

THE SATIRE OF JULES FEIFFER: CHANGING
FORM AND IDEOLOGY

by

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ABSTRACT

Jules Feiffer's satire is both personal and social. In an extraordinary collection of cartoon anthologies and plays that range from 1959 to 1970 the transformation from what can be called "emotional" content to political content can be ascertained. At first, primarily concerned with Freudian inspired relationships, Feiffer then moves into an area of anti-Americanism that represents a shift in his satirical ideology as well as a divergence in his form from cartoon to play.

Significantly, one can see a variety of influences on Feiffer's satire, which makes for a tremendous wealth of theoretical approaches to his art. Among them in this thesis are historical, behavioural, psychoanalytical and literary theories, all of which lead to a definitive and evaluative assessment of Jules Feiffer as a satirist.

SOMMAIRE

La satire de Jules Feiffer est à la fois personnelle et sociale. En étudiant sa collection extraordinaire d'anthologies de dessins satiriques et de pièces de théâtre, allant de 1959 à 1970, nous nous rendons compte de l'évolution de ce que nous pouvons appeler contenu "émotif" au contenu politique. Feiffer s'intéressa tout d'abord aux types de relations d'inspiration freudienne, puis se dirigea vers un secteur anti-américain, qui représente autant un changement de son idéologie satirique qu'une divergence de forme allant du dessin satirique à la pièce de théâtre.

Nous pouvons percevoir d'une manière fort significative de nombreuses influences dans l'évolution de la satire de Feiffer qui permettent une très grande richesse d'approches théoriques menant à son art. Dans cette thèse nous analyserons certaines de ces approches, à savoir les théories historiques, du comportement, psychoanalytiques et littéraires qui mènent toutes à une estimation définitive et évaluable du satiriste Jules Feiffer.

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INTRODUCTION

"Satire"

Satire, like irony, is one of the continually discussed literary genres that keeps scholars and critics as protean as they are. It is a genre, or at least a literary device or element, that is broached from every conceivable literary angle making it rich, if not uncomplicated, in definition and broad in its application. As Robert Elliott in The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art states: "We shy from using the category 'a satire' today at least when we are trying to speak precisely, because the term has lost for us any sense of formal specification."¹ To call Jules Feiffer a satirist, then, is not to pigeonhole him formally by any means; on the contrary, it is to allow for an eclectic schema by which the artistic forms of cartooning and playwrighting can be examined.

It would be helpful first, however, to make some qualitative and definitive conclusions about satire that are universally agreed upon before isolating the unique definition of satire employed by Feiffer.

Elliott traces the inception of the satiric form

¹Robert C. Elliott, The Power of Satire: Magic, Ritual, Art (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), p. 185.

in Greek, Irish and Arab peoples as an actual curse cast in the form of a diatribe on one's enemy. The sheer power of words, very much like the power of witchcraft, was expected to enforce change. Consistent with this ancient aspect of satire, is one of the concerns of satire that persist through all literary history: "There is one general quality which, although it has been given various names, seems most readily and widely recognized. This is the quality which we shall describe as 'attack'."²

Admittedly, "attack" is one of the essential elements of satire, but this is not sufficient for deciding if a work is satire. Immediately springing to mind are the muck-racking novels of the early Twenties in American literature and the social realist plays of the Thirties in America called 'agit-prop' plays, (agitation-propaganda). By and large, both these literary modes made it clear that something, usually government or social injustice, was under "attack". The "attack" of satire and social realism are both intended to make the reader aware of social evils and to elicit change within the social structure. By examining method, the purpose of attack in satire is made distinguishable from the purpose of attack in social realism or any other literary

²Edward Rosenheim, "The Satiric Spectrum," in Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. R. Paulson (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1971), p. 306.

or dramatic mode.

The method of "attack" in satire is to employ a humour that is ironic in structure and is at once recognizable by the reader. Irony is the element of satire that allows the many levels of satire to be created and interpreted. Irony is the most complex, albeit clearly and cautiously defined, tool of the satirist. There is a stipulation, however; the irony must be comic in order to be satire. As Northrop Frye states: "Satire is irony which is structurally close to the comic. The comic struggle of two societies, one normal and the other absurd, is reflected in its double focus of morality and fantasy."³ Unique and compulsory to satire, ironic humour is built on a logical structure that substitutes falsehood for truth; however, the audience must be tacitly in "cahoots" with the satirist and recognize this as the form of humour. "In order to denigrate his object, the satirist concerns himself with falsehood rather than truth, a concern that distinguishes the satiric presentation . . . this paradox of literal truth as the basis of the poet's falsehood is a sine qua non of satire."⁴ In other words, the satirist lies methodically

³Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 224.

⁴W. O. S. Sutherland, The Art of the Satirist (Austin: Humanities Research Center, 1965), p. 12.

for effect, not pathologically. It is ostensibly pathological to eat babies to solve a famine in Ireland, but once the reader understands the irony of the humour, which oftentimes requires a subtle sophistication on the part of the audience, the nature of satire is understood.

Attack, object of attack and methods of attack are three confirmed elements of a satire. The artist's motivation for attack is something else and is subject to a wide variety of opinions. The chief end of attack is to denigrate the values the satirist is examining, but why the satirist chooses to do this is a field of study that has lent itself to psychological and behavioural as well as literary theories. It becomes increasingly interesting to understand the motivation of the satirist when one realizes the shift from the social content of satire in the eighteenth century to the personal content of the type of satire that Jules Feiffer writes. Ronald Knox in an essay called "On Humor and Satire" in Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism touches a fringe of motivation when he connects the use of humour with an expression of the half-angel half-beast in man: "In all humor there is a loss of dignity. Somewhere virtue has gone out of somebody. For there is no inherent humor in things; wherever there is a joke it is man, the half-angel half-beast, who is somehow at the bottom of it." The half-angel

half-beast quality of man that Knox refers to as the human source of humour taps the inherent paradox of the satirist. Half-humanitarian, half-misanthrope; half-presumptuous, half-petrified; half-dog-catcher, half-dog seem to be the characteristics of the satirist's nature. As satire is a half-way sort of diatribe, a built-in protection provided by its humour, the satirist appears to be the artist whose personality has captured the interest of theoreticians who study the motivation of humour.

The subjective themes of Feiffer's cartoons make the "formal specification" of modern satire that Elliott speaks of conceivable today only in the broadest sense of definition: satire is an attack with a clearly established object of the attack, understood by both the satirist and audience and the method of attack is highly rhetorical and formulaic in its use of literary tropes such as irony and parody. To "speak precisely" of satire today is conceivable also, but in a very special context: "In trying to define the terms and to explain the special literary experience that satire gives, it may be best to abandon the traditional methods of literary classification and instead to consider the satirist's attitude to life and the special strategies by which he communicates this attitude in literary form."⁵

⁵Matthew Hodgart, Satire (Toronto: World University Library, 1969), p. 13.

Hence, in this thesis Jules Feiffer, cartoonist and playwright, is examined as a satirist with special attention directed toward his "attitude to life." Freudian psychological theory, behavioural theory and literary theory are used to root out the unique, personal motivation of Jules Feiffer as a satirist. This is done by close examination of the themes in Feiffer's cartoons from 1959 to 1966 (approximately 300 cartoons). The themes in Feiffer's plays are then examined to show the divergent nature of Feiffer as a satirist; that is, his ideology tends to shift from emotional to political concerns as he moves into playwriting.

Feiffer's form can be traced as a steady mixture of elements, wherein the form of the cartoon and the play can be seen as interchangeable. Essentially, Feiffer was writing play-cartoons and cartoon-plays.

Given that personal motivation of satire is the optimum rationale for this thesis, Feiffer's own definition of satire in literary and social context will be used.

Feiffer's Satire

The personal attitude to life that affects Feiffer's satire in his cartoons and plays must be made distinct from the formal properties of Feiffer's satire. To distinguish the formal properties of satire from the emotional motivations of satire is to separate the craft from the content. It is

perfectly realistic to set up a Freudian model of motivation to decipher the content and to set up a rhetorical model of formal properties to decipher the craft in the case of Jules Feiffer's satire.

There is an incredibly close connection between what Feiffer says in interviews and what appears in his cartoons and his plays.⁶ The basic issues he deals with in art form are the same issues that preoccupy him. He is profoundly and intelligently, one might say prophetically, aware of the American political scene. He is concerned with sexual attitudes to a great degree. And, he is always trying to assess the nature and importance of his satire.

Feiffer's definition of satire is consistent with his employment of it as a socially minded political satirist. When he was what will be called a Freudian satirist, most evident in his cartoons, his work falls slightly short of his definitions.

"Satire is creating a logical argument that, followed to its end, is absurd. All humor is basically about one kind of outrage against logic, but satire concerns itself with logically extending a premise to its totally insane conclusion, thus forcing onto an audience certain, unwelcome awareness. If it's going to be true satire, it has to be subversive to the system it's operating within. It can't

⁶A personal interview with Feiffer in June of 1974 revealed the first biographical link between the man and his art, which inspired the focus of this thesis.

be what used to be called satire a few years ago, which was jokes on suburbia and crab grass and commuters."

In the plays logical argument stretched to insane and absurd conclusions is strictly adhered to. The degeneration in plot or dissimulation of character is created by starting with apparently conventional stage comedies and transforming them into the absurdity of farce. In Little Murders, a traditional boy-meets-girl, girl-brings-boy-home-for approval theme, the plot is transformed into murder and then the commercial enterprise of selling photographs of the victim. In God Bless, an interview with a famous statesman by a Catholic priest turns into a roundtable discussion with the President of the United States as to which American cities will be bombed by the radical insurrectionists who have just abolished the Constitution and toppled the Washington Monument. In The White House Murder Case, an emergency presidential meeting with cabinet officials over the pressing issue of a military disaster in Brazil (the wind changed direction after the American Army released nerve gas on its enemy) turns into the mysterious murder of the President's wife by one of the cabinet officials. This changes the subject from how to cover-up the military mistake to how to cover-up the domestic murder.

⁷Larry Dubois, "Playboy Interview: Jules Feiffer," Playboy Magazine, Sept. 1971, pp. 81-86, 206-207. [Herein-after quotes from the Playboy article will be footnoted immediately following the quote by: (pb., p. __) 7

Rhetorically speaking, the plays readily fit Feiffer's definition of satire. In an article on Feiffer in Up Against The Fourth Wall: Essays on Modern Drama John Lahr says of Feiffer's satire:

"Feiffer makes his point with words, logic that spirals smoothly until, without knowing why, the audience confronts something menacing and true . . . by turning the conventional stage environment into a surreal geography, Feiffer consciously betrays the lie of bourgeois naturalism . . . he can develop philosophical positions as logical and febrile as Swift's Aeolists, who disdaining matter, walk with their eyes shut bouncing into objects whose existence they deny."⁸

The plays are overwhelmingly political in content and the intention to make the American political structure look insane and inept is done with unsurpassable rhetorical precision and comical vehemence. In the cartoons, however, "logically extending a premise to its totally insane conclusion" is not as easily discernible as it is in the plays. The cartoons can be examined through a logical structure, but the idea of extending logic beyond logic into "insane conclusion" was something Feiffer discovered as he became more interested in playwriting: "Satire is the discovery of relationships in society, it's always society you're looking at," Feiffer said to John Lahr in Transatlantic

⁸ John Lahr, "Satire as Subversion," in Up Against The Fourth Wall: Essays on Modern Drama (New York: Grove Press, 1968), p. 82.

