No Solution Provided In 'Tea And Sympathy'

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Robert Anderson's "Tea and Sympathy" presents a tangible and pertinent problem to its audience and then fails to provide any adequate solution. The outstanding fault of The Players cast was the inability of the "adult" characters to really portray maturity.

The play is essentially a portrayal of a mature woman living literally and figuratively in a society of adolescents. Her problem, as the wife of a prep school house master, is to guide a boy into the self-confident realisation that the non-conformist in a superficial society of gaudy "regular guys" is to be congratulated, despite the label of "queer" that his differences brings.

Lowera Standards

She is completely unable to convince him on a moral and intellectual basis and must resort to the physical to prove his masculinity to him, thereby negating her efforts by lowering her own standards. The play ends with a stagnant status quo.

Julliet Johnson gave a well-sustained portrayal of Laura Reynolds, her best scenes being with the persecuted Tom Lee, where Laura's self-attributed selfish motive (a need for an emotional outlet for the affection her husband refused) underlined her basic reason for giving more than "tea and sympathy."

Nathans Fails To Develop

Although Miss Johnson's sincerity never wavered, her youthful appearance in the opening scenes and her indecisiveness in scenes with Bill detracted from her overall performance.

Jude Nathans, although convincingly naive and troubled in the first act, failed to develop, and in the last act suffered no true understanding of Laura's friendship or her ultimate sacrifice. The characterization was weak in its interpretation of sensitivity, which often degenerated into self-pity and bickering.

Victor, Kidd Good

In spite of a mechanical quality to his lines and a particularly unrobust appearance for the role, Arthur Victor as Bill Reynolds portrayed the insouciance and small-minded husband with vigor. As Herb Lee, an extraordinarily in-