes overhead. Sightseers thronged around Boeing's "Leviathan of the Air," a 14-passenger biplane equipped with Pullman sleepers, a kitchen, and a dining room.

Coloradans celebrated "The West's best airport...a model for further airport development...a great center on America's aerial map...large enough and level enough to meet all future needs of long distance passenger flying."

To feed the flyers, "Mom" Williams opened her Skyline Buffet next door to the terminal. Mom, the original airport concessionaire, was replaced in the 1960s by Sky Chef, which opened one of Denver's fanciest restaurants. Shrimp-boat dinners and ice cream sundaes made Denver's fanciest restaurants. Shrimp-boat dinners and ice cream sundaes made

Denver's new airport and activity elsewhere around the city slowed down in the 1930s as the Great Depression struck Colorado. By 1933, the worst year of the Depression, one out of every four
Mayor Newton, planner DeBoer and Helen Johnson, chair of the Denver Zoological Foundation, began a major overhaul of the zoo.

They began with a 1950 rehabilitation of Monkey Island, followed by construction of a Children's Zoo (1951), a Pachyderm Habitat (1959), a Feline House (1964), a Giraffe House (1966), an Animal Hospital (1969), and the Johnson Bird World (1975) on the site of the old Singing Pavilion birdhouse. The new aviary allows visitors to walk through several habitats with free-flying birds in a building covered outside with vines in which native birds nest. The Mountain Sheep Habitat (1979) echoes Bear Mountain, but lacks the exquisite detailing. Northern Shores (1987) houses sea lions and other Arctic wildlife, which included Klondike and Snow, polar bear cubs rejected in 1995 by their mother and raised by the zoo staff. Wolf Pack Woods (1988) was followed by Tropical Discovery (1983). The zoo's most ambitious undertaking since Bear Mountain, Tropical Discovery is an $11.5 million exhibit topped by a huge glass pyramid soaring over the ruins of a pre-Columbian temple, invaded by plants and animals. Primate Panorama opened in 1996 on the site of the old Children's Zoo.

Some 1.6 million visitors annually come to see more than 3,100 animals representing 640 species from all over the globe. Clayton Freiheit, director since 1970, has added hundreds of new species, including many rare and endangered ones, and planted more than 500 trees in the 76-acre zoological park. At last Denver has a world class zoo.

Flush Times

The oil boom and federal spending made Denver flush, and air travel put the isolated, provincial Mile High City within a few hours of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles. By making itself the regional air travel hub, as well as the rail center, Denver attracted offices of both the federal government and businesses. Some firms, such as Johns Manville, Anaconda, and American Express, even left New York to establish headquarters in Metro Denver. Between the 1950s and the 1980s, downtown Denver erupted with new skyscrapers. Suburban subdivisions, shopping malls, and office parks flooded the High Plains in all directions. Ranch houses replaced ranches and prairie dog villages in suburban Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Douglas, and Jefferson counties. But another bust lay just around the corner.

More Downs and Ups

The crash came in the mid-1980s as the price of oil slid from $34 a barrel in 1981 to $9 a barrel in 1986. Once again unemployment and office vacancy rates soared. Some 13,000 Denver oil industry workers lost their jobs. In 1985 and 1986, a downtown Denver overbuilt during the energy boom of the 1970s and early 1980s had the highest office vacancy rate in the nation—30 percent. Republic Plaza, the tallest of 10 new office towers sprouting skyward between 1978 and 1983, stood strangely quiet, a 56-story ghost.

In March 1987, downtown office space, which once commanded as much as $40 per square foot, was auctioned off for prices closer to $5 per square foot. A 2,348-square-foot office on the 13th floor of the once-proud Denver Club Building leased for 10 cents a square foot.

During the 1990s, Denver continued its economic roller coaster ride. The 1980s nose dive ended in an abrupt upturn. Newcomers attracted by the relatively cheap housing prices, high vacancy rates, and Colorado's climate and recreational advantages turned the economy around. By the mid-1990s Denver had emerged as one of the healthiest and fastest growing cities in America. On the suburban outskirts, Douglas County became the fastest growing county in the country.

In a November 1996 article for National Geographic on "Colorado's Front Range," Michael E. Long found that "a robust economy and swift access to mountains, canyons, trails, trout streams, and ski slopes have lured hordes of new suburbanites to the Front Range, all seeking their slice of the West's open spaces and blue skies." Newcomers and old-timers alike found that the new boom darkened skies with air pollution and hemmed in Colorado open spaces.

Whereas Denver's ups and downs once rode the gold, silver, and oil markets, the next bust may be a Los Angeles-style exodus from a community where the quality of life is diminished by air pollution.
The Pentagon concurred. The Air Force Academy arrived in 1958, followed by the North American Air Defense Command. Both complexes were in Colorado Springs, but Denverites regarded the Springs as just another jewel in their Rocky Mountain Empire. The Cold War likewise increased business at Denver's Lowry Air Force Training Base, as well as at Buckley Field and Fitzsimons Army Hospital. Denver lobbied effectively for two other major military installations—the Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant. At Rocky Flats, plutonium triggers were manufactured and maintained for nuclear bombs. The Arsenal made toxic weapons for chemical warfare. Both sites were regarded as heaven-sent boosts for the local economy. With the end of the Cold War in the 1990s, Lowry Air Force Base closed and was converted to civilian housing and educational purposes. Coloradans also began the long, costly cleanup of contamination at Rocky Flats and the Rocky Mountain Arsenal.

The Cold War also fueled an explosion in the number of defense contractors. Ball Brothers Research Corporation, Martin Marietta Aerospace Corporation, and other firms set up Denver-area plants employing tens of thousands in the Highest State, which portrayed itself as the fortress of America.

Denver's growing role as the largest government employment center outside of Washington sparked a post-World War II boom comparable to the initial 1870-1893 bonanza days. This new boom put Denver on an economic roller coaster ride that reached it zenith in the early 1980s before the inevitable, scary downward plunge.

**The Oil Boom**

Oil and the automobile age reshaped the Mile High city. Denver's emergence as an oil hub rivaling Houston and Dallas was not accidental. As early as the 1950s, the Denver Chamber of Commerce began sponsoring an "Oil Progress Luncheon." Hundreds of oil and gas men, with their lackeys and lawyers, were treated to a display of Colorado's climatic and recreational advantages. They were assured of Colorado's favorable tax laws for oil companies, including minimal land use costs and no severance taxes. The chamber also advertised Colorado's advantages in petroleum trade journals and in publications such as *Petroleum Information*, a large Denver clearinghouse and information center for the oil and gas industry.

Major oil companies as well as wildcatters flowed to Denver to open new headquarters or branch offices. The city's new royalty were oil kings and queens, including Colorado's first two billionaires—oil men Philip Anschutz and Marvin Davis.

Among the oil magnates were a few givers as well as a horde of takers. Frederick R. Mayer, for instance, sold his contract oil-drilling firm, Exeter, Inc., in 1980—just before the oil crash. With proceeds estimated at $75 million, Mayer moved into the airy pinnacle of the Norwest Tower and dedicated his time and money to making Denver a home for the arts. He became the principal supporter of the Denver Art Museum. Of Frederick and Jan Mayer, DAM Director Lewis Sharp said in 1997: "Before you can ask, they come and ask what the museum needs." Often working anonymously, the Mayers donated to an encyclopedia of needy causes. For instance, they helped the Denver Public Schools set up a successful School of the Arts to show deprived youngsters that the arts can pay off and provide fulfilling lifelong vocations or avocations. Honoring the memory of Anne Evans, the Mayers bought and restored her mountain cabin on Upper Bear Creek. Like Anne Evans, this couple shared their love for art with all Coloradans.

While some oil tycoons sank money into the community, most were preoccupied with extracting black gold. Colorado crude oil production soared from five million barrels in 1945 to 47 million by 1970. During the 1970s, oil and energy companies bankrolled a gusher of downtown high-rises, topped by the 44-story Anaconda Tower and its swanky Petroleum Club (reorganized as the Top of the Rockies Club in 1996).

In the early 1980s, Denver continued to be the nesting place of the construction crane. Philip Anschutz and others erected the 56-story Republic Plaza (1984), which boasted almost as much prime office space as did all of downtown in 1950. Republic Plaza topped the 54-story City Center Tower (1985) and the 52-story United Bank Tower (1984) with its curved pinnacle (the Mayers' office) that led locals to dub it the cash register building.

The curved top of the cash register building represented the peak of the boom, which soon turned to bust. Indeed, United Banks of Denver, which built the tower, soon disappeared into the economic
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Link:

http://digital.denverlibrary.org/cdm/search/searchterm/Rh-5941/order/nosort
WOMEN IN AMERICAN THEATRE

THE COMIC MUSE OF MARY CHASE

ALBERT WERTHEIM

When Mary Coyle Chase won the Pulitzer Prize in Drama in 1945 for her comedy Harvey, she was only the fourth woman to win that prize since its founding in 1918. Zona Gale had received the prize in 1921 for the dramatization of her novel Miss Lulu Bett; Susan Glaspell for Alison's House, a play based on the life of Emily Dickinson, in 1931; and Zoe Akins for The Old Maid in 1935. What sets Mary Chase immediately apart from these other women dramatists is that she does not in her three major plays—Harvey (1944), Mrs. McThing (1952), and Bernardine (1952)—deal with the plight of women in society, and she is, moreover, a writer of highly imaginative comedy. A longtime resident of Denver, Colorado, and environs, Mary Chase does not write about New York or other East Coast cities; but sets her plays in what might be any medium-sized mid-American city, though Denver is probably her model. By freeing herself from specific social or political issues and by casting off the restraints of geography, she is able deftly and sometimes brilliantly to use her comic art to present man's eternal conflict between his imagistic world and the constraining world of social forms and social realities. Although at first glance a seemingly lighthearted dramatic gewgaw, a play like Harvey shares a common theme with such overtly serious works as Eugene O'Neill's The Emperor Jones, Philip Barry's Hotel Universe, on Tennessee Williams's Glass Menagerie. Mary Chase's comedies, particularly Harvey, deserve the serious treatment they have not yet received from critics and even from their more enthusiastic reviewers.