Review, Winter 1969. Such a statement is better suited to the cartoons because of the subtle, gradual and poignant development of the logic of peoples' psychology in contrast to the crude psychology of institutions that is presented in the plays.

The formal characteristics of the satire in the cartoons are twofold: rhetorical and visual. The visual aspect of the cartoons create the tone much in the same way gesture creates character in drama. This is the first link in the chain that allows one to examine the cartoons as plays and later to examine the plays as cartoons. The visual aspect of the cartoons concentrates on facial expressions and body stature. The emphasis on the "look" of the character in the cartoon is indistinguishable from a "look" on an actor's face. The sympathy-evoking prowess of Feiffer's pen captures an utterly human aspect comparable to the dramatic effect of characterization through gesture on the stage. "His drawings admirably serve his literary, sardonic, and humanitarian purposes . . . his drawings work quietly with his captions so unobtrusively in most cases that one is scarcely aware of them."⁹ Like a good actor, the expressions are there naturally.

⁹Russell Lynes, "Jules Feiffer's Wicked Eye and Ear," Horizon Magazine, November 1961, pp. 48, 57.

The cartoons range from six to twelve frames; their average is eight or nine frames. The drawings tend to be outlined and expression is suggested "sketchily" rather than by detailed line. The facial expression is extremely important in tracing the development of the psychic growth or disintegration of the characters. There is rarely extraneous environment or paraphernalia; sometimes two characters sit at a table or on a couch, but the primary emphasis is on the individual, his body posture and facial expression. The animation tends to be static rather than kinetic which focuses the reader's attention on the reading material instead of the pictorial element in the cartoons. Of course the visual element of the cartoons cannot be ignored, but the modern reader tends to overlook the significant meaning of the visual element. This, by comparison with the plasticity of drama, is the major difference between the cartoons and plays. "He is not a gag cartoonist whose drawings are intended to explain a caption . . . his drawings help to establish and maintain the mood he wants and they make it possible for him to express place and time and character without having to define them further."¹⁰

The wordless frame, often preceeding the last frame, is the turning point of the "theme" in the cartoon. When

¹⁰Lynes, "Jules Feiffer's Wicked Eye and Ear," p. 48.

Feiffer does extend his logic into insanity, or perhaps better called the "unexpected" in the cartoons, the wordless frame serves as a preparatory frame for the "punch-line" or "double take" (see the first cartoon included in text).

Bold type is used for words Feiffer intends to emphasize tonally making the "script" in the cartoons highly theatrical.¹¹ When the visual aspect of the word moderates the sentiment there is a joining of the rhetorical and the visual elements of the satire. "Feiffer is a cartoonist by profession and a writer by temperament and talent . . . it is said that he draws easily and writes painstakingly; in other words he puts the effort where it is worth it."¹² Kenneth Tynan in an introduction to Sick, Sick, Sick, Feiffer's first cartoon anthology, said Feiffer was one of the best cartoonists now writing.¹³

The special effect of a Feiffer cartoon is that it is short, entertaining and complete:

¹¹Note the excessive use of bold type in the cartoons representing the female castrator. The visual aspect of word becomes an indication of strength or force in the character. The reader also can assume the words are spoken at a deafening volume, making the visual experience also an auditory one. When Feiffer creates visual inflection, he combines artistic form with the dramatic form.

¹²Lynes, p. 57.

¹³Jules Feiffer, Feiffer's Album (New York: Random House, 1963), inside jacket flap.

"The effect of Feiffer's strips with their ten or a dozen drawings on a page or a single spread, is at its best that of the short story. He does not deal in anecdote, as so many cartoon strips do; he deals in vignettes or segments of life; suggesting with the economy of the short story writer what has come before and must inevitably come after."¹⁴

Essentially, the art of total vision in the cartoons is the precursor to Feiffer's playwriting career. As it turned out, presenting a vignette of life in the cartoons was the mark of recognizable genius in Feiffer's visual art yet according to most critics this was the shortcoming of his dramatic talent. Irony, parody and paradox work in the cartoons to create satire by presenting the mental processes of man, not as insane or absurd, but as universal modes of behaviour that the audience identifies with. One major difference between the cartoons and plays is the personal and sympathetic response evoked by the cartoon compared with the objective response of condemnation in the plays.

Feiffer's definition of satire includes subversion as a necessary attitude. In the Lahr interview in Transatlantic, Feiffer said:

"Satire basically has to be antagonistic to the system within which it operates. Otherwise it has nothing to satirize. I don't think of Noel Coward as satire, they're pastiches, parodies. I don't mean that pejoratively. It's just that they don't fit into the basic meaning of

¹⁴Lynes, p. 57.

satire which is more subversive . . . this subversion is simply a by-product of one's art."¹⁵

Here too, subversion is reserved for the political plays when Feiffer expresses anti-American attitudes; but the cartoons primarily indulge in sentimental, albeit antagonistic, themes.

Subversion for Feiffer is the art of audacity and is modeled after his esteem for Lenny Bruce.

"I guess Lenny Bruce came closest to what I'm doing, although I want to do it theatrically. Bruce would create little situations. There would be marvels of discovery. The audience would just hold its breath and laugh in a way which indicated that they were giving themselves away. That it had hit hard. It was marvelous to be there and be hit yourself. To have the air clarified. Lenny would say something that no-one had ever said and suddenly the ghosts were laid and there was nothing to be afraid of. At least at the moment. It was a marvelous feeling."¹⁶

Lenny Bruce was more brutal than Feiffer has been to date, but the effect of "hitting hard with marvels of discovery" that have already been known to some part of the consciousness is the sort of antagonism towards or subversion to the system which both Feiffer and Bruce were after, be it the psychological or social system.

The plays are successful at subversion and are clear

¹⁵ John Lahr, "Interview with Jules Feiffer," Transatlantic Review, 32, Winter 1969, p. 44.

¹⁶ Lahr, Interview, p. 47.

attacks against the American social and political system. The cartoons that have political themes are also subversive and blatantly so (see blanket statement cartoons, pp. 172-174, Appendix 4). When the cartoons that satirize the sentimental relationships in society are subversive, it is because Feiffer dares make private neurosis a public phenomenon. This need to expose and exploit the private concerns of the individual is the source for discussing the personal motivation of Feiffer as a satirist.

There is an introduction in Feiffer's Album (1963) in the form of a dialogue which adds significantly to a working knowledge of Feiffer's definition of satire. The dialogue is also an important touchstone in the transition of Feiffer's form from cartooning to playwriting. When Feiffer writes a dialogue there is a movement away from the visual support of his cartoons and a movement towards the development of the play form. The dialogue on satire supplies both a formal definition of and an attitude about satire which are two essential elements for understanding the mode and motivation of the satirist.

The dialogue takes place on a stage on which spotlights come up on five satirists who are seated on stools (except for the right wing satirist who has to be prepared for quick getaways.) The second satirist serves as an

instigator and provokes the others to define their art.

The first satirist is a Liberal, the third is a Conservative, the fourth is a Jew and the fifth is a Black. Nowhere, in any of Feiffer's cartoons or plays, has he so clearly utilized his own objects of attack as in his selection of the "types" of satirists that appear in this dialogue.

The first definition, suggested by the black satirist, agreed upon by all the satirists is that satire is communication. The second satirist, as the instigator, denounces the idea of communication and replaces it with "hate" as the major concern of satire. They agree that "hate is the satirist's bridge to communication." Hate is probably the most crucial motive in much of Feiffer's work; Feiffer admits to hating his parents, women and the army (discussed in Chapter I). After admitting that hate is a device of the satirist's art, there is a barrage of aggressive remarks by the satirists which defines satire's vehemence: "satire outrages, satire strips bare, satire exposes our inner corruption, satire destroys."¹⁷ They admit that the destructive nature of satire is to be constructive in the long run: "to build on the ashes. . . a better society . . . a saner tomorrow . . . an improved image of man . . . (a happy people with a natural sense of rhythm)".¹⁸ The moral and

¹⁷Jules Feiffer, Feiffer's Album (New York: Random House, 1963), p. 4.

¹⁸Album, p. 4.

humanitarian nature of the satirist is apparently the motivating force, but ironically, sadistically and theatrically, the satirists set the stage on fire so they can have "ashes" on which to build.

Allowing for a possible autobiographical fallacy, the fourth satirist, the Jew, is probably indicative of Feiffer's own attitude and approach to satire.

"I offend them. They love it. I make fun of their wives. They love it. I tell them I hate them. They love it. I use words like schmuck. You should hear them applaud."¹⁹

"The kind of satire I prefer to do is the take-off on the little man . . . his trouble, pet peeves . . . the little unnoticed bedevilmments of life that may not give the audience a belly laugh, mind you, but will give them a smile of recognition. 'Yes - I'm like that,' they'll say. 'There I am. There you are. There we all are. Little Man. Peering off into the middle distance.'"²⁰

Psychological exposure is the "stuff" the cartoons are constructed from. This is in contrast to the plays which attack social institutions in a more conventional satiric mode. The intensely personalized tendentious content of the cartoons leads one to conclude that the formal aspects of satire in the cartoons are at times just that: form. For Feiffer the satiric form is a vehicle for a personal expulsion

¹⁹Album, p. 4.

²⁰Album, p. 4.

of sentiment. The desire to satirize the "little man", "pet peeves", "bedevilments of life" in Feiffer's satire is possibly equivalent to self-exposure of Feiffer. The personal and tendentious quality of the cartoons are agreeable to the audience because "the author affords the audience vicarious satisfaction as he attacks . . . momentarily, perhaps unconsciously, we identify with him and so gain release of frustrated aggressive feelings with which we are charged. He represents our own (and presumably the author's) suppressed aggressive impulses."²¹

Statements about audience affiliation with author, vicarious satisfaction and suppressed aggressive tendencies lend themselves, almost compulsively, to the method of connecting the satirist's personal impulses to his artistic content. The overwhelming preoccupation with neurosis in the cartoons makes Freud the automatic starting place for exploring the cartoons.

While the motivation of the satirist is of great importance in examining Feiffer, the motivational aspect is more or less a syndrome, a personal syndrome that can only be hypothesized about. A conclusion that Feiffer, the man, possibly has a castration complex is an assumption as to why Feiffer satirizes a stereotyped version of the female

²¹Elliott, Power of Satire, p. 140.

castrator. But, such conclusions must be remembered as being conclusions based on assumptions. The process of sifting the work to make conclusions about the author, which in turn are thrust back onto the work has two shortcomings. First, there is a de-emphasis of the work on a structural level and second, autobiographical assumptions can be fallacious; they are not bound to be, but unless the author confirms the conclusions, one can never be certain as to the validity of interpretations. The use of interviews which reveal the personal motivations and character of Feiffer does help to validate assumptions.