One is tempted to say, and perhaps with some justification, that, written and produced during wartime, Harvey must surely have had immediate appeal to audiences wearied by the grim realities of global war and, consequently, eager to find escape in the fantasy world that Mary Chase offered. Elwood P. Dowd, who takes leave of the worldly society represented by his sister Veta, his niece Myrtle Mae and their friends to share a life with a pooka, an invisible six-foot rabbit, is doing no more, one might argue, than the audiences of 1944 and 1945, who took leave of Germany, Japan, and Italy to spend a few enjoyable hours with Elwood and his invisible friend Harvey. Though these judgments may well be true, the fact that Harvey has survived beyond the World War II era, that it is still being successfully performed and enjoyed today, seems proof that the play has more than mere escapism to recommend it.

A usual procedure of comedy is to laugh at the illusions of comedy's

Albert Wertheim is Professor of English at Indiana University. He has published articles on Shakespeare, Renaissance, and Restoration theatre as well as on modern British and American theatre.
3. WHERE ARE THE WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS

2. THE ACTRESS

HELEN KIRK CHINOY

Preface

Table of Contents

Acknowledgments

1. FEMALE RITES

INTRODUCTION

LINDA WALKER JENKINS

A STRANGER IN THE VILLAGE: THE ACTRESS IN AMERICA

LINDA WALKER JENKINS

2. A FIGHTING CHAMPION

LOIS ADLER

MARIAN MILLER CONSIDERED

SOPHIE SIEGEL

3. THE LADY'S LASTING

PAULINE KAHN

THE LADY'S LASTING

PAULINE KAHN

4. THE LADY'S LASTING

PAULINE KAHN

THE LADY'S LASTING

PAULINE KAHN

5. WHERE ARE THE WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS?

PREFACE

EARLY WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS

SUSAN DREYER LEE

6. WHERE ARE THE WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS?

SUSAN DREYER LEE

EARLY WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS

SUSAN DREYER LEE
The invisible presence of Harvey upon the stage of the encyclopedia—"Pooka," from old Celtic mythology—ills the page. Always very large, the pooka appears different each time, so that one cannot recognize it at a glance. Very fond of trunks, it has no home or stable. How are you, Mr. Wilson? Wilson? Wilson? The encyclopedia, a book of knowledge, is But of course Dr. Sanderson's error in judgment, the ailment the patient must bear for himself. And as the first scene of Harvey ends, with the impossible conclusion of the second scene of the encyclopedia, Wilson, the mental hospital staff, the psychiatrist, the psychiatric establishment that would roam around with an overgrown white rabbit is another who is lost in the insane chaos produced by Elwood. Dowd has far more sympathy for Elwood Dowd and himself than his sister or than the psychiatrist staff. The psychiatrist staff, the authority, is more than his sister or than the psychiatrist staff. The psychiatrist staff, the authority, is more than his sister or than the psychiatrist staff. But you realize what you have done to the audience. You have made them think. You have made them laugh.
Beginning in the confines of Veta’s home and satirizing her Wednesday Forum, Harvey proceeds in subsequent action to move to the Chumley sanitarium and satirize normalization of behavior in general. Mrs. McThing never goes beyond a satiric criticism of the insulated, overrefined, vapid life of Mrs. Larue and her society friends. After a pre-Broadway run of Harvey in Boston, where Harvey was portrayed by an actor in rabbit costume, Mary Chase wisely eliminated the visibility of Elwood’s pooka. In Mrs. McThing, the fantastic world, the world of Poison Eddie and his gangsters at the Shantyland Pool Hall, is all too graphically represented. Likewise, perhaps distrustful of the audience’s powers of imagination, Mrs. Chase, in the final moments of the play, has the powerful but hitherto invisible Mrs. McThing make a double appearance, first as a frightening witch and then as a beautiful fairy godmother decked in rhinestones. The theme of Mrs. McThing remains the same as that of Harvey: the importance of imagination and fantasy to make human beings more than the stick figures of convention. Yet by giving a local habitation and a name, actualizing the fantasy world, Mrs. McThing, although a comedy of merit, falls short of Harvey’s triumph.

Mary Chase’s third well-known comedy, Bernardine, first staged the same year as Mrs. McThing, explores new comic ground. It is a nostalgic, wistful remembrance by a young man, Arthur Beaumont, of the humor and mystique of the years when he was “Beau,” the acknowledged leader reigning over the special preadult world of teenage boys. Entering in the prologue to Bernardine and dressed in his Air Force uniform, a mature Beau recounts his dramatic anecdote of earlier days when he reigned supreme as leader of the Kings. His monologue recognizes—and forces the audience to recognize—the universality and inherent comedy of that special time in the lives of the young—just before they enter the adult world of responsibility. It is at once a time rich in pubescent fantasy and a universal rite de passage, that, when viewed with hindsight as it is in Bernardine, makes one aware of the comic nature of teenage posturing. As Beau explains to the audience in his prologue:

There are quite a few of us retired Kings flying these days. But often in the service clubs and around we get together and talk about our lost kingdoms; high-school days in the old home town—a Hallows’en world that—almost with its own set of rulers, values, dreams, and a cockeyed edge to laughter.

Here no adult can enter fully—ever. (1)

And it is that “cockeyed edge to laughter” that Mary Chase seeks to recover in Bernardine.

There is much wistful comedy in Bernardine derived from the intersection of a straightforward adult world with the “cockeyed,” exclusive world of teenage fantasy. There is as well some broad comedy derived from the
scenes in which one of the teenagers, who is less sophisticated than he thinks he is, comes close to seducing an unusually attractive older woman. But Bernardine is a comedy that has higher sights than Time Out for Ginger or any number of Henry Aldrich comedies, for it suggests that the special world of the Kings with its concomitant special ideal vision of womanhood and sexuality, Bernardine Cruc of Sneaky Falls, is a necessary part of growing up, a desirable prerequisite for adulthood. In both Harvey and Mrs. McThing, Mary Chase suggests an alternate fantasy world for the rigidity and limitation of diurnal existence. Her position in Bernardine might seem a little, for she suggests that the special imaginative world shared by adolescents can inform their adult lives in such a way that the memory of it will serve to humanize the rigors of adult life and prevent their becoming the stick figures of Mrs. McThing. Even the adults like Mrs. Weedy, who urge the young men to act responsibly, seem to understand this, for Mrs. Weedy ultimately advises her son and his friends to make the most of their adolescent years in the Shamrock, “You stay here—all of you—as long as you can.”

Mary Chase creates successful comedy from the time spent by teenagers in their idiosyncratic, closed fantasy world. At the same time, she emerges curiously close to a serious poet like Wordsworth, who also, in poems like “Lines Composed a Few Miles Above Tintern Abbey,” celebrates the special scenes of youth, which when remembered in tranquility have the power to humanize the everyday world. One has the sense here that those humorous, awkward, but halcyon days spent in the minds of visualizing Bernardine of Sneaky Falls will, in later life, bring Wordsworthian “tranquil restoration” and will lighten the “burden” of a troubled and sometimes “unintelligible” adult world for Bean and his teenage contemporaries.

Where Bernardine falls short is in its ability truly to recapture the adolescent world. Mary Chase is a competent comic playwright, but she is, finally, no match for Wordsworth and his ability to recapture for adult readers the mystique of youth. Harvey continues to stand out as Mary Chase’s major work, even perhaps her masterpiece, and it is Harvey, plus Mrs. McThing and Bernardine, that secures for Mary Chase an important place among those American writers who have championed the necessity of dreams, the life of the human imagination.

LILLIAN HELLMAN’S MEMORIAL DRAMA

MARCUS K. BILLSON AND SIDONIE A. SMITH

For years critics of self-narrative have defined the memoir in terms of the autobiography. They claim the autobiography narrates the story of a person’s unfolding sense of identity, the tale of becoming in the world; the account usually involves considerable self-analysis on the part of the author. The memoir, on the other hand, focuses not on the narrating self, but rather on the outer world of men and events: the memoir-writer’s intention is not self-examination. Critics who describe the differences in the forms in this way fail to realize that the memoirist’s vision of the outer world is as much a projection and reflection of the self as the autobiographer’s. The manifest content of the memoir may be different, but the latent context is likewise self-revelation. Nowhere, perhaps, is this latent self-revelation more intriguing than in Lillian Hellman’s first memoir, An Unfinished Woman. By eschewing conventional autobiography and focusing on the people and the historical circumstances of her past, Hellman invites the reader into a world of “others,” who, as they come together in her memory, become significant in the articulation of her “self.” They are mirrors in front of which Hellman’s self tries to create its own reality (“presence”).

The process is akin to that used in writing plays. Despite her explicit comments about her inability to feel at home in the theater, Hellman opt for the drama as the medium best suited for her art because drama is informed by the objectifying process so natural to Hellman’s creative temperament. The word of the playwright becomes the voice of the actor on stage. The characters in a play become “others,” outside the author and audience; people to watch, interpret, enjoy, learn from. Yet they are also clear mirrors in which to observe the reflection of the self. A character’s ability to reveal its mirroring function is dependent on the play of identity and difference (that is, in other words, the audience’s empathy) we see structuring Hellman’s strategy of the “other” in her memoirs.

In preparing An Unfinished Woman for publication, Hellman drew upon previously published work, returned to early diaries, wrote new material. Hence, An Unfinished Woman has a disjointed quality to it; within the work there are several disparate forms of narrative presentation: the chronological opening; the diaries of her trips to Spain and Russia; the three portraits that conclude the book. Throughout the apparent discontinuity in this work, however, the strategy of the “other” persists, demonstrating its versatility in permitting Hellman her problematic goals: to avoid self-indulgence while committing to paper experiences that are uniquely hers; to sustain a fragile
Mary McDonough Coyle Chase

Chase wrote the Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Harvey*, one of Broadway's most popular and longest-running hits. In more than a dozen other comedies, Chase also satirized contemporary American life, earning praise from Dorothy Parker as "the greatest unacclaimed wit in America."

Mary learned storytelling from her Irish-born mother Mary McDonough Coyle, her father and her uncles. Their fairy tales of banshees, leprechauns and pookas would later reappear in her stories and plays. Mary attended Denver schools, graduating from West High in 1922 at the age of 15. Her childhood home, a small one-story cottage at 532 W. 4th Ave. in a working class neighborhood, has been designated a Denver Landmark in her honor.

Mary Coyle attended the University of Denver and the University of Colorado before joining the *Rocky Mountain News*, Denver's oldest newspaper. An attractive, shapely, black-haired woman who dressed stylishly, she wrote a newspaper column called "Society Notes."

In 1931, Mary left the newspaper to write plays, while also working as a free-lance writer of many articles, short stories and children's books. Hoping to bring laughter to wartime America, Chase wrote a comedy about a six-foot tall imaginary white rabbit. *Harvey* opened on Broadway in 1944 and ran for 1,775 performances, also becoming a successful 1950 Universal-International Pictures movie starring Jimmy Stewart.

Chase photo credit: Rocky Mtn. News
If quantity means anything in the theatre, then 1945 should prove auspicious. Broadway has reached the saturation point; every theatre is filled, every box office running over. The mildest success turns overnight into the maddest triumph. Among those who are foolish enough to care about the quality of the merchandise so lavishly displayed along the Rialto there is less cause for rejoicing. Broadway, suffering from a lack of theatres to house its hits, suffers also paradoxically enough from a singular lack of talents to make those hits important events in the theatre. Yet in spite of a prevalent mediocrity, Broadway has its moments. In the middle of blare and confusion of high pressure production and rauous salesmanship, it can produce as fresh and beguiling a musical as Oklahoma, as sensitive and expert a comedy as The Voice of the Turtle, or as humorous and kindly a folk tale as I Remember Mama. It can even be successfully whimsical, as in the creation of Broadway’s own peculiar ha’nt, Harvey.

For Christmas and New Year’s Eve consummation Harvey comes first among the mid-season’s offerings. Mary Chase dreamed him up, Brock Pemberton escorted him to Broadway, but it is Frank Fay as Elwood P. Dowd in person who evokes his all-but-visible presence on the stage. Mr. Fay can be seen doing it in the frontispiece of this issue, for Harvey is that tall white rabbit, six feet two with long sensitive ears who is coming through the door at Mr. Fay’s invitation. If you don’t see him, lay it to the fact that you are not in the proper holiday mood. Josephine Hull, who plays Elwood’s sister, has become so accustomed to having Harvey around the house that she does occasionally see him himself. Of course we must grant that Mrs. Hull is not an entirely trustworthy witness. She has been mixed up for years past in a confusion known as Arsenic and Old Lace. A lady who poisoned off elderly gentlemen for the kindly purpose of providing them with a
decent funeral would have no trouble in discerning a rabbit in someone. else's mind's eye. The exact status of Harvey, (who, by the way is a Pooka, which of course explains everything, like the Snark being a Boojum), is left ultimately to the decision of the audience. Mrs. Chase merely presents an episode from the life of that amiable tippler, Elwood Dowd, at a moment when his sister Veta decides that the presence of Harvey is interfering with the matrimonial chances of her daughter Myrtle Mae. Veta's attempts to have Elwood incarcerated in Chumley's Rest form the matter, if any, of an evening's pleasant entertainment. The moral, should anyone misguidedly insist on seeking one, lies in a general plea for kindliness. For Harvey, besides being the tallest of rabbits, is also the best of companions because he is the most understanding, tolerant and wise of creatures.

Mrs. Chase's odd combination of pixy imagination and Broadway hokum derives most of its charm from the performance of Frank Fay who steps from vaudeville to the legitimate stage in a role made for him in an actor's heaven. As Elwood P. Dowd he can make effective use of every asset at his command; his odd personality, dreamy, detached, gently-pathetic, his expert technique trained by years of exercise on the vaudeville stage, his actor qualities of impersonation and projection. None of our comedians, except Victor Moore, can so nicely combine wit and pathos. He is master of understatement, past master of the gentle art of evocation. By a murmured word, a pause, a gesture, a mere glance of the eye, he can convey a fund of meaning usually, in his vaudeville days, of double meaning. In this play, he can even convey a tall white rabbit. Antoinette Perry has directed Harvey skilfully, allowing Mr. Fay latitude for his own individual methods. Since Elwood's absorption in the companionship of Harvey allows Mr. Fay to do most of his acting when technically alone on the stage - Harvey being of course invisible to the audience's duller senses - the one-man quality of his performance is entirely in keeping. He wanders, bemused, through the crude doings of the real world around him, courteous, abstracted, irresponsible, kindly.

Josephine Hull gives him superb support. They are both denizens of the same mad-hatter castle, but whereas you can accept Frank Fay as a dreamer of dreams, a seer of strange sights, Mrs. Hull is superbly concrete. Her rotund figure — which is a delight in itself — her hats, her hand-bags, the disordered flurry in which she lives are not matters of vision. She arrives at her mad conclusions by the piecemeal prac-
ELWOOD P. DOWD, an amiable, dipsy gentleman enacted by Frank Fay, above, gazes fondly at Harvey, the invisible six-foot white rabbit who plays the title role in Brock Pemberton's new production, by Mary Coyle Chase.
JAMES STEWART AND FRIEND

In preparation for his film appearance in *Harvey*, James Stewart took over from Frank Fay for seven weeks this summer the role of Elwood P. Dowd in Mary Chase's engaging comedy — a challenge to one's reputation as an actor that few Hollywood stars of equal calibre would be willing to meet.
Comedy by Mary Chase; staged by Antoinette Perry; settings by John Root. Presented by Brock Pemberton at the Forty- Eighth Street Theatre, November 1, 1944.

A Fine Night with a Rabbit

By LOUIS KONRERBECK

Harvey, for all its shortcomings, gave me the pleasantest theatrical lift I have had in a long time. The play itself was wonderfully funny, and occasionally shocked with something that goes deeper than the ordinary laugh-making...

THE CAST

Myrtle Mae Simmons...Jane Van Duser
Vera Louise Simmons...Josephine Hull
Elwood P. Dowd...Frank Fay
Margarette Chase...Miss Johnson
Elise Sloan...Mrs. Eitel Chausen
Frederica Going...J. Ethel Kelly
Jane Whyte...Evelyn West
Lyman Sanderson...M.D. Tom Selden
William Webb...Louis Lott
Betty Chamley...Dora Clement
Judge Oscar Gaffney...John Kirk
E. J. Lofgren...Robert Olst

Harvey is most delightful, droll, endearing, funny and touching piece of stage whimsy I ever saw, and in it Frank Fay, making his first appearance in a legitimate, modern stage, brings a performance so perfect that forever hence he will be identified with the character he plays, as was Joseph Jefferson with Rip van Winkle or Frank Bacon with Lightnin' Bill Jones. Not since "On Borrowed Time" have we seen anything so beautifully played or so perfectly charming, and we made it with pleasure.

Mr. Fay's character is not Harvey, Harvey is Mr. Fay. Harvey is a white rabbit, six feet tall, and one-hundred and one inches tail whom nobody—well, hardly anybody—sees. Mr. Fay is Harvey's record-worshipful companion and his only friend. Mr. Fay has aPhiladelphia producer, who will wait for years for something to happen and Mr. Chase's direction is by Antoinette Perry. The other characters have a whole new world of stage fancy to offer and they have fashioned a piece of theatre way over the beaten track, have cast it well, and have had the double inspiration of Harvey's originators...Mr. Fay, but also the equally lovely, equally funny Josephine Hull.

Harvey is not for the completely literal-minded, who may think it's plain silly to make all this fuss about a big white rabbit. I never in my life thought of any rabbit ever being anything close to a human. But I suspect that the rabbit will get all the solid fact brains sooner or later. Harvey is a big rabbit that you'd want to meet—gentle, funny, courteous, friendly and generous. He drinks coffee and has a cup of it, on one of the dates Mr. Fay is out for a walk, he doesn't know who it is, and he's never heard of it before. When Harvey came out of a place one night, he was coming out of a place one night, and Harvey was leaving against a lamp-post at one end of the street.