The necessity, consequence, even interest in understanding the "man behind the art" remains to be argued. The interest in the argument is directly linked with the form. Satire is what might be called a "crucial art" in that it is inherently propagandistic; it is built upon argument with the positive and negative clearly in view. The virtue of its existence lies in its power to present a realistic point of view in a fantastic, absurd and what is finally a comic way. It is the comic element that obviates the necessity of knowing the artist as part of the art; but it is the realistic point of view that makes the artist and the form inseparable. The point of view in satire is never self-contained; a persona must always be identified. The interest

in discovering the real biographical link between Feiffer and his art is the same as an interest in post-Freudian, post-World War II existential America in the 1960's. The persona of Feiffer's satire is Feiffer.

Gratuitous Violence

Gratuitous violence is the environmental, historical motivation from which Feiffer's satire develops. One can see a growth from the personal content in the cartoons motivated by a reaction to a Freudian permeated culture to the political content in the plays motivated by a reaction to a violent environment (the only Freudian hangover from the cartoons found in the plays is the female castrator, a type Feiffer cannot seem to get away from.)

Gratuitous violence is a condition of paranoia that breeds random and unwarranted violence in a society. Feiffer had felt the paranoia of a catastrophic environment since he was a youth. In speaking about theme hunting for his first play Feiffer says:

"Floundering helplessly for a theme, I sought refuge in the first piece of advice given to all young writers by all old writers: write about what you know. I chose random violence. Since I am city bred, it has always been an issue with me, and I cannot remember a time since childhood, when I did not expect to be struck down momentarily by Nazis, Japs, bigger kids, smaller kids, teachers or parents . . . what a relief, then, to see what I often suspected to be private

paranoia has today been institutionalized as public paranoia."²²

A fear of exploitation that breeds distrust is basic to gratuitous violence; the "little man" abandons his ethics for the sake of survival in a violent society. In The Great Comic Book Heroes, an anthology that reprints all the original versions of the comic book heroes, compiled and introduced by Feiffer, Feiffer reveals some autobiographical aversions to the world in which he was growing up:

"Villains, whatever fate befell them in the obligatory last panel were infinitely better equipped than those silly hapless heroes. Not only comics, but life taught us that. Those of us raised in ghetto neighborhoods were being asked to believe that crime didn't pay? Tell that to the butcher! Nice guys finished last; landlords first. Villains, by their simple appointment to the role were miles ahead. It was not to be believed that any ordinary human being could combat them. More was required. Someone with a call. When Superman at last appeared, he brought with him the deep satisfaction of all underground truths: our reaction was less 'How original' than 'But, of course!'"²³

The paranoia and defensiveness that characterize the cartoons have their origin in the environment Feiffer speaks of. A personal insecurity was augmented by watching evil triumph over good: "My own observations led me to believe that the

²²James Ethridge, Barbara Kopala, Carol Riley (eds.), Contemporary Authors: Jules Feiffer (Detroit: Gale Research Co., 1970), p. 118.

²³Jules Feiffer, The Great Comic Book Heroes (New York: Bonanza Books, 1965), p. 17.

only triumph most people eked out of adversity was to manage to stay alive as it swept by."²⁴

The overly pessimistic tone of the previous statements is the same tone that emerges from the cartoons. Mistrust, deceit, failing relationship, withdrawal, and a despondent introversion pervades Feiffer's cartoons. There is an overt concern with self-reflection and self-realization measured against a hostile society. After Feiffer works out the emotional insecurities that are bred into him by such an environment, the urge to retaliate as a satirist against the system that instilled this paranoia can be seen in the gradual shift in the themes of the cartoons over the years. When Feiffer moves away from the personal conundrum of relationships into the more socially stultifying themes about government he is reacting to a form of gratuitous violence that was highlighted by the Kennedy assassination:

"After a number of years, if the convictions of opinions you hold seem to be borne out by events, you simply trust them, and beginning with John Kennedy's assassination, I have developed the view of society that's written into Little Murders. His assassination highlighted for me the age of gratuitous violence that grew out of the frustrations of the American dream as measured against the American reality, out of a previously isolationist nation having to go internationalist very suddenly in a big way. And despite, or as a consequence of, what it

²⁴Feiffer, Comic Book Heroes, p. 27.

thought of as its good works, feeling increasingly isolated, unappreciated and finally unwanted. So, in reaction, it turns narcissistically violent toward the outside world- Cuba, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Vietnam- and paranoically violent toward its own internal world: race violence, random violence, motiveless mass murders (pb., p. 94)."

The dream (as measured against the reality) in the Sixties was for growth, national purpose and a participation in national affairs that would be in direct opposition to the dormant political administration of Eisenhower. The reality, however, was the increasing rift in black-white relations and an involvement in war, a typical phenomenon of Democratic administrations of the Twentieth century.²⁵

The Sixties in America was characterized by growing paranoia and violence; whether or not this was a national reaction to rejection is debatable. The artistic result was a preoccupation with violence in many art forms. As Laurence Kitchen comments (in referring to the exhibition in 1964 of "Violence in Society, Nature and Art" at the Institute of Contemporary Art, England): "The artist in any medium is using subject matter parallel with human actions, their causes and results."²⁶ Artistically, Feiffer

²⁵Henry Farille, The Kennedy Promise: The Politics of Expectation (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1973), p. 10.

²⁶Laurence Kitchen, Drama in the Sixties: Form and Interpretation (London: Faber and Faber Ltd., 1966), p. 34.

uses violence in a relatively innocuous way in comparison to much of the theatre in the Sixties, but that violence suddenly and finally obsesses him is seen in his plays. His dramatic satire is more compassionate than brutal; perhaps this is a hangover from his Freudian struggles with love and hate in the cartoons. "Feiffer is a compassionate satirist and he uses his needle with a bedside manner (I'm sorry, but this is going to hurt a little), though he hopes to expose the basic ills of society and do what he can to cure them."²⁷

But, decidedly, gratuitous violence, the label of society gone mad from internal threat is the historical environment which sparked Feiffer's critical transformation from an emotionally, psychologically oriented cartoonist to a politically indignant playwright. As Feiffer readily admits, once rage becomes part of your tool kit, it stays with you for life. "I've discovered that rage can't be bought off. If you have it, you have it for life (pb., p. 206)."

²⁷ Lynes, Feiffer's Wicked Eye and Ear, p. 48.

CHAPTER I

CARTOON THEMES

Before a sense of public rage, sparked by the increase of gratuitous violence, motivated Feiffer, one discernible motivation was Freudian psychology:

"In the segment of society to which Feiffer addresses his subtly wicked pen, the language of Freud is sort of equivalent of the Victorian language of the flowers. Repressions, aggressions, guilts, Oedipal urges and a profusion of other linguistic underbrush clutter the landscape in which his characters have their shadowed being."¹

After examining the cartoons, it becomes quite obvious that for many years Feiffer's sole preoccupation, with only occasional forays indicative of his political awareness, was that of defining, defending and diffusing types of real relationships; this was clearly inspired by the sheer numbers of Freudian psychoanalytic couches in America in the Fifties and the Sixties. The notion of humour at the expense of the individual and very often at Feiffer's personal expense ("like most good satirists, and Feiffer is a good satirist, Feiffer is sharpest when he is dealing with his own shortcomings")² is the basis for the label "emotional content."

¹Lynes, Feiffer's Wicked Eye and Ear, p. 48.

²Ibid.

The wit and sarcasm of the cartoons is a veneer of bitter commentary beneath which an ethos of disillusionment and disappointment operate. Satire in his cartoons is belied by a sentimental edge: "Meaning well and putting their trust in Freud, Feiffer's cartoon characters are forever trying to find themselves and at the same time break through to others."³

Various levels of 'self-hood,' defined through relationships, is the primary object of attack in the cartoons. Honesty is the key to interpreting the content as well as being one of the hidden ingredients of Feiffer's art. Very often in the cartoons, honesty is tantamount to confession, especially in the cartoons that interpret the relationship between men and women.

The Relationship of Man to Woman

The relationship between men and women is a major theme in all of the cartoon anthologies. In every anthology, at least ten cartoons can be classified categorically as representing the relationship between men and women. Percentage wise, these cartoons constitute approximately twenty-five percent of the contents and, in The Unexpurgated Memoirs of Bernard Morgendeiler, approximately half (20) of the cartoons

³ "Seek, Seek, Seek," rev. of "Harry the Rat with Women, Time Magazine, June 28, 1963, p. 66.

are concerned with men and women. Out of the 300 cartoons that have been examined, 65 belong to this category. It is in the cartoons that Feiffer most readily satirizes himself.

Feiffer stereotypes two types of males and one type of female. Bernard and Huey are well developed stereotypes. The stereotyped woman, the castrator, is only nominally developed.

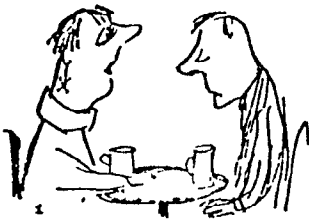
Bernard is a self-effacing "do-gooder" who never has a lasting relationship with a woman. His prototype, Huey, is a broad, dark, handsome male egotist who always "makes out" with women. Insecurity, intimidation and inadequacy are the characteristic symptoms of Bernard's meek personality. Bernard is always rejected because he is too kind and too understanding. His women get bored with him; he is a "pushover". Huey, on the other hand, is mean, flippant, casual and aloof. His women are infatuated with him; he is a "hipster".⁴

Bernard, because of his human sensibility and compassion is always rejected. Huey, because of his callousness and indifference, is always accepted.

⁴Feiffer's dichotomy of male stereotypes holds true in form even in Carnal Knowledge, a movie script written in 1971, in which two college roommates center their college careers around sexual exploits. One has the sentiment of Bernard, the other the cynicism of Huey.

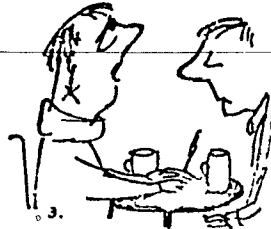
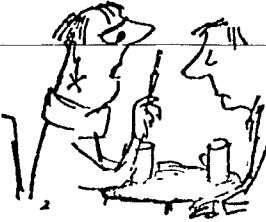
WHY YOU SEE
BERNARD?
IT'S NO GOOD.

- 28



YOU'RE A DOLL AND
I'M INSANE ABOUT
YOU - BUT IT REALLY
WOULDN'T JELL,
BERNARD

WE'RE DIFFERENT!
I'M JUST MANIC
FOR PARTIES - FOR
FUN PEOPLE - FOR
HAVING A BALL



AND YOU
DIG
TELEVISION

I WANT TO DANCE AND
FEEL FREE - TO GO
BACK TO MAJORCA AND
GAMBLE AND MAKE
LOVE



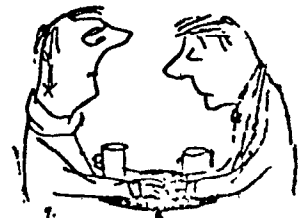
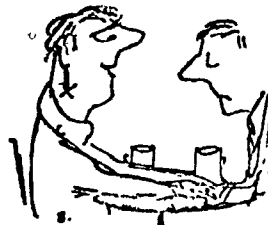
AND YOU WANT TO
GO TO QUEENS
AND LIVE WITH
YOUR MOTHER



YOU'RE A DEAR,
BERNARD, BUT I'M
WRONG FOR YOU.
IN TIME YOU'LL
REALIZE.



YOU DO
UNDERSTAND
DON'T
YOU?