Since then they have been inseparable. This is some trouble to Elwood P. Dowd's sister, Veta Louise Simmons, and her daughter Myrtle Mae, because the two are living in Elwood's house out in Los Angeles and they can't have a social life. Sometimes they have a party. Elwood comes in and introduces Harvey to everybody and everybody goes home.

Mixup at Chumley's

So Veta Louise thinks it would be better if Elwood, were put away in Dr. Chumley's sanitarium. She goes there and starts telling them about Harvey, and before she knows it she's the one sitting in a small cell with the rabbit, upstairs, while Elwood wanders blissfully around making friends with all and sundry.

There is much more to happen—some of it funny, some of it giving you the oddest lump in the throat—but I don't spill it by telling you beforehand. Let Dr. Chumley and Harvey become acquainted, too. It is well to think of Harvey as a stop-clock—stop a clock so you can have your tea or whatever it is. You can imagine what you want and do whatever you want, and when you come back not one little minute has passed. Dr. Chumley can even handle this for he'd like to go to a camp in a maple grove outside Akron with a young woman...
Harvey—continued

My ribs are still aching. I can't recall that I ever laughed so hard and so continuously at any show as I did last night at the New York World-Telegram, by Mary Chase, at the 48th Street Theater. And when I was in good company, the audience was in hysterics as part of the moment almost from the moment that it was seen. It went down for the evening. This play will be here for a very long spell. I foresee you have something.”

Harvey is having an immediate effect upon our general speech and action. If, for instance, you are thinking along that Harvey is a chance, that Harvey is a chance, or that Harvey is a chance, you may find yourself smiling, rebelling, and asking, in turn, “What have you in mind?”

That should be uplifting. If too many people are affected by Harvey, however unconsciously, the thing can be very stimulating, a chance to make a change in our lives. Harvey is there. It is a chance, and Harvey is there.

The story of “Harvey” is a little hard to explain. Six-foot rabbits being unusual enough, the actor who plays the part of Harvey, in the role of Charlie’s, is an amiable man with a thirst for barrooms and parties, and met Harvey one day leaning against a wall, and they became friends. When Elwood brought Harvey home, Elwood’s sister, who was known as Charlie’s, there is no evidence that Charlie’s, of course, at the end of the play, very little, so the sister decided that Elwood had better keep Harvey around.

Harvey is a chance, as “Harvey” can run into fearful trouble if he is badly done, but the best object that can be raised against the play is that some scenes are a bit slow. The first act, in particular, is far too long. But when Mr. Fay is on the stage, quickness and alertness to get to it with Harvey, the theatre could ask for little more. Mr. Fay does not act. He wonders aimlessly about the stage, never raising his voice, and when he wants to make a full gesture he only lifts a finger or two. Harvey obviously is not his best time—and perhaps all those of the Palace and the Night Club, where actors grow accustomed to dealing with rabbits and barmaids, etc.

Josephine Hull also is no beginner on the stage. Her portrait of the voice, when she takes her brother to the rest home, she herself is locked up there. Flights and screeches are Josephine’s corner. But Mr. Fay, in a character for Mr. Fay’s casual ease. The rest of the cast back up the two principals, although the part of the nurse, played by Miss B. M. L. Beatty, is an attractive nurse in the rest home. Fred Irving Lewis, a properly stocky psychiatrist, John Kenney, a master of timing, and Miss Dorothy granite, Fred Irving Lewis has directed the play so that it runs easily, and John Root has designed the setting suitable for a home or rabbit hunt—whichever Harvey is worth knowing, either at Charlie’s or Forty-eighth Street.

New York World-Telegram
November 3, 1944
Harvey, by Mary Chase, Hazards, Hilarious
BY BURTON BASCQ

Harvey, by Mary Chase, is a chance, hilarious, paradoxical, and paradoxic. It is a chance, and Harvey, as a concept, is a chance, and Harvey is there.

The story of “Harvey” is a little hard to explain. Six-foot rabbits being unusual enough, the actor who plays the part of Harvey, in the role of Charlie’s, is an amiable man with a thirst for barrooms and parties, and met Harvey one day leaning against a wall, and they became friends. When Elwood brought Harvey home, Elwood’s sister, who was known as Charlie’s, of course, at the end of the play, very little, so the sister decided that Elwood had better keep Harvey around.

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New York World-Telegram
November 3, 1944
Harvey, by Mary Chase, Hazards, Hilarious
BY BURTON BASCQ

Mr. Fay’s Friend Is a Big White Rabbit in Harvey, Enormously Funny Play
BY WARD MOREHOUSE

That is, droll and quiet-spoken, as one is known as Frank Fay, of the most fantastic human characters to ever have appeared on the stage. Believe it or not, Frank Fay is Mr. Fay’s friend. It is a match that is almost from the heart, and Harvey has been a hit with both audiences and critics.

Mr. Fay is a master of timing, and Harvey is the big white rabbit that Mr. Fay’s friend. They are inseparable. Elwood takes Harvey to his home, brings him to bars with him, buys him tickets to plays. The ever-present Harvey becomes Mr. Fay’s companion, and it is a chance, and Harvey is there.

Josephine Hull, a master of timing, and the sidekick galloping some wonderful moments, particularly second scenes where Elwood lives with Harvey, Harvey, the six-foot white rabbit, is against a lamp-post, and who said his was a droopy fate? Flamboyant Josephine Hull, an actress at human, when facing a dilemma, or ev’en a given role, is not to be found. Josephine Hull, an actress at human, when facing a dilemma, or ev’en a given role, is not to be found. She is a character in this play, and Harvey is the big white rabbit that Mr. Fay’s friend.

Miss Chase’s dialogue is generally excellent and Harvey, the big white rabbit, is a masterful creation. Harvey is a chance, and Harvey is there.
“Harvey” -continued

The cast

Teta

Ethel Barrymore

Bichler

Sanford Meisner

Costume Argen

Betina Carl

Mojmir

Mina

Wauna Paul

Drobnik

Madeline Lee

Eduard

Gerharditl

Peggy Meredith

Franziola

Auguste Roeland

Mattie Carrier

Mrs. Schults

Blaze Basserman

Pastor

Martin Blane

Kovakby

Frank Richards

Prentisler

Wolfe Barrell

Mojmir

Eduard Frants

Masha

Sheila Trent

State

Schnur

DUI

Komperth

Harry Neville

Monogram

John McKees

Master of Ceremonies

Gertrude Leve

The Pigeon

Albert Bamberger

Papal Violet

Julian Phillips

Pike

Palme

Swiss Guards

Palme Edwards

Rabbit PHYJed

“Up Boston way, where “Harvey” has been going through its pre-Manhattan paces, they were agreeably surprised to find out that Ethel Barrymore is making a hit. Well, I say, Ethel Barrymore! What’s her name? She’s a beauty, a real beauty, and she really shines in this role. She’s the perfect Harvey, no doubt about it. She makes the audience laugh, she makes them cry, and she makes them think. She’s a true Shakespearean actress, and she’s proved it in this production of “Harvey.”

New York Post

November 5, 1944

Ethel Barrymore Stars in

A Theatre Guild Pageant

By WILELLA WALDOP

The Theatre Guild, which owns a private mint in “Oldahoma,” cannot be accused of being parsimonious. It shares with its loyal subscribers in the form of an elaborate new production, “Embezzled Heaven,” presented last night at the National Theatre with Ethel Barrymore as the star.

Franz Werfel’s novel upon which the play is based tells the story of the Teta, the cook at Castle near Prague, who is having her way to Heaven by educating her nephew, Major

Embezzled Heaven

Play by L. Bush-Fekete and Mary Helen Fay, based on a novel by Franz Werfel; staged by B. Idee Payne; settings by Stewart Chaney. Presented by the Theatre Guild at the National Theatre, October 31, 1944.

New York Post

November 1, 1944

Ethel Barrymore Stars in

A Theatre Guild Pageant

By WILELLA WALDOP

Harvey a Good Idea Gone

Wrong at the 48th Street

By WILELLA WALDOP

A PLAYWRIGHT named Mary Chase has created one of the most delightful char- actsers in the history of the stage. She has done it through the medium of a white rabbit, supposedly in the form of a play, and the result is a very amusing one. The play, titled “Harvey,” has been produced at the 48th Street Theatre, and the audience seems to be thoroughly enjoying it.

We are told that the play is a sequel to the author’s earlier work, “The Flea,” and that it was written to fill the void created by the death of the former character. The new play takes place in the same setting and features the same cast, including Ethel Barrymore as the leading lady.

But we must not let the success of the play blind us to the fact that Mary Chase is a very talented writer. She has a literary style that is both unique and charming, and she is able to create characters that are believable and sympathetic. In “Harvey,” she has created a character who is both endearing and funny, and we cannot help but be won over by her charm.

The play opens with the introduction of the central character, Mr. White, who is seen sitting at a table in a bar. He is a middle-aged man with a bowler hat and a monocle, and he immediately strikes us as being somewhat peculiar. As the play progresses, we learn that Mr. White has been hunting a white rabbit for years, and that he has finally found one. The rabbit, which is named “Harvey,” is described as being a friendly and trustworthy companion, and Mr. White takes great pride in his discovery.

As the play continues, we are introduced to a number of other characters, including a spoilt, rich, and pretentious lady named Mrs. S. S. W. S., who is always looking for a new admirer. She is played by Ethel Barrymore, who is just as endearing as she is funny, and she manages to steal the show every time she appears.

Another character that stands out is a young man named Charley, who is played by the talented actor, Robert McKee. Charley is a bit of a troublemaker, and he is always getting into trouble with Mrs. S. S. W. S. However, he is also a very likable character, and we cannot help but root for him.

The play’s climax comes when Mr. White finally succeeds in catching the white rabbit, and he brings her home to his apartment. There, he finds that Harvey is not the only white rabbit in the apartment, as there is also a small white rabbit that is living in the wall. Mr. White is shocked to find this, and he is not sure what to do.

In the end, the play leaves us with a sense of wonder and amusement, as we are left to ponder the implications of a white rabbit living in an apartment. It is a charming and delightful play, and it is sure to be a hit with audiences everywhere.

New York Post

November 5, 1944

Embezzled Heaven

By ROBERT GARLAND

To tell you the truth, I can imagine

Frank Fay getting along without “Harvey,”

but, for the life of me, I can’t imagine

“Harvey” getting along without Frank Fay.

Last night, at the 48th Street Theatre,

the gentle vaudevillian whose cradle

was a wardrobe trunk, was in his mother’s

Phoebe’s dressing room, which had been

his on-stage debut at the age of four, who

has acted Shakespeare with

E. H. Sothern and Sir Percy Irving, who...

But you know Frank Fay. Everybody

knows him. He’s the type of man who

looks the leading role of the new arrival

at 48th Street. Not as Harvey, mind you, for Harvey

is a great big rabbit that lives there.

With Ethel P. Dowd, the fabulous fellow who

plays Ethel’s sister, is an extremely com-
In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, which should have, and indeed would have, won the Pulitzer for 1963 had not the advisory board rejected the drama jury's recommendation—resulting in the courageous resignation of both John Gassner and John Mason Brown, two of the most eminent and respected drama jurors ever—Albee explores the same issue of whether the destruction of illusion might ever mean salvation rather than death. In *Iceman*, Harry Hope's birthday celebration quickly becomes a wake as Hickey strips away saving illusions. In *Virginia Woolf*, there emerges the same play on birthday/deathday when George determines to destroy his and Martha's illusionary child, on the day that it could be trusted and tried as the basis for human relationships. The award of the 1945 drama prize to Mary Chase's *Harvey* goes even further in suggesting that truth has replaced illusion, but that it is such a deceptive, as the object of Chase's criticism—though admitted not as extreme a criticism as in *Glass Menagerie*, which broached the same topic. To say “it stands to reason” is deceptive. Veta, the staid, matronly sister of Elwood Dowd, whose faithful companion Harvey is, stresses that reality is somehow less than the totality of life. Referring to the portrait of their mother in the stage set, she distinguishes between a photograph that simply records the surface and a painting that “captures not only the reality but the dream behind” that reality; it is such “dreams that keep us going. That separate us from the beasts.” Later, Elwood significantly replaces his mother's painting with one of Harvey, the fruit of his imagination, and Harvey makes a serious point not unlike that of *Iceman*: for some people, illusions are not only harmless but helpful. It goes even further by suggesting that the illusion-less are the really deprived. Though Harvey finally ran for 1,775 performances, its winning the Pulitzer must rank very nearly the least defensible in the history of the prize, since that year the jury passed over Williams's now-classic *Glass Menagerie*. Many critics like McCarthy not only judge Harvey as utterly “lacking in artistic merit,” but also generally question its theatrical merit as farce. Despite its flimsiness as drama, Chase's play remains a paean to the imagination and to man's power to create metaphor. Since the title character, a pooka in the form of a six-foot white rabbit, never appears on stage (only sounds and props, such as a hat with holes in it for the ears, indicate his presence), watching the play demands not simply a willing suspension of disbelief but an imaginative participation by the audience, who must accept what they cannot see. The point is made, then, that surface reality tells only a part of the story, and those who accept only experiential, empirical knowledge, who attempt to remove all mystery and magic from life, become fools rather than wise.

The theatre has always been a house of illusions capable, if the playwright so desires, of whisking an audience away from their everyday reality; in this way, going to the theatre becomes analogous to the journey that the characters in romantic comedy oftentimes take when they leave their usual habitat for a distant green world. Here, the audience and the characters enter not a green world, but a sanatorium. Dr. Chumley, who owns the rest home where the second two acts occur, emphasizes that the so-called worldly wise often suffer from an inability to distinguish the reasonable from the irrational. Ironically, a “fool” living in illusion most nearly approach sanity, and the psychiatrists themselves, bent on freeing people from their psychoses and neuroses and denying them any life-giving and creative fantasies, are the object of Chase's criticism—though admittedly not as extreme a criticism as in *The Striker*, which broached the same topic. To say “it stands to reason” is deceptive. Veta, the staid, matronly sister of Elwood Dowd, whose faithful companion Harvey is, stresses that reality is somehow less than the totality of life. Referring to the portrait of their mother in the stage set, she distinguishes between a photograph that simply records the surface and a painting that “captures not only the reality but the dream behind” that reality; it is such “dreams that keep us going. That separate us from the beasts.” Later, Elwood significantly replaces his mother's painting with one of Harvey, the fruit of his imagination, and Harvey makes a serious point not unlike that of *Iceman*: for some people, illusions are not only harmless but helpful. It goes even further by suggesting that the illusion-less are the really deprived. Though Harvey
who has been in Elwood's camp all along, is joined in her support of Elwood by Chumley himself, after he has been converted by the "miracle" occurring around the sanatorium; on the other hand, Myrtle, her convention-ridden daughter, Dr. Sanderson, and the Judge all oppose Elwood. Sanderson, as his vocation demands, urges a return to reality, of dramatic art and clever stage business indicate a moral shallowness approach to evidence that American drama can attain a literary as falling into line behind Sanderson, arguing that to accept Elwood's escapist ein, for instance, solemnly protests, "To glamorize neuroses, psychoses, and even murders and to make them subject of light laughter by means of dramatic art and clever stage business indicate a moral shallowness and intellectual futility...the first signs of decadence," while George Jean Nathan less sententiously calls "the greatest intemperance document that the American stage has ever offered." (Harvey will certainly never appear to either of them.)

It takes the Cabbie to state explicitly that Sanderson's cure would be worse than the disease, that the injections to return the patient to sanity destroy a person's "faith" and ability to have "fun." Veta echoes this, claiming that normal human beings are "bastards," the kind who, if they ruled the world, would cause dissension and war. Elwood simply suffers a more aggravated case of a disease that everyone might benefit from—a liberal dose of life-saving and humanizing illusion. The only differential that Chase would seem to admit between the people in her world is the quality of their imagination, which exists in proportion to and is a measure of their humanity. Despite everything that can be said for her viewpoint, this type of play by its very nature oversimplifies and ignores entirely the opposite possibility: that illusions can be harmful and that maybe the only heroism finally does come from an uncompromising refusal to be sheltered by the dream. In short, her unambiguously upbeat philosophy allows no room for admitting that the iceman does come. Moreover, this narrow vision, while it might be temporarily satisfying, is conveyed in a work that never challenges the audience to regard it as more than an amusing trifle.

Many of the Pulitzer plays, including some of the earliest winners, are, however, decidedly more substantial than Chase's. With the possible exception of Susan Glaspell's one-act plays Trifles and Suppressed Desires, and his own one-act plays of the sea, Eugene O'Neill's Beyond the Horizon, recipient in 1920 of the second drama Pulitzer (none was awarded in either 1917 or 1919), is the first work by an American playwright to provide evidence that American drama can attain a literary as well as a theatrical position. Stated abstractly, Horizon considers what happens when an all-consuming dream is denied, when the almost visionary impulse of poet is not acted upon. O'Neill concretizes this in the conflict between two brothers who each make an inauthentic choice: Robert Mayo, possessed by "a touch of the poet," who yearns to wander freely on a voyage of discovery in search of the secret "beyond the horizon"; and Andrew, who finds fulfillment in farming, rooted and wedded to the good, clean earth. Their is the archetypal conflict between the romantic and the realist—between the sensitive, nonmaterialistic impulse and the practical, businesslike one that O'Neill often dramatizes. Linked to this is the more universal search for some place to belong, for a sense of oneness with self and mystic union with something outside of and greater than self that also constitutes one of O'Neill's recurrent motifs.