YOU HAVE ANY
NICE FRIENDS?



PUT ON YOUR
SHOES - I'LL
WALK YOU TO
THE SUBWAY.

YOU
NEEDN'T
BOTHER
I'VE NEVER
MET
ANYONE
SO CRUDE
IN MY
LIFE.



CRUDE -
PUT ON
YOUR SHOES -
I'LL WALK YOU
TO THE SUBWAY

YOU
WANT
EVERYTHING
YOUR
OWN
WAY!
YOU'RE
SPOILED!



YEH, SPOILED -
NOW PUT ON
YOUR SHOES -
I'LL WALK YOU
TO THE SUBWAY

I DON'T
LIKE
BEING
PUSHED
INTO
THINGS
I NEED A
LITTLE
TIME YOU
KNOW!



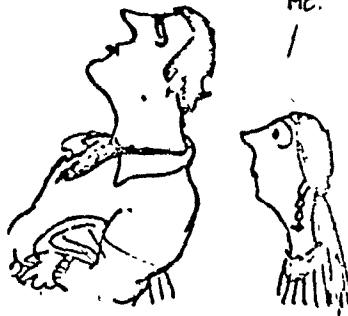
YEH, TIME - NOW
PUT ON YOUR
SHOES - I'LL
WALK YOU TO
THE SUBWAY

I MEAN -
WE'VE
HARDLY
EVEN
TALKED



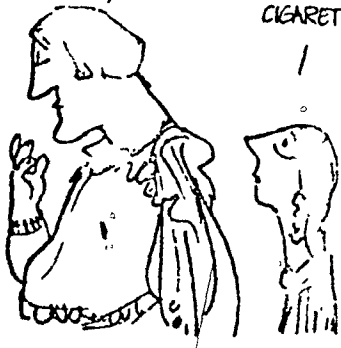
YEH, TALK-NOW
PUT ON YOUR
SHOES - I'LL
WALK YOU TO
THE SUBWAY.

YOU'RE
CERTAINLY
ANNOYING
TO GET
RID OF
ME.



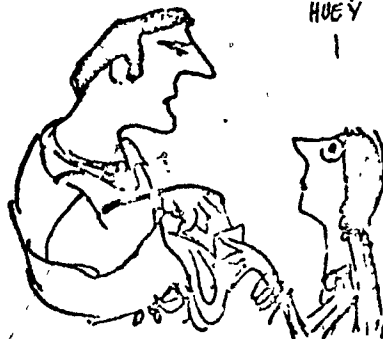
I'M HIP-NOW
PUT ON YOUR
SHOES - I'LL WALK
YOU TO THE
SUBWAY.

ISN'T
THERE
TIME
FOR
A
CIGARETTE?

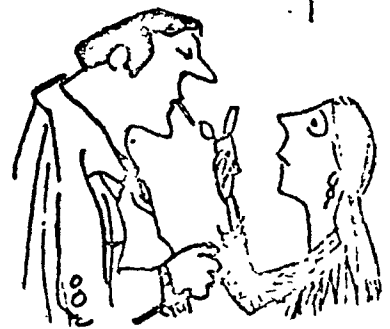


SURE-NOW JUST
PUT ON YOUR
SHOES - I'LL WALK
YOU TO THE-

YOU'RE
A
VERY
STRANGE
BOY,
HUEY



YOU
TAKE
ME
SO
SERIOUSLY



I
KNOW
I'D
FEEL
MORE
RELAXED
AFTER
A FEW
BEERS



I
THINK
I'M
OUT

I
HAVE
MONEY



YOU KNOW WHAT BE AGE
LIVING IN PLANT? BE
AGE IN US IN THE AGE
OF THE URBAN
CHICK. YOU
CAN'T TELL
THEM ANY-
THING THE
HIP! THEY URBAN
IT ALL AT SHIN
OR EXCUFFEE.

SH WAS A LITTLE
BOY, WHEN I
WHAT CAN I
DO?



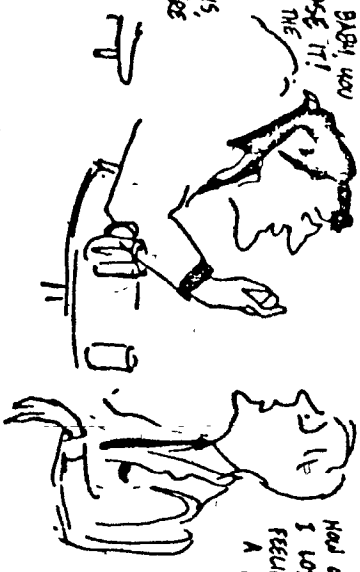
THE URBAN CHICK IS TRAINED FOR
DESTRUCTION VERY EARLY IN
HER CAREER THEY
TAKE AWAY HER
BRUTALITY AND
GIVE HER A SUIT
OF ARMOR.

MY TROUBLE
IS IM NOT
FASCINATED
ENOUGH.



SO IF ALL YOU GOT IS
—ARMOR— BABY YOU
GOT TO USE IT!
YOU TAKE THE
URBAN
CHICK ON
HER TOES,
HAW, YOU'RE
DEAD!

HAD BETTER CALL
I LOST WITHOUT
FEELING LIKE
A LOSER?



THERE'S ONLY
ONE WAY
I KNOW
TO
CRUMBLE
MR.

HOW? FOR
GOD SAKES—
HOW?



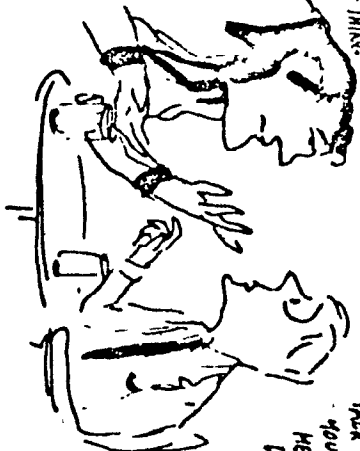
TALK
DIRTY?

TALK
DIRTY?



NOT SELF-CONSCIOUS DIRTY
LIES ITS A CURRENT AD-THINK
SHE DOES THAT HERSELF
I HEARD ANIMAL DIRTY
LIFE YOU GOT TO MAKE
HER BELIEVE SHE'S IN
A JUNGLE AND THE
RULES SHE LEARNED
IN SCHOOL DON'T
WORK!

TALK DIRTY?
YOU REALLY
HEARD TALK
DIRTY?



MADE AN URBAN CHICK
FEEL OFFENSELESS AND
SHELL CONFUSE IT
WITH LOVE
WITH ALL THAT
ARMOR WHERE
COULD SHE
GET THE
EXPERIENCE TO
KNOW THE
DEFERENCE?

THIS
WORKS?

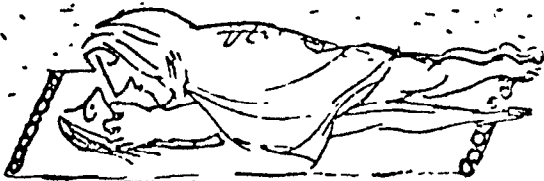


HAD TALK DIRTY, NEVER FOR
A CHECK AND TAKE HER
TO TENNESSEE WILLIAMS
PLAYS - IT HAS TO
WORK. TO THE
URBAN CHICK
BRUTALITY
IS A
STATUS
SYMBOL.



I DON'T
KNOW IF
I SHOULD
HUEY

SURE YOU DO
SURE YOU DO
TEN TONIGHT -
DOWN ON THE
BEACH



I WANT TO
AND I DON'T
WANT TO.
YOU MUST
THINK I'M
VERY SILLY.

YOU'LL SEE, IT'LL BE
JUST WHAT YOU WANT,
TEN TONIGHT - DOWN
ON THE BEACH.



PROMISE YOU
WON'T DO
ANYTHING
UNLESS I
TELL YOU.

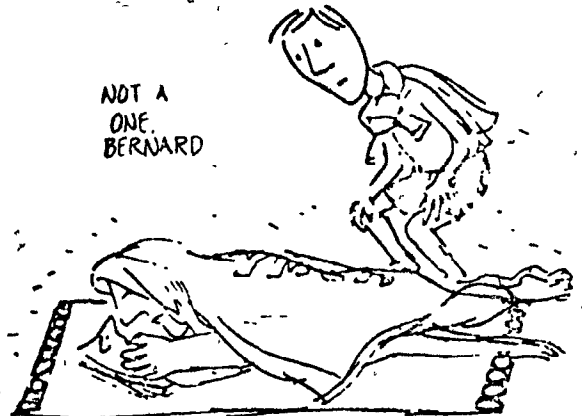
I'LL ONLY DO WHAT
WE BOTH WANT
TEN TONIGHT DOWN
ON THE BEACH.



HI HUEY! YOU
KNOW ANY
PARTIES TONIGHT?



NOT A
ONE,
BERNARD

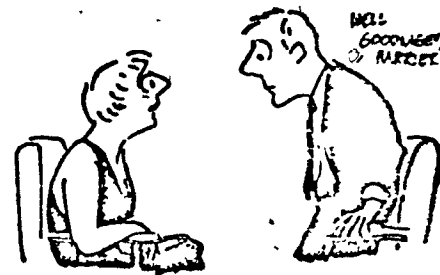
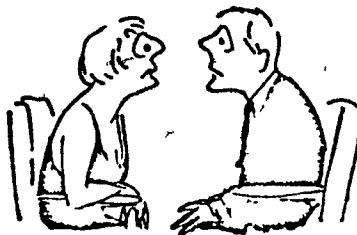
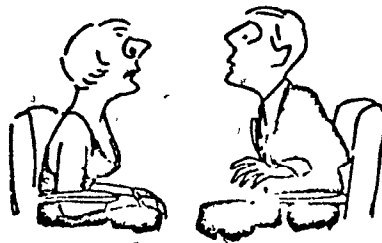
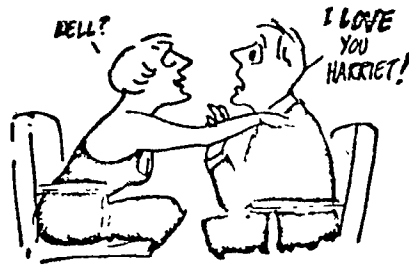
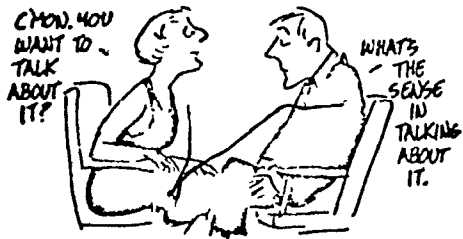


ANOTHER
NIGHT
AND
NO
PARTIES.



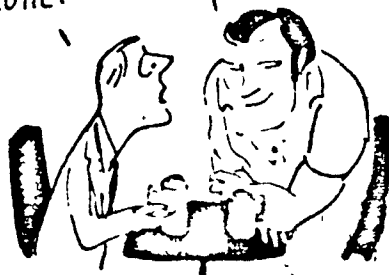
I CAN'T
DECIDE
WHETHER
I SHOULD
READ
ANOTHER
NOVEL OR
GO TO
ANOTHER
MOVIE





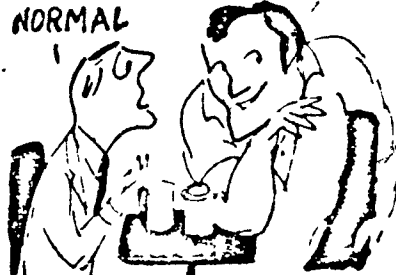
WHY DO I
ALWAYS
WIND UP
WITH GIRLS
WHO ARE
NEUROTIC?

HEY, DIG THAT
CHICK IN THE
BOOTH HUH?
SOMETHING, HUH?
SOMETHING



I NEVER KNOW
THEY'RE NEUROTIC
IN THE BEGINNING
IN THE BEGINNING
THEY SEEM SO
NORMAL

SHE'S ON A
LITTLE MAG-
AZINE KICK
I LOVE IT IT
KILLS ME



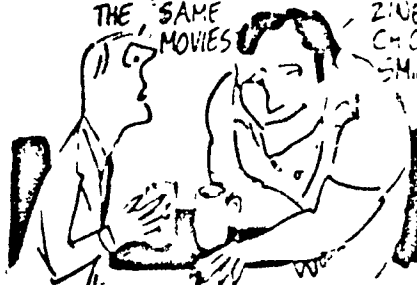
IN THE BEGINNING THEY
TELL ME HOW KIND I
AM HOW I'M NOT
CRUDE AND DEMAND-
ING LIKE ALL THE OTHER
MEN THEY'VE
MET

SHE'S
LOOKING
UP! WILD
EYES! WILD!
LOOK
THIS
WAY,
BABY!



IN THE BEGINNING
WE SEEM TO BE
ALMOST THE SAME
PEOPLE WE LOVE
THE SAME SONGS-
THE SAME
MOVIES

SMILE,
YOU
PHONEY
LITTLE
MAGA-
ZINE
CHICK
SMILE!



THEN ALL OF A
SUDDEN SHE BEGINS
TO HIDE YAWNS
WHILE I'M TALKING.
WHEN WE'RE ALONE
SHE MAKES
LONG PHONE
CALLS

GO AHEAD! PRETEND
TO READ. DON'T
PRETEND WITH ME,
SUGAR LOOK UP!
LOOK AT
ME.



SOON IT'S ALL OVER
WE HAVE A LONG CRY
ABOUT IT SHE SAYS
IT'S ALL HER FAULT
AND I'M THE ONLY
MAN WHO
EVER RE-
SPECTED
HER I'VE
LOST A
GIRL
AND
WON A
FRIEND

YEAH THAT'S MY BABY
LOOK AT THAT NO
GOOD LITTLE DOLL
SMILE HEY, LOAN
ME A FEW
BUCKS,
BERNARD



DO YOU
EVER
RESPECT
GIRLS,
HUH?

IF I HAD
ANY -
RESPECT
FOR GIRLS
I'D NEVER
MAKE OUT



It is implicit that the women who make out with Huey feel used, but the women whom Bernard honestly loves feel used too, according to Feiffer: hence, the impossibility of a good relationship between men and women.

Feiffer, in stereotyping males, establishes two modes of relationships: the superficial and the ineffectual. The superficial relationship is calculated; the ineffectual is absolutely demoralizing. Apparently, Feiffer oscillates between the extremes of cynicism and sentimentalism in his depiction of male stereotypes. One he envies, the other he sympathizes with. From several articles on Feiffer and interviews with Feiffer, one can assume that Feiffer is the sentimental 'schnook,' Bernard, but would prefer to be the cynical chauvinist, Huey. An hypothesis suggests that Feiffer is his character, Bernard Morgendeiler, and that Feiffer's satire of the relationship between men and women is often built around the theme of failure because of Feiffer's desire to express a frustration of his own 'personhood.'

"With Feiffer and Silverstein the humor is so often implacably cruel and pessimistic that one must look outside of it to explain its popularity entirely. Both men seem to provide a masochistic pleasure that derives from seeing one's private estimate of oneself and one's world printed for all the rest of the world to see. Their audience conditioned by the methods of psychoanalysis, does not miss the lack of personal compassion in Feiffer and Silverstein, but finds the most dour

interpretation of personal and social behavior to be the most congenial."⁵

David Segal's statement carefully lays a solid basis for both the essence and appeal of Feiffer's satirical form. The essence of Feiffer's satire within the relationship of men and women is self-exposure; the appeal is through recognition. That self-exposure provides a "masochistic pleasure" for the audience, as well as for Feiffer, is the hallmark of Twentieth century satire. When contrasted to the Swiftian definition of satire, an essential difference becomes apparent:

"Satyr /-sic / is like a glass, wherein Beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own; which is the chief Reason for the kind reception it meets in the World, and that so very few are offended with it."⁶

In the Eighteenth century the only commonly understood psychological phenomenon was Reason, a Christian Reason which understood that depravity was a condition suffered by man. But, such depravity was recognized as sent by God not as a blessing but in man ways as a necessary incongruity of man's goodness:

"Swift's Satire arises from a sense of sin, and from the painful awareness of human existence.

⁵David Segal, "Feiffer, Skinberg and Others," Commentary Magazine, 32 (July 1961), p. 432.

⁶Jonathan Swift, A Selection of His Works, ed. Philip Pinkus (British Columbia: Macmillan of Canada, 1965), p. 448.

It does not cure many vices, or mend many worlds, but by presenting the image of man's depravity it protests the ways of God to man with all the passion of his faith."

The possible distinction between an Eighteenth century satire and a Twentieth century satire is not the representation of the depravity of man, but the understanding of and reaction to this depravity. Feiffer brings two things to satire that the Eighteenth century would find incomprehensible. The first is the metaphorical death of God and the second is the knowledge of the Freudian divisions of the mind.

The Twentieth century makes depravity absolutely human and psychologically comprehensible. In one sense this makes the physical brutalities of Eighteenth century satire somewhat innocuous when measured against the mental destructiveness of Twentieth century satire.

Feiffer's satire is built upon psychological self-flagellation. This is recognizable and comprehensible to the "Beholders" of the Swiftian satiric looking-glass because the knowledge of the "working of the mind" is the Twentieth century mode of comprehension. The "Beholders" look into the glass and see the image of themselves reflected. Now, according to Swift, this should evoke an unkind reception,

⁷Philip Pinkus, Jonathan Swift: A Selection of His Works, p. xxxiv.

but it does not. The modern reader is not offended even when he sees himself reflected because of what Segal labels the "masochistic pleasure" the audience receives in the "most dour interpretation of personal and social behavior."

Satire has always made fun, mocked, parodied man's behaviour. But, historically, the laughter provoked was a class-conscious laughter. Feiffer moves the laughter from class-consciousness into self-consciousness. The reaction has shifted from an awareness of the exploitation of social role to the awareness of the exploitation of self-image. The marvel of the Twentieth century response is the knowledge of the exploitation of self-image coupled with the enjoyment of it. Feiffer's cartoon satire thrives on the representation of psychological neuroses, a unique element only applicable to the content and reception of modern satire. The temptation to include the author as part and parcel of his diatribe in studying satire in Feiffer's case is unquestionably provoking, but must be examined cautiously.

One always has to be careful not to presume too much about an author from his work, but understanding the personal motivation of the satirist is a vehicle through which the art of satire is understood. It makes sense that the satirist's temperament has been of interest because satire is a public screaming of disgust, a temper-tantrum at times, that

exposes the hostilities and antagonisms of the satirist, not just his anger at social evils. The interest that Feiffer is Bernard, or at the very least, that Bernard's travails most resemble the actual life (sexual) experiences of Feiffer is important in a broader literary sense. There is a mini-genre of Jewish castration-complex literature in American literature that Feiffer belongs to along with writers like Saul Bellow and Philip Roth who use their personal biographies successfully in their art.

Throughout the cartoons and plays there exists a tension between men and women that is never resolved; the tension is made obvious and clearly represents the domination of men by women. When Feiffer reveals his personal sexual experiences in interviews the connection between the man and his cartoon world is too great to pass up as a possible explanation for why he creates the stereotypes of men and women that he does.

In three hundred cartoons there is only one that is pictorially autobiographical and this cartoon is enormously significant in aligning Feiffer in a real way with his projected image in his art. When Feiffer is willing to lay his own image on the confessional line he combines his boyhood fantasies with his delusions of marriage. The biographical content of the cartoon on the next page is supported by statements made in essays and interviews.

MY WIFE ALWAYS
USED TO SAY TO
ME, "BILLY BATSON,
YOU'RE SMALL,
WEAK, INEPT, AND
UTTERLY CON-
TEMPTIBLE! WHY
COULDN'T I
MARRY A
REAL MAN?"



SO, ONE DAY,
WHILE SHE
WAS IN THE
MIDDLE OF
A TIRADE
I LOST MY
TEM'ER AND
DECIDED TO
REVEAL MY
SECRET
IDENTITY!

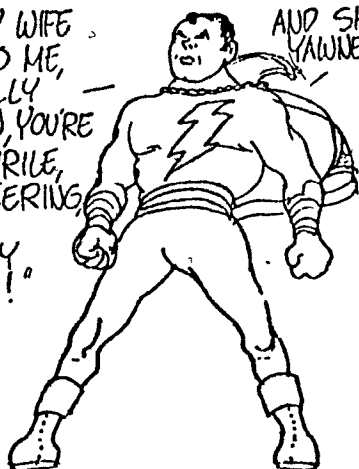
- 40 -



AND
I
SAID
SHAZAM!

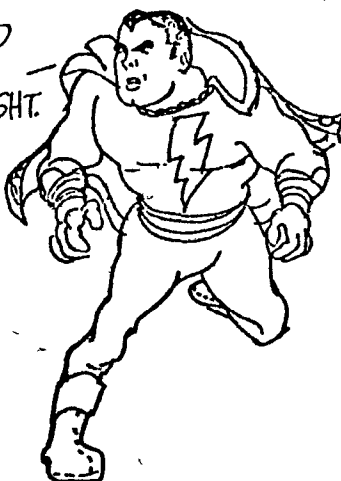


AND MY WIFE
SAID TO ME,
"OH, BILLY
BATSON, YOU'RE
HUGE, VIRILE,
DOMINEERING
AND
UTTERLY
HEROIC!"



AND SHE
YAWNED

SHE YAWNED
FOR THREE
WEEKS STRAIGHT.
THEN ONE
DAY I
CAUGHT HER
PACKING
HER SUIT
CASE -



SO I
UN-
SHAZAMED
MYSELF.



NOW MY WIFE
SAYS TO ME,
"BILLY BATSON,
YOU'RE SMALL,
WEAK, INEPT
AND UTTERLY
CONTEMPTIBLE!
WHY COULDN'T
I MARRY A
REAL MAN?"



ONCE MORE
WERE HAPPY!



Feiffer's choice of super heroes is Captain Marvel, alias Billy Bateson. Feiffer says this of Captain Marvel:

"The captain himself came out dumber than average superheroes, or perhaps less was expected of him. A friendly full back of a fellow with apple cheeks and dimples, he could be imagined being a buddy rather than a hero, an overgrown boy who chased villains as if they were squirrels. A perfect fantasy figure for, say, Charlie Brown."⁸

There is an absolute honesty in this statement that absorbs the demeaning content. And this is the superhero Feiffer identifies with. In short, the honesty of self-effacement in this cartoon is the same honesty that is representative of Feiffer in all his cartoons. The special significance here is that the man in this cartoon is really Feiffer.