Robert's means of escape will be a three-year voyage at sea, undertaken not for financial gain, the only motivation that his cunning father could imagine, and not even to come into touch with some cosmic mystery. Rather, he intends unselfishly to remove himself from Ruth, whom he loves, since he knows that Andy loves her too, and believes that she loves Andy. Yet when he tells Ruth about leaving, he misreads her banal that Sanderson's cure is, however, a false poetry, a lesser good, and by choosing it Robert fates himself to never belonging anywhere, except in death. Instead of fighting for Ruth, Andy flinches from the pain of seeing her with Robert and himself embarks on the voyage. Despite old man Mayo's portrayal as an authoritarian and ruthless father (whom Andy resembles, just as Robert, in a pattern typical in O'Neill, emulates the soft and compassionate mother), he serves as a choral figure, warning Andy that he is "running against his nature" and will come to regret being untrue to himself. As is frequently the case in O'Neill, the ethical perceptions of the father are valid, rebel as youth might against the rough surface qualities of the man. Both sons, of course, have betrayed their nature: Andrew returns from having hated the sea and, now that life on the farm seems trilling to him, determines to go off to Argentina and seek his fortune; Robert's marriage has become another Strindbergian battle zone, Ruth hating him for having distracted her from love of Andy, and Robert accusing her of never having provided the support he needed. The farm has gone to seed and become a wasteland, imprisoning Robert both physically and spiritually. When their daughter, Mary, dies five years after the initial wrong choice, Robert curses God and questions the meaning of suffering and its relationship to Providence; if unmitigated suffering exists for life's misbegotten creatures, then the suffering itself becomes meaningless and irrelevant, since no interlude of joy exists against which to measure it. Only in contrast to something better can pain be meaningful, and if it is not meaningful, then existence itself becomes un-
Mary Coyle Chase (1907-1981)

Although Mary Coyle Chase (1907-1981) wrote plays from the late thirties to the late seventies, she is chiefly remembered for three plays performed in New York in a space of eight years. She is still represented in the American theatre by occasional revivals of her Pulitzer Prize winning play, Harvey. She had a gift for comic characterization and dialogue which offered fine opportunities for actors such as James Stewart, Helen Hayes, and Fred Gwynne.

Chase was a native of Colorado. She was born in Denver and was highly influenced by her four Irish uncles and her Irish mother. Her Irish fancy pervades her writing.

Chase wrote her first play for the Federal Theatre Project in Denver. Me Third was produced in 1936 and directed by Antoinette Perry. The director interested producer Brock Pemberton in presenting it in New York in 1937 under the title Now You've Done It. After the failure of this play, Chase wrote a script for a movie Sorority Girl (1938). Undeterred by another failure, she wrote a new play incorporating Irish folklore, The Banshee. Pemberton felt it was too dark for presentation during the war, so Chase set herself to writing a play which would bring happiness to people in that sad time.

For two years she wrote at the dining room table, moving empty spools around a miniature stage as she envisioned the action of the play. Her idea was to treat the subject of a woman who takes up with a pooka—a large mischievous fairy spirit in animal form. Again, Chase drew on Irish folklore. At first she conceived the pooka as a large canary! After several drafts, she changed the central figure from a woman to the gallant Elwood P. Dowd, the pooka to a giant rabbit, and the title from The White Rabbit to Harvey. With these changes she created one of the biggest hits in the history of the American theatre.

Chase's central idea is simple, but unforgettable. Well-to-do Elwood P. Dowd has become an embarrassment to his socially conscious sister Veta and her daughter Myrtle Mae. He spends most of his time drinking and insists that he is accompanied by Harvey, a six foot tall rabbit. Elwood describes his pleasing existence to the psychiatrist Veta contacts. He usually passes his time sitting in bars with Harvey, drinking and playing the juke box, and meeting people: "Soon the faces of the other people turn toward mine and smile. They are saying: 'We don't know your name, Mister, but you're a lovely fellow.' Harvey and I warm ourselves in all these golden moments...soon we have friends. They come over to us. They drink with us. They tell about the big terrible things they have done. The big wonderful things they will do" (54). Ultimately, the pleasure of Elwood's life becomes so attractive to the psychiatrist examining him, that he determines to get Harvey for himself. Meanwhile, Veta attempts to commit Elwood to the sanitarium, but through a series of funny misunderstandings is herself, committed, stripped, and shoved into a hydro bath.

Chase develops the characters who represent proper society in sharp contrast to the easy-going, polite character of Elwood. As Albert Wertheim has noted, she exposes, the ridiculous stiltedness, meanness, and sterility of what one might call "normal" or "expected" social behavior. To foster her increasingly negative picture of normalcy, she makes her audience laugh at the comic posturing, insensitivity and stupidity of "good society" and of the arbiters of normalcy, the psychiatrist and his staff. (164)

After her experiences in the sanitarium Veta is doubtful about what to do, and has also come to feel more sympathy for Elwood. She asks
her daughter, “Where else could I take him, I couldn’t take him to jail, could I? Besides, this is not your uncle’s fault. Why did Harvey have to speak to him in the first place? With the town full of people, why did he have to bother Elwood?” (60). As the psychiatrist is about to give Elwood a shot which will bring him back to reality and a responsible existence, a cab driver tells Veta about the change which will take place. He has noticed the difference between the patients he brings up and the ones he takes away: “Lady, after this he’ll be a perfectly normal human being, and you know what bastards they are!” (69). As the play ends, Veta decides she prefers Elwood as he is. As they leave the sanitarium Elwood sees Harvey, and says “Where’ve you been? I’ve been looking all over for you” and he and the invisible rabbit exit arm in arm (71).

The play was an immediate success and ran for four years. Frank Fay was the original Elwood P. Dowd, and although he enjoyed the success, he tired of telephone calls allegedly from Harvey, extra place settings in restaurants with lettuce and carrots, etc. Josephine Hull was hilarious in the role of Veta on-stage and in the movie (for which she won an Oscar). Later Elwoods included Jimmy Stewart and Joe E. Brown. Stewart was in the film version (1950) and the Hallmark Hall of Fame television production of the APA revival which also starred Helen Hayes. Chase did the scripts for both and was paid a record breaking million dollars for the film rights. Writing in 1951, Chase estimated that the play had earned her about eight million dollars.

Critics noted the wit in the play and the charm of the whole production. Howard Barnes’ review was typical: “Fantasy has charm and infinite delight in Harvey. The new play is as wise as it is witty; as occult as it is obvious. It is full of laughter and delicate meaning... It is stage sorcery at its whimsical best. A lively and utterly charming show. Frank Fay’s performance of the bum is memorable; Josephine Hull’s daffy dowager is not to be missed” (“Fay in Wonderland” 95). John Chapman wrote, “‘Harvey’ is the most delightful, droll, endearing, funny and touching piece of stage whimsey I ever saw” (“‘Harvey’ is Just Wonderful” 95). Despite the general praise, and the critics’ delight with the production, several critics suggested that much of its success was due to the performances and criticized the structure of the play. Louis Kronenberg said that the play gave him the “pleasantest theatrical lift I have had in a long time” despite shortcomings. In particular he noted, “‘Harvey’ has a first act that keeps going too long, and a

last act that, in a sense, can’t keep going at all” (“A Fine Night” 95). Ward Morehouse wrote, “It sags in spots, the first act is over-long and the third act is not up to the pace of the second” (“Mrs. Fay’s Friend” 96). Wilella Waldorf was even more negative, stating, “Elwood is a delightful fellow and Harvey is an entrancing, though invisible rabbit. But the vehicle their creator has knocked together for them to wander around in is a slipshod farce in which all of the other characters are stock figures hacked rather crudely out of a very low grade of theatrical cardboard” (qtd. in Toohey 200).

The number of successful revivals and the high quality of the movie based on the play testify to its ability to please an audience. However, a present-day assessment must question the message the playwright was presenting. Even at the time, George Jean Nathan mocked the Pulitzer Prize Committee for giving the prize to Harvey instead of Tennessee William’s The Glass Menagerie. He reminded readers that the award was supposed to go to a play “which shall represent in marked fashion the educational value and power of the stage, preferably dealing with American life.” He went on to say that the educational value of Harvey consists “in the instruction that it is far more contributive to human happiness to be good and drunk, and to stay good and drunk, than it is to be dismally sober. The play is the greatest intemperance document that the American stage has ever offered” (qtd. in Toohey 200). Paradoxically, Chase was an alcoholic, but she may have realized this only later when she faced her own problems and gave up drinking for good. In 1971 she refuted the comments of critics to the effect that Elwood was a “happy drunk” or a “gentle tippler.” She said most of the critics missed the message she intended, “It is not a play about an amiable drunk. It is a spiritual play written in farce terms. I never intended Elwood to be a drunk. Some people live in a different world than other people, and Elwood is such a man” (Syse 3).

A recent revival of Chase’s biggest success demonstrated the many changes in American outlooks since she wrote the play. The production at the San Jose Repertory Theatre. As Steven Winn wrote, the production, “adds at least one wrinkle audiences wouldn’t have encountered in the ‘40s: three of the 11 actors in the cast are black” (“‘Harvey’ Reappears” 1). Winn also commented that Chase’s satire on psychiatrists seemed rather light-weight to “a contemporary audience that’s been to the ‘Cuckoo’s Nest’ and other black comic dens of insanity” (1). Assessing the play as a whole, Winn commented...
on the “magically timeless lines” which still drew laughs, but noted, “Harvey” which beat out ‘The Glass Menagerie’ for the Pulitzer Prize in 1945, potters along for three acts (1). The sense of the review was that the hilarious dialogue still held up, but that only when the best lines were given “the play sheds its years and feels newly minted” (1).

With the tremendous success of Harvey, Chase’s circumstances altered considerably. One would have supposed that for a woman unaccustomed to wealth and praise, the change would have been for the better. But Chase told a reporter in 1971 that the success of the play had been “a painful experience, traumatic and actually frightening” (Syse 3). First, her problem with alcohol increased. (Later she was able to overcome her alcoholism and was proud of having founded a home for alcoholic women in Denver.) Second, the great success of the play created a writer’s block. Finally, she felt that her former friends turned against her. She wrote that three witches always come to the feast: “Greed and the distorted faces of her sisters Envy and Malice” (Chase “My Life With Harvey” 58). The bitterness against supposed friends who let you down is a dark undercurrent in her later play Mrs. McThing.

The next play to appear in New York by Mary Chase was The Next Half Hour, a reworking of The Banshee. This opened in 1945, but ran for only 43 performances. In her play Chase told the story of a woman able to hear the wail of the banshee, and thus predict a death in the next half hour. When the victim is to be one her sons, she decides to try to avert the fate, but succeeds only in causing the death of another son. The critics thought little of the story line—Howard Barnes going so far as to say, “The general idea of the piece adds up to sheer nonsense” (“Mystical Confusion” 132). Burton Rascoe was one of the few critics to praise it as a “drama with even more substance than Harvey.” However, he noted that the cast had done its best by “a melodrama that depends more on the way it is played than on the text” (“The Next Half Hour” 12). The play had been directed by George S. Kaufman, with a cast headed by Fay Bainter but their efforts could not disguise the weakness of the script. Ward Morehouse called it “gloomy, plodding, and quite exhausting ... tedious and stumbling—and quite definitely her second best” (“Mary Chase’s ‘The Next Half Hour’” 130). In “Bad News for ‘Harvey’ Fans,” Louis Kronenberger wrote, “The play is the limpest kind of theater, billowing and at length, just stagnating with talk ... Mr. Kaufman’s direction is for the most part

above reproach, but hasn’t a chance of carrying the day” (130). It is unfortunate that Chase was unable to develop a workable structure to express her Irish mysticism and reveal the essentially interesting character she had created. She started out with a character and situation which, had the play been successful, might have led her to develop her abilities in depth.

Chase returned to fantastic comedy with her play Mrs. McThing (1952). The producer Robert Whitehead originally intended a run of a few weeks for the play described as a play for “children of all ages.” That phrase, which has become such a cliché, is actually a rather meaningful description of not only this play, but all of Chase’s work. Mrs. McThing is a type of fairy tale in which even crooks and gangsters are harmless. Chase based some of the play on her own relationship with her young sons.

One of the most interesting elements of the play is the double roles it provided for Helen Hayes, as Mrs. Larue, and the charming Brandon de Wilde, as her son Howay. Mrs. Larue is a wealthy woman, selfish in her desire to protect her son from any unpleasantness and discontent with his normal boyhood boisterousness. When Mimi, a poor waif, wants to play with Howay she is driven away. Her mother, Mrs. McThing, avenges Mimi by substituting a perfect “stick child” for Howay, and sending Howay to earn his living at a pool hall/lunchroom run by gangsters. She also substitutes a “stick woman” for Mrs. Larue. Mrs. McThing appears, first as a hateful witch, then as a loving fairy, and bids goodbye to Mimi. The gangsters joyfully take away all the silver with Mrs. Larue’s blessing (it’s all insured anyway), and she promises to open her home and gardens not only to Mimi but to all children.

The play was successful in part because of the light touch with which the characters are created, and in part because it allowed Helen Hayes and Brandon de Wilde to play a wide range of emotions and switch costumes and characters as they alternately played the real people and the stick characters. The play was so well received that it ran throughout the spring, Hayes toured it through the summer and returned with it to New York in the fall.
The reviewers generally liked the play, but pointed out that it was very weak in its construction, several using the phrase "ramshackle construction." Brooks Atkinson noted its "innocent sense of comedy" and said, "It is delightful. Thank Ireland for Mrs. Chase's rich make-believe sense of humor and her compassion for the needs of adults and children." ("Helen Hayes" 1). John McClain wrote one of the more negative reviews, saying that even the superlative performances of Hayes and de Wilde could not "sustain the meagre and frothy premise which the author endeavored to stretch into an entire play... Mrs. Chase is a gifted writer, but this time I think she became entangled in a plot from which she never quite extricated herself." ("Mary Chase Gets Snarled" 360). Robert Coleman praised the production, noting that the audience roared appreciatively throughout most of the evening, but described the play as something "J.M. Barrie and William Saroyan might have penned together in an off moment." ("Mrs. McThing" 361). Walter Kerr was "crazy about it" noting that the only flaw in the production or the play was the "comic strip mannerisms" of the gangsters. ("Mrs. McThing" 362). Despite its flaws, the critics chose it as the runner up to I Am a Camera for the Drama Critics Circle Award.

By November of 1952 Chase had quite a coup: she had two plays running successfully in New York City. Bernardine had opened with the attractive young actor John Kerr in a major role. Again, the play relates to Chase's life and background. In it she develops the relationship between a mother and her son when he has reached adolescence. The plot is really an exploration of the tricks and pranks which disturb a mother as she attempts to understand her teenage son and his friends. As Chase wrote in her introduction to the play, "I embarked on an impossible journey of penetration into a world where I did not belong—a study of the viewpoint of a crowd of teenage boys. This was not easy" (viii). Critical response was mixed. Although critics found many faults, particularly with the first act, most found the play moving. Noting that the kids and grown-ups seemed caricatures, nevertheless, Robert Coleman said, "After a slow and disappointing start, 'Bernardine' becomes an amusing and moving theatrical experience. The best, the most rewarding comedy of the season." ("Bernardine is Moving" 231). Walter Kerr felt the play had a special appeal, but wrote, "As a dramatist, Mrs. Chase is loaded with faults. It is perfectly possible that she is the sloppiest scenarist now delighting the professional theatre." In a staggering statement of male chauvinism, he concluded that the weakness in the structure was because she was a woman, "There never was a more feminine playwright, every bureau drawer is left open." ("Bernardine" 233). Richard Watts was one of the few critics who simply found the "antics in the back room of a beer hall" trying. But he noted, "I may be alone in being chill to "Bernardine"" ("Trials" 234). He was nearly alone.

The play was made into a movie with Pat Boone, which was not particularly successful. It has seldom been revived. Perhaps this is largely to do with the change in times: both youth and youthful slang have changed since Chase depicted her teenagers. Critics in 1952 generally perceived the play as a touching and accurate depiction of the problems of adolescence. Brooks Atkinson was nearly alone in describing the teen-agers as "comic-book stereotypes." ("Mary Chase Studies Problem of Being Young" 233). Today, the young men seem not only stereotypes, but idealized and sentimentalized stereotypes. Al Wertheim commented, "Where Bernardine falls short is in its ability truly to recapture this adolescent world." (170). Although it was amusing in its time, it added little to Chase's reputation. That was even more true of her next play.

Midgie Purvis, a vehicle for Tallulah Bankhead, was produced in 1961. In this play the eponymous heroine is a debonair lady with a fondness for furs and spectacular clothing. Her notion of fun is to build a giant snowman in the front yard and dress him in a bra. Her neighbors and family are embarrassed and irritated by her continual antics, so she runs away and disguises herself as an old, shabbily dressed woman and sets up as a baby-sitter for a working widow. Needless to say, the moral is clear and the ending is happy. Ms. Purvis' priggish son realizes how much he loves his mother and welcomes her home. The story is a little like Mrs. McThing in reverse.

Walter Kerr was definitely in the minority in his extravagant praise for the comedy and "advanced sociology" in the play. He professed amazement at the fact that although the nine scenes in the play "could have been played in almost any order at all" and that it rambled, nevertheless he enjoyed it immensely ("Midgie Purvis" 377). Howard Taubman began by remarking, "There is nothing more depressing than a fantasy that won't take wing" and concluding that the leading character, while initially comical "becomes thoroughly vulgar." ("Tallulah Bankhead in Mary Chase Play" 376). The feeling of the critics in general can be summed up by Frank Aston's conclusion, "For the under-
statement of the year, let it be said that the play is negligible” (“Tallulah Plays” 376). Despite the poor quality of the play, many critics raved about the performance of Tallulah Bankhead and her fans cheered each evening when she made her entrance. John McClain noted, “It's a pity the play's on the seamy side. It will be interesting to see if Miss Bankhead's personal draw will be sufficient to keep the play alive. I would guess not—but I hope I'm wrong” (“Tallulah's Fine—The Play? No!” 378). He was right, the play did not run.

Chase had no more plays produced in New York, although a few minor efforts were presented in some regional theatres. In 1979 the production of a play called We Love You Denver! was announced by the small Off-Center Theatre in New York. However, the theatre cancelled its season and expanded its bread baking operations instead! This was her last effort at a major production before her death in 1981.

Mary Chase spent the years following the success of Harvey coming to grips with her changed position in life. She was torn between her urge toward a career and the urge to be a full-time mother and wife. After writing her first play, she said she really didn't know if she could find time to write another one. She once told a reporter, “Rearing three sturdy youngsters is a job in itself” (Coleman, “Her Play” n.p.). Unlike many other women playwrights, she never acted or directed; and did not enjoy the rehearsals which kept her away from Denver. She also had a fairly casual attitude toward playwriting, remarking that any intelligent person should be able to write a play: “Just put things down on paper. Just write. If you have something to say, you will find a way to say it” (Coleman, “Her Play” n.p.). Perhaps this accounts for her failure to perfect the structure of her plays.