As for the notion of a transformation of the meek and inept Feiffer into the strong and virile Feiffer by conjuring up the magical 'Shazam':

"Then too there was great disappointment in the word 'shazam!' As it turned out it didn't work for readers. Other magic words were tried. They didn't work either. There are just so many magic words until one feels he's been made a fool of. How easy it became to hate 'Shazam! Shazam! Shazam!' that taunting cry that worked fine for Captain Marvel but didn't do a damn thing for the rest of us."⁹

A study of the satirist's temperament, motivation and influence by Leonard Feinberg in a book called The

⁸Feiffer, Comic Book Heroes, p. 24.

⁹Feiffer, Comic Book Heroes, p. 25.

Satirists's Art defines the level of personal intrusions of the satirist on his art. According to Feinberg, there are several categories of satirical motivation. Aesthetic drive and morality are two, a third is compensation. Compensation breaks down into several subcategories: rage and rebellion, protective laughter, perverted self-criticism and perverted frustration. Not to deny that aesthetic drive and morality are partial components in Feiffer's art, perverted frustration is the category in which Feiffer's satire predominantly falls. A tenet of the principle of compensation is that "all the variations on this theory assume that the satirist is striking back at society because it has either neglected him for being inadequate or punishing him for being obstreperous."¹⁰

Feiffer falls into the former part of the category of frustrated perversion which means society has neglected him for being inadequate. Feiffer readily admits to social and sexual inadequacy. As a youth he was a misfit; he could not play ball. He preferred to stay in the house and read all day.

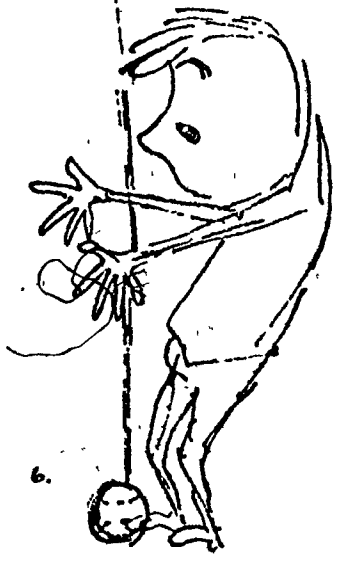
¹⁰ Leonard Feinberg, The Satirist: his Temperament, Motivation and Influence (Iowa: Iowa State University Press, 1963), p. 43.

WHERE DID THE
TIME GO? 43 -
WHAT HAVE
I DONE WITH
IT?

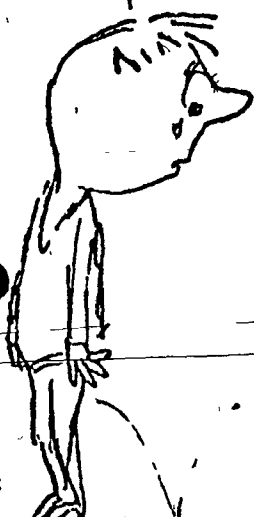
ELEVEN YEARS - HUH -
THAT'S STILL NOT
VERY OLD. IT'S NOT
LIKE I WAS THIRTEEN.
I STILL CAN LEARN!



I CAN PRACTICE!
LEARN ALL THE
ANGLES! MAYBE
TAKE A FEW EVENING
COURSES. WHY I'VE
GOT A WHOLE
LIFETIME AHEAD
OF ME!



ELEVEN
YEARS...
ELEVEN
YEARS



"Echoes of my childhood keep creeping
into my work. I'm sneaky - I hide
behind my pictures."

Time Magazine, February 9, 1959
p. 52.

"I guess it was a formidable shyness. The best kids are the biggest and most athletic-affable. Outgoing kids. And I was a shrimp I was skinny: I didn't eat, which my mother never forgot to tell the neighbors. I didn't play ball. I didn't even learn how to catch a ball till I was fifteen, and to this day I still can't throw one. The only person I was at all capable of talking to was myself and even there I had severe lags in communication. I understood with complete objectivity that I was a total failure, so if I was going to make a comeback I know it had to be as a grownup. Grownups didn't have to take gym." (pb., p. 84)

"Grownups wielded all the power, still" could not be talked back to, still were always right however many times they contradicted themselves. By eight I had become a politician of the grownup, indexing his mysterious ways and hiding underground my lust for getting even until I was old enough, big enough and important enough to make a bid for it. That bid was to come my way of a career - (I knew I'd never grow big enough to beat up everybody; my hope was to, somehow, get to own everything and fire everybody)."¹¹

As a youth he felt an incredible urgency to revenge anything that controlled him. His objects of revenge in his art move from parents to women to government. The immensity of his need for revenge is expressed by his current need to confess these hostilities)¹²

¹¹Jules Feiffer, Comic Book Heroes, p. 12.

¹²Admittedly, one has to be careful as to how seriously Feiffer makes these statements. After all he has a sharp wit and probably can't help his witticisms which tend a bit toward exaggeration. His statements seem like a flamboyant honesty that Feiffer is free to express having achieved that "career" he speaks of. The grain of salt that might be necessary at times to decipher fact from exaggeration is more often included precisely because of the added saline quality of hostility that overruns Feiffer's remarks.

As an adolescent he was sexually unknowledgeable:

"I didn't even know about sex. When I was in high school, I was much less interested in getting laid than getting out. I had a 24-hour a day hard-on, but I never quite connected it with sex. I was terribly retarded in that area and never ever knew what to do with this thing in my pocket and never dreamed it could be used with girls. Or how you were supposed to use it. A fascination with breasts was the closest I came. To me sex was something you had with a woman's breast. I didn't know there was anything else. I was so unpracticed in the dark, scary world of carnality that I did not even know you could go blind, I didn't know you could get warts and pimples or that it would fall off. I didn't even know the folklore (pb., p. 84)."

As a bachelor: "Most bachelors I suspect, aren't the miserable failures at bachelorhood I was (pb., p. 86)." As for marrying something Feiffer finally did when he was thirty-two, Feiffer has this to say:

"Most of the married men I know get married because their wives made it impossible for them to stay unmarried. Not necessarily by ultimatum, but by making pressures and guilt so intense that it simply became easier to get married than stay shackled up . . . I hated and feared marriage . . . it meant I had to be a grownup (pb., p. 96)."

That his inadequacies no longer shame him personally is made very clear from his boldness, but that his inadequacies are the very stuff his life is made up of is evident as well. Bernard suffers from many of the same inadequacies Feiffer speaks of as his own. David Segal says:

"Ultimately Feiffer may do more to popularize neurosis than Norman Vincent Peale has done to popularize tranquility. These and other facts of

contemporary life are seen under two great shadows: individual anxiety caused by a sense of deeply felt inferiority and public anxiety caused by the bomb."¹³

From the above quotes, one can see that Feiffer's wit during interviews is an aggressive one. Feinberg classifies the type of wit used by the satirist who is motivated by perverted frustration in order to compensate for inadequacy. Freud is his source: "Satirists motivated by tendency wit are 'persons having a powerful sadistical component in their sexuality, which is more or less inhibited in life, are most successful with the tendency-wit of aggression.'"¹⁴

This is not to imply that the witty remarks from Bernard are going to express this sadistic sentiment, but that the very creation of Bernard by Feiffer was necessitated by Feiffer's need to express his contempt for and apprehension of women. It does imply that Feiffer has a "powerful sadistical component in his sexuality."

In an article "Men really don't like women" written by Feiffer which appeared in Look Magazine in January of 1966, Feiffer admits that most of the statements he makes are in some way, an "emotional autobiography . . . all that I am really giving away is some veiled secrets about myself." His

¹³Segal, p. 432.

¹⁴Feinberg, p. 152.

most blatant admission is that men dislike women.

"Only in religion is it not a perversion to love one's enemy. In the real world we hate and fear and despise and protect ourselves from our enemies . . . man has always seen woman as his enemy. How in the world can he be expected to love her? He cannot . . . the term "relationship", as we have come to know it, is the artless blending of what man needs with what he dislikes."

This statement is ill founded and left completely unsupported factually in the article. Such a statement is not intended to be satirical though; a confessional tone is more applicable:

"We are all familiar with the fact that little boys don't like little girls. We pretend to think they outgrow it. They do not. They merely learn to hide it. What they really fear for is their own potency (not always sexual, in fact in our times less and less so)."

The combination of hate and fear expressed by Feiffer in these statements invites a Freudian analysis of the castration complex which is also constructed around hate stemming from fear. The assumption here is that Feiffer's personal dislike for women is the source of his stereotype of the female castrator.

In explaining the original reaction of young boys to the absence of a penis in girls, Freud notes that a natural antipathy toward women develops along with the fear of a lost penis.

"A young boy's first reaction is to assume the little girl will grow a penis like his own. Then he thinks that they had one once, but it was cut off and in its place is left an open wound. This

theoretical advance already makes use of personal experiences of a distressing kind. The boy in the meantime has heard the threat that the organ which is so dear to him will be taken away from him if he shows his interest too plainly. Under the influence of this threat of castration he now sees the notion he has gained of the female genitals in a new light; henceforth he will tremble for his masculinity, but at the same time despise the unhappy creatures on whom the cruel punishment has, as he supposes, already fallen."¹⁵

Despising women at an early age is Feiffer's adamant confession. In fact, when he makes confessional statements about hating women, they are often expressed in such an aggressive way as to assume that Feiffer has a "powerful, sadistical component in his sexuality." When Feiffer wrote Carnal Knowledge (screenscript 1971), he originally had a speech in it that he cut out because "... it seemed too on the nose (pb., p. 84)." The speech epitomizes a basic contempt for women.

"Remember when you were a kid and the boys didn't like the girls? Only sissies liked girls? What I'm trying to tell you is that nothing's changed. You think boys grow out of not liking girls, but we don't grow out of it. We just grow horny. That's the problem. We mix up liking pussy for liking girls. Believe me, one couldn't have less to do with the other (pb., p. 84)."

Assuming that a real castration complex is one of

¹⁵ Sigmund Freud, The Complete Works of Sigmund Freud, trans. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1948) Vol. xl, p. 195.

the roots of Feiffer's satire, the failing relationship between men and women, and the development of the female castrator allows Feiffer to display this aggressive wit. Ultimately, the failure of relationships is the final satirical statement Feiffer makes about relationships.

Freud says:

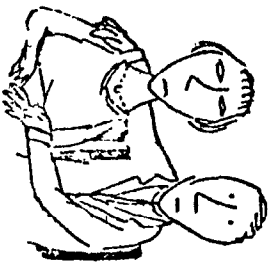
"Psychoanalysis believes that it has discovered a large part of what underlies the narcissistic rejection of women by men, which is so mixed up with despising them in drawing attention to the castration complex and its influence on the opinion in which women are held."¹⁶

In "Men really don't like Women", Feiffer claims that women are a "projected narcissism of man's psyche." By this Feiffer means men create types of women. "When moral attitudes inhibit his drives he invents women, the most damnable of women. The seductress, the shrew, the harlot, the nag, the tease, the castrator. They are instruments by which different men reap different (carefully contained) satisfaction."