Chase spent her last years as a successful figure in Denver society, almost a “civic monument” in her beloved home town. She was awarded an honorary doctorate by Denver University in 1947. She served on many committees and was a member of the board of trustees of the Bonfils Theatre and the Denver Center for the Performing Arts. In 1944, when she failed to realize the immediate success of the opening night of Harvey, Frank Fay called her a “dumb Denver housewife” and this description stuck to her (Chase “My Life With Harvey” 54). She was a housewife, but she was far from dumb. Her plays are filled with witty lines and amusing situations. Her ability as a playwright was summed up by Lucina P. Gabbard, who wrote,
his income remain mysteries, except for the implication that like all rich men, he derives his money from those who can ill afford to lose it. Happy in spirit, generous in his benevolence, Joe is also severely crippled, remaining seated at one of the bar's tables.

Joe, some sort of wounded saint, "born again" in his recognition of what his past has been, makes recompense by using his wealth for the down-and-outs who find their way into Nick's haven (heaven?). Dispensing financial largesse and good advice to all, Joe offers hope in this fantasy world of wish fulfillment, buying up all the newspaper's papers, convincing others that they can play the piano, sing, or dance, and making the prostitute Kitty believe that she has indeed been in burlesque. He promotes the love affair between Kitty and Tom, who waits on him and carries out his various orders; in some mysterious way, we believe, he induces the pinball machine to flash its lights, ring its bells, and pop up an American flag for young Willie, who has been feeding it his limited wealth in nickels for most of the play. Finally, old Kit Carson, teller of tall tales, gets rid of the cruel Detective Blick, who has haunted the place. Thus, all can live in the good time of their lives, ignoring the constant complaint of a character called the Arab that there is "no foundation... all the way down the line."

Saroyan's later plays, likewise concerned with offbeat characters in loosely structured, optimistic plots, never equaled the popularity of his first two. Love's Old Sweet Song (1940) involves an improbable romance between a well-to-do spinster and a con man, and a family of 14 intruding Okies, and concludes with a happy ending appropriate to vaudeville. The Beautiful People (1941) features an even-tempered protagonist who believes that all life is miraculous. Saroyan's originality seemed less striking in these plays, which have been seen only rarely since their appearance.

By most standards of effective dramaturgy—a consistent style, careful construction, and orderly progression of events, together with uniformly developed characters—Harvey should soon have collapsed. It mixes realism with whimsical fantasy, interspersed with farce, plus more than a little satire. Its lopsided, hysterical first act is overweighted with wild improbabilities; thereafter the play proceeds at a moderate walking pace, abandoning along the way an incipient and uninteresting love affair. Some characters are wonderfully rounded, while others are sketchily outlined. The play explores a single situation: does or does not a six-foot one-and-a-half-inch white rabbit exist? Dramaturgical violations can mean very little to the average audience, and Harvey proved the point by winning the Pulitzer Prize for the season and by enjoying a run of 1,775 performances, the fifth-longest for an American legitimate play.

Elwood Dowd's introducing Harvey into the horrors of a musical afternoon at the Wednesday Forum is precisely the kind of thing most of us would relish doing, including bringing Miss Greenawalt's quartet of gin into the midst of these hypocritical, social-climbing, gossiping dowagers. It is remarkably easy to accept Harvey's existence, but we all would no doubt be as confused as Vita Louise in her desperate attempt to explain him to the young psychiatrist who sees her as a dangerous mental case. By the time the doctor has discovered the punctured hat, and Wilson the orderly has read the cheerfully mocking greeting in the encyclopedia, Chase leaves us with no doubt at all.

The balance of the play is a clever satire on "normal" life, with the totally unperturbed Elwood displaying more common sense and offering
sounder psychiatric advice than any professional. Elwood has long practiced what few of us can ever do: he has overcome reality in order to make life bearable. The weary Dr. Chumley’s frantic effort to capture Harvey by fair means or foul attests to Elwood’s deep wisdom, but the doctor is never sure if he should fear or embrace this creature. Still, there must always remain the question of Harvey’s existence, regardless of every viewer’s private conviction that he is present. The hat, the spontaneously opening and closing doors, and Elwood’s accurate predictions of the future are fair proofs, but nobody will admit it in public. After all, the power of suggestion is strong. Or maybe, as Dr. Chumley comes to recognize, there are facts of life that his training can never tell him. Harvey cannot be explained away either in medical jargon or as a carry-over from delirium tremens, and any attempt by Dr. Sanderson to discredit him is lost in Elwood’s rational explanation. Chase realized the necessity of the doubt / acceptance aspect and quickly abandoned the tryout experiment of an actor in a giant rabbit suit.

The gentle Elwood Dowd and his unseen long-eared friend have carried a plea for tolerance of human individuality, however eccentric, into the world’s major languages. Harvey’s message about deadening conformity and its spoof of scientific efforts to eliminate social deviation have won sympathetic understanding in every type of civilized community. At the heart of things, messages or not, Harvey has probably succeeded because, if nothing else, it is a superb example of modern theatrical escapism. It is wacky, cockeyed, zany—name your term. Its fundamental wisdom lies in its lesson that there is much to be gained from those whose grip on reality is not as deathlike as that of most of us. Being crazy, it seems, can be great fun.

Fantasy has its place in drama; there is absolutely nothing wrong in seeking theatrical entertainment in unbridled make-believe. After all, it is the promise of the theater that it will always be a place where ideas, fears, and joys will receive their graphic interpretation without restriction. So why not in fantasy, as a counter to the heavy dosage of grim reality surrounding us? Indeed, why not.

The United States, this new world forged by hand in relatively recent history by a population entirely of European old-world origins, has been almost completely lacking in the development of any genuinely indigenous folk tradition. The reasons are not difficult to discern. A native “folk,” often semiliterate at best, are those who have developed and preserved through several generations a body of knowledge, beliefs, and customs passed on by oral tradition. Furthermore, they have remained over time removed from the main body of society by geographical or socioeconomic conditions that tend to prevent intrusion from the outside world. Thus, the accumulated myth, legend, and superstition evolving from the imagination and often naive minds of these folk develop into the collective body of folklore. America’s rapid growth and headlong western expansion provided little opportunity for the establishment of the isolated pockets of culture from which a folk tradition can arise.

Only our native American Indian culture has created anything resembling truly indigenous folklore passed on by myth and legend, but it is still devoid of drama as we are defining it here. Much of what we call
MARY CHASE'S
HARVEY
THE WHITE RABBIT
STARRING...

MELISSA MCDOWALL
MICHAEL KUBOSUMI
CASSANDRA BAKER
ERIN CROUSE
KRIS TANIS
CASSIE GISH
NOBLE BROWN

AT THE MLHS THEATRE, MAY 15-17
7PM NIGHTLY, SAT. MATINEE @ 2PM
$5 ADMISSION $4 WITH ASB

ALSO SENIORS IN THEIR FINAL PERFORMANCES
ROBERT RUIZ, MICAH BROWN,
MEGAN MASON, CHRIS BUCHMANN
CARLOS VALDEZ, AND KARISSA PERALEZ

⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐
* Put all garbage in the garbage.
* Leave the make-up alone unless you have permission.
Dressing Room Rules

* Put things back where they belong.
* Hang up all costumes.
* Clean up counters.
* Pick up garbage off floor.
* Put all garbage in the garbage.
* Leave the make-up alone unless you have permission.
May 15th-17th 2003

Moses Lake High School's

Masque and Gavel Society

Presents

Harvey

Thanks to:

Keith's Downtown

765-0227

www.keithsontheweb.com

by Mary Chase
Director....................................... Mr. Don Hendrixson

The Cast
(in order of appearance)

Myrtle Mae Simmons............................ Megan Mason
Cassandra Baker
(Sat. Mat. only)

Veta Louise Simmons........................... Melissa McDowall

Elwood P. Dowd.................................... Micah Brown

Miss Johnson........................................ Cassandra Baker
Megan Mason
(Sat. Mat. only)

Mrs. Ethel Chauvenet............................ Erin Crouse
- Ruth Kelly, RN................................. Karissa Paralez

Duane Wilson...................................... Chris Buchmann

Lyman Sanderson................................ Noble Brown

William R. Chumley, MD....................... Robert Ruiz

Betty Chumley.................................... Cassie Gish

Judge Omar Gaffney............................ Michael Kubosumi

E.J. Lofgren..................................... Carlos Valdez (Thur./Fri.)
Kris Tanis (Sat.)

Production Crew
Stage Manager.................................... Felicia Moore

Assistant Stage Manager...................... Cassandra Baker

Light and Sound technicians................ Kamien Sheppard
Kim Sweeney

Costumes........................................... Heidi Hendrixson
Kristi Whitesitt

Painters......................................... Amaris Guy
Megan Guy
Aaron McPherson
Rebecca Nelson

Properties........................................ Megan Mason

Makeup............................................ Kris Tanis
Kristi Whitesitt

Stage Hands.................................... Rebecca Nelson
Brynn Roth

Act I
Scene One: Dowd Mansion library, late afternoon.
Scene Two: Chumley's Rest, an hour later

Act II
Scene One: The library, an hour later.
(10 minute Intermission)
Scene Two: Chumley's Rest, four hours later

Act III
Chumley's Rest, a few minutes later.
+ Thanks to:
Heidi Hendrixson
Keith's Downtown
The Masque and Gavel Officers
Central Washington University's Theatre Dept.
Cindy Hodson
Mr and Mrs. Baker
Charles and Nancy Verkist