To assess the stereotype of the castrating female as presented by Feiffer, is to realize that the females, although loud, domineering, emasculating and apparently controlling, are actually fulfilling the requirements of the relationship which are established by the male. Bernard wants/needs/loves in a narcissistic way to be castrated or rejected.

¹⁶Freud, Vol. x1, p. 199.

YOU DISGUST ME!



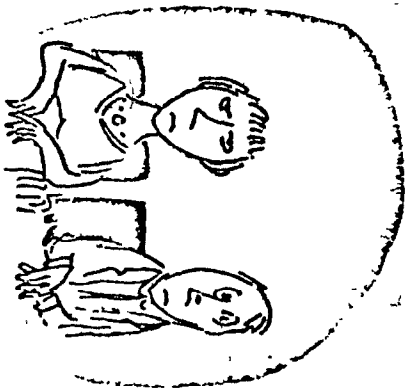
CHAIT YOU KEEP YOUR HANDS TO YOURSELF FOR ONE MINUTE?



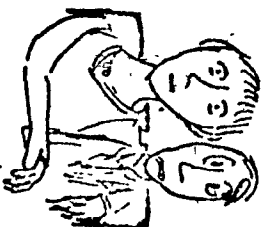
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU THINK YOU BROUGHT ME HERE BUT I CAME TO SEE A MOVIE!

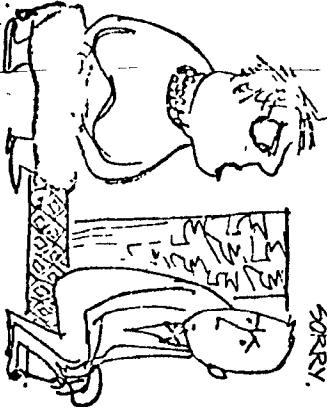


IF THAT'S WHAT A DATE WITH YOU IS GOING TO BE LIKE WE MAY AS WELL PUT A STOP TO IT RIGHT NOW!



YOU POOR DEAR, I FRIGHTENED YOU HALF TO DEATH, DIDN'T I?





THAT'S ALL YOU
THINK A GIRL
IS FOR

I
SAID
IM
SORRY.



SOME PEOPLE
THINK I HAVE
A MIND TOO!

ALL RIGHT,
I APOLOGIZED
DIDN'T I?

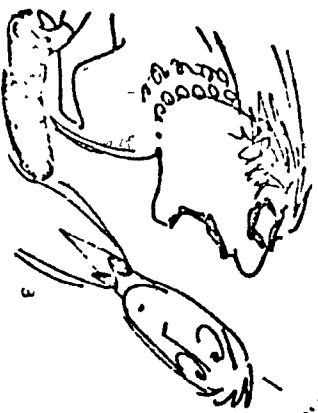


NOT TO ME,
MR. SLOPPY
MOUTH!



IM GOING INSIDE TO
DANCE. YOU CAN
COME IF YOU WANT
TO.

SHE
FORGIVES
ME!



MR. BIG
HANDS!

OH GOD...



DO YOU THINK IM
ON THIS EARTH SO
YOU CAN PROVE
YOUR
MASCULINITY?

BUT ITS
NEW YEARS
EVE.
EVERYBODY
DOES THAT
ON NEW
YEARS EVE!



Yeh... hah? IT WAS
ALL AN ACT!
THIS IS THE
NIGHT.



DONT PRESS SO
CLOSE! THATS
ALL YOU THINK
A GIRL IS.
FOR.

HAPPY
NEW
YEAR

WHAT DID I DO THAT
WAS SO TERRIBLE?
TELL ME! I'LL
OMIT IT IF
I'M
TERRIBLE.
TELL ME!



FORGET IT.
WILL YOU
PLEASE
JUST
FORGET
IT?

WHAT DID I DO? IS IT THAT
YOU CAN'T SCORE ANY POINTS
IN TENNIS?
IS THAT
WHAT'S
BOTHERING
YOU?



SWEETHEART, I LIKE
THE FACT YOU'RE
SO EASY TO
BEAT IN TENNIS.
WITH ALL THE
THINGS YOU DO
BETTER THAN
ME, ISN'T IT
ALL RIGHT
FOR ME TO
DO ONE
THING BETTER?



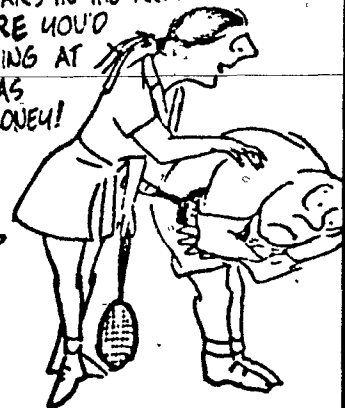
FOR INSTANCE, YOU TYPE
MARVELOUSLY!
I WISH I -
COULD
TYPE HALF
AS WELL!



AND YOU'RE TERRIBLY
NEAT! YOU'RE MUCH
NEATER THAN
I EVER CAN
BE! AND YOU'RE
A VERY STRONG
WALKER!



AND IF IT WASN'T FOR THOSE
TWO YEARS IN THE ARMY
I'M SURE YOU'D
BE MAKING AT
LEAST AS
MUCH MONEY!
HONEY,
WHY
GET
UPSET?



LARRY!
WHAT DO
YOU THINK
YOU'RE
DOING?



HEMORRHAGING.



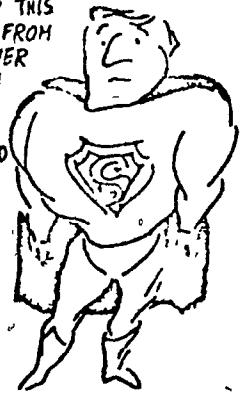
I USED TO BE
SUPERMAN



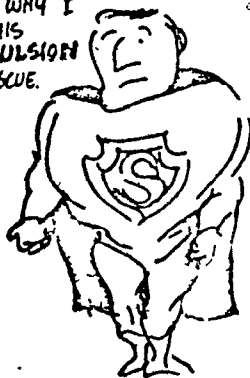
I USED TO GO RESCUING
PEOPLE ALL THE
HELL OVER THE
PLACE WHERE
EVER YOU
LOOKED
I WAS
SAVING
SOME-
BODY



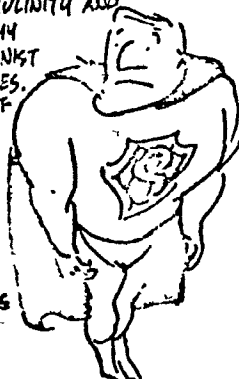
THEN ONE DAY I
PULLED THIS
CHICK FROM
THE RIVER
DO YOU
THINK
SHE
THANKED
ME?
NO!



SHE JUST WANTED TO
KNOW WHY I
HAD THIS
COMPULSION
TO RESCUE.



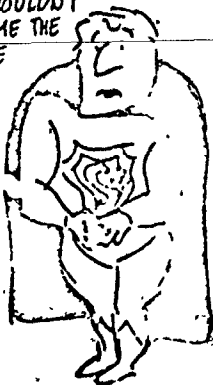
SHE ACCUSED ME OF DOUBTING
MY MASCULINITY AND
HENCE MY
EXHIBITIONIST
TENDENCIES.
SHE WANTED
TO KNOW
WHY I
DIDN'T
SPEND
MORE
TIME
READING



SHE TOOK ONE LOOK AT MY
CAPE AND SAID I WAS A
LATENT TRANS-
VESTITE AND
WHY WAS
MY COS-
TUME SO
SKIN
TIGHT
AND
DID I
RESCUE
MORE
MEN
THAN
WOMEN



I TRIED TO TELL HER
SHE SHOULDN'T
JUDGE ME THE
WAY SHE
JUDGES
EARTH
PEOPLE.
SHE JUST
PATTED
MY HEAD
AND
SMILED.



SO AFTER A LOT OF
ARGUMENT BACK AND
FORTH I FINALLY
GOT HER TO ADMIT
THAT ALTHOUGH I
MIGHT NOT BE
SUPER, I
WAS A LOT
BETTER
THAN
AVERAGE.



NOW I HAVE A
REGULAR OFFICE
JOB IN THE CITY
AND A HOUSE
IN THE
SUBURBS.
WE'RE
BOTH
VERY
HAPPY.



Another conclusion is that masochism is the source of the relationship between men and women. Feiffer, according to Feinberg's theory, in some perverted self-critical way wants to satirize his own irritation and disgust at his inadequacy.

Ronald A. Knox said: "It is seldom that the impetus to write satire comes to man except as the result of a disappointment. Since disappointment so often springs from love, it is not to be wondered that satirists have dealt unkindly with women."¹⁷ This is true to a certain extent for Feiffer. He has created a loathesome, satirical female type: the castrator. The theme of sexual failure and insecurity on the part of the male dominates the cartoons through the characterization of Bernard. Huey, on the other hand, is an absolutely necessary creation by Feiffer to compensate for Bernard's ineffectuality. But Huey's sexual prowess only serves to denigrate Bernard.

Establishing a real psycho-sexual link between Feiffer and his satire of the relationship between men and women emphasizes the biographical nature of Satire. In the same mode, Swift's scatological references have been scrutinized for personal parallels. And then conclusions like this are

¹⁷ Ronald A. Knox, "On Humour and Satire," in Satire: Modern Essays in Criticism, ed. R. Paulson (New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1971), p. 62.

reached:

"According to psychiatrists, Swift seems to have suffered from an impressive variety of neuroses brought on, perhaps, by being deprived of mother love at an early age, and giving rise to symptoms of emotional immaturity and psychosexual infantilism."¹⁸

It is not unreasonable to assume that Feiffer's admitted misogyny is the key to understanding his satiric statements about the relationship of men and women. Basically, his central motifs concerning the relationship of men and women are failure, mistrust, hate, insecurity and deception.

Conclusion: Relationship of Man to Woman

Feiffer has created three stereotypes of men and women in his cartoons: Bernard the sexual failure, Huey the sexual success and the female castrator. Bernard and Huey are carefully and fully developed characterizations of a type, while the female castrator is stereotyped only to the extent that she defines the stereotype of Bernard. Feiffer's limited development of the female as a type is carried over into his plays as well.

An assumption has been made that Feiffer is his character Bernard. The correlation has been based on two theories:

(1) Leonard Feinberg's theory of motivation of the satirist

¹⁸Philip Pinkus, Jonathan Swift: A Selection of his Works (Toronto: Macmillan Co. Ltd., 1965), p. viii.

in which Feiffer belongs to the special category of perverted self-criticism which is a portion of the larger classification of compensation. The use of a 'tendency wit' of aggression is a result of the insecurity felt by the satirist. (2) Freud's theory of the castration complex, which identifies the origin of man's psychological hatred and fear of women.

The creation of the female castrator is the means by which Feiffer satirizes himself while satisfying a masochistic tendency: the desire to be rejected which, according to Freud and Feiffer, is really a "narcissistic rejection" of women.

The major theme of the satire of the relationship between men and women is failure. This is due to Feiffer's personal failure, perhaps. When the plays are examined, the conclusion that the relationship of men to women ultimately fails is supported. From the clear lack of authentic female character development in the plays and the propensity toward the stereotype of the female castrator, Feiffer exhibits a limited artistic conception of women in the plays and the cartoons.

It is interesting to note that while the relationship of man to woman is of great importance in the cartoons (65/350), in his plays Feiffer only allows the relationship of man to woman to dominate in one; but even then (Little Murders) the relationship is actually a disguise for a harsher treatment of national violence.

I CAN
READ
YOU
LIKE AN
OPEN
BOOK!



YOU CAN
NOT!

YOU'VE
SELFISH
WRITTEN ALL
OVER YOUR
FACE!



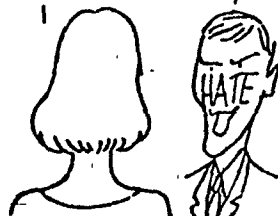
I HAVE
NOT!

YOU LIKE TO THINK
YOU'RE A NICE
GUY. YOU'RE NOT A
NICE GUY- YOU'RE
A HYPOCRITE!



THAT'S
A
LIE!

YOU CAN'T TAKE
THE TRUTH CAN
YOU? YOU MUST
REALLY HATE
ME RIGHT NOW.



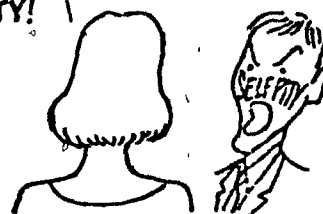
YOU
ARE
SO
WRONG!

'ME! ME! ME!'
THAT'S ALL
YOU EVER
THINK OF!



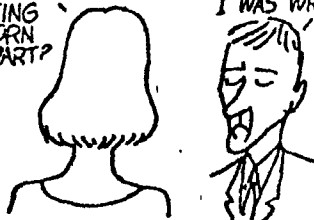
THAT'S
NOT
SO!

YOU AND YOUR IN-
JURED INNOCENCE!
ALL YOU DO IS
WALLOW IN SELF
PITY!

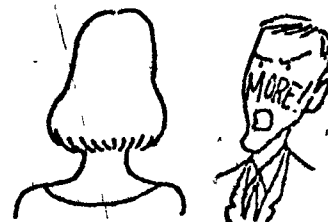


I DO NOT
FEEL
SELF PITY!

WHAT I CAN'T
FIGURE OUT IS
WHY YOU LISTEN
TO ALL THIS. DO
YOU ENJOY
BEING
TORN
APART?



I-I HAD HOPED
I COULD MAKE
YOU UNDER-
STAND ME-
BUT I SEE
I WAS WRONG.



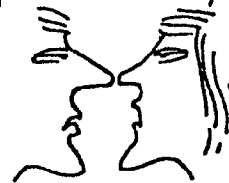
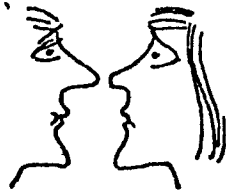
I NEVER WANT TO
SEE YOU AGAIN!

LIFE
IS A
GAME.

NO, LIFE IS
THE WEARING
OF MASKS.
EVERYBODY
KNOWS THAT.

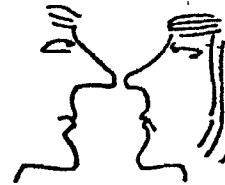
FOR EXAMPLE, UP TILL
A MINUTE AGO WE
WERE PLAYING THE
LOVE GAME. NOW
WE'RE PLAYING THE
ARGUMENT GAME.

THAT'S ALL A MASK.
THE ARGUMENT
MASK IS A COVER-
UP FOR OUR DIS-
APPOINTMENT IN
THE LOVE MASK.



IF YOU DIDN'T HAVE
THE TOO-COOL ATTIT-
TUDINE THAT LOVE IS
A MASK I MIGHT
NOT HAVE BEEN
DISAPPOINTED IN
THE LOVE GAME.

AND IF YOU THINK
THAT BEING
TREATED LIKE A
TEAM PLAYER
IS MY IDEA OF A
GOOD MASK
YOU'RE OUT OF
YOUR MIND.

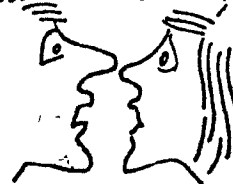
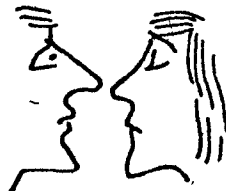


THIS IS
ALL SORT
OF SILLY
ISN'T IT?

I-I
SUPPOSE
SO

WHAT DOES IT MAT-
TER - MASKS OR
GAMES? IF ANYTHING
ON THIS UNREAL
EARTH IS NOT A
GAME, IT'S MY LOVE
FOR YOU, ISABEL!

AND IF FOR EVEN A
MOMENT IN THIS AGE
OF DISGUISES WE
COULD DROP OUR
MASKS, MY TRUE
FACE WOULD SHOW
I LOVED YOU BER-
NARD!



MY
DARLING!

MY
HEART!



Russellian paradox - when a message
in the message.

about the message is contained

"Gregory Bateson," Humor in Human Communication in
Motivation in Humor, ed. J. Levine, p. 163.

IM STANDING
RIGHT IN FRONT
OF YOU - DO
YOU SEE ME?



I CAN'T
TALK TO
YOU. I
JUST
CAN'T
GET
THROUGH
ANYMORE!

ALWAYS ITS
YOU. NEVER
ITS ME. I
HAVE RIGHTS!
IM A PERSON!



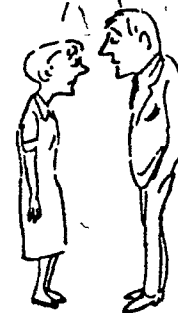
YOU LIVE IN
YOUR OWN
PRIVATE LITTLE
WORLD. OPEN
IT UP! AIR
IT OUT!
LOOK AT
ME! LOOK
AT ME!

YOU LIVE IN YOUR
OWN PRIVATE
LITTLE WORLD.
OPEN IT UP! AIR
IT OUT! LOOK
AT ME! LOOK
AT ME!



ALWAYS ITS
YOU. NEVER
ITS ME I
HAVE RIGHTS!
IM A
PERSON!

WHAT'S THE USE? YOU HAVEN'T
HEARD A SINGLE WORD I'VE SAID.



I CAN'T TALK
TO YOU. I JUST
CAN'T GET
THROUGH
ANYMORE!



IM STANDING
RIGHT IN FRONT
OF YOU - DO YOU
SEE ME?

WHAT?



WHAT?
WHAT?

"They are so self-absorbed that they are incapable of communication; they have parallel monologues, not conversations. Feiffer's strength is that in these characters he has caught quite precisely the distinctive verbal and physical gestures of their prototypes - the people who of course compose his audience."

Segal, Feiffer, Steinberg and Others - Commentary, July 1961, 32(1), p. 432.



Relationship of Man to Himself

Out of 300 cartoons, 51 are concerned with the relationship of man to himself. It is difficult to isolate the satiric intention in these cartoons in contrast to the ease in which the theme of failure is established in the relationship of man to woman. More abstract and certainly more ironic and absurdist, the cartoons representing the relationship of man to himself present a conglomerate of themes: among them are the discrepancy between image and self-image, isolation and the art of rationalizing.

Feiffer was influenced by Dostoevsky's Notes from the Underground. He says of it that he "always hoped to get in terms of humour some of the feelings that Dostoevsky got about his man . . . to show within the space of a strip how man views himself and then show what the outside sees him as. And the two have absolutely no connection."¹⁹

Feiffer's fascination with the "sick man" of literature helps to define one of the structures presented in his cartoons. Feiffer has stated that there is a schism between man and the social structure, the basic implication being a failure of society to truly know the individual. This is because society sets up a structure in which "image" is the

¹⁹ J. E. MIDGE, IS. KOPALA, C. RIKY, eds, COMEDY AND THE ARTS, II (MICHIGAN: GALE RESEARCH COMPANY 1971) 112.

vehicle for self-definition, while the individual sets up a structure whereby "self-image" is the vehicle for self-definition.

According to The Art of the Satirist by W.O.S. Sutherland; a satiric mode is established when a moral discrepancy or contrast of values is represented. The dichotomy of image and self-image can be classified as satire according to this criteria. Image and self-image can be seen as a contrast of values, one emphasizing the individual value structure, the other emphasizing society's value structure. The discrepancy between image and self-image is that image is an imposition that forces man into an acceptable behaviour pattern that might not necessarily be compatible with his self-image, which functions independently of socially acceptable behaviour patterns. The imposition of behaviour on man by society as the means by which image is forced, makes the nature of self-image a measurement of the variation from that norm of behaviour. Distinctly 'Feifferesque,' and clearly understandable if Feiffer was truly influenced by Dostoevsky, self-image must be measured in terms of the sense of the inappropriateness of the self in the social milieu. Facade is the compensatory trademark of the isolated individual whose behaviour is prompted by self-image.

In the satire of the relationship of man to himself there is a

tension that Northrop Frye calls sophisticated pathos:

"A study of the isolated mind . . . how someone recognizably like ourselves is broken by a conflict between the inner and outer world, between imaginative reality and the sort of reality which is established by a social consensus."²⁰

The term sophisticated pathos is used by Frye in defining the mode of high and low mimetic tragedy, which essentially is unrelated to the satiric mode. But when one realizes that the characters are motivated by a "weakness which appeals to our sympathy because it is on our own level of experience"²¹ the effect of Feiffer's satire takes on a more somber quality, one that resembles the struggles of a tragic hero.

Self-image becomes a weakness in the Feiffer character because it makes for a hostile, aggressive social response, an indication that self-image cannot cope with the image expected of it. It is interesting to note that those characters who are representatives of the self-image, must be hostile and aggressive in their behaviour. This reinforces the assumption that Feiffer is basically an angry man, who expresses human conflict through an aggressive satire.

It is assumed that Sutherland's latter reference to

²⁰Northrop Frye, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 39.

²¹Frye, p. 38.

a contrast of values is more appropriate when considering Feiffer's attitude toward the individual and the system than a moral discrepancy, because the dichotomy of image and self-image in the cartoons is depicted in a behavioural fashion. A distinction between values and morals is necessitated here. Morals are a tradition of sentiment that affects the conscience. Morals are upheld through beliefs which then cause behaviour. Maintaining a moral standard is maintaining a behavioural pattern, but the purpose of the maintenance is to procure a good conscience. Values, on the other hand, are personalized volitional choices which cause behaviour to meet desired ends. The purpose is not to end up with a good conscience but to procure what one desires.

A contrast in morals then would be a contrast in the opinion of what is right and wrong which imposes a judgement on actions. A contrast in values simply admits to different means to procure ends. In the case of image and self-image, the desire for social approval is the end in effect. How one acts, socially or anti-socially, not rightly or wrongly, is the distinction between morality and values in this case. One might say that social or anti-social labels are judgements. They are not; they are measurements of the need for social approval.

The great disparity between self-image and image can be measured in terms of the need for social approval. Ayn Rand's philosophy in The Fountainhead is applicable to Feiffer's characters who must cope with the decision between self-image and image as their motivational source. What Rand calls the Altruists and the Egoists is essentially a measurement of the need for social approval. According to Rand, the Altruists are masochists, motivated by image (desire for social acceptance) to give of themselves completely, compulsively. The Egoists are sadists, motivated by self-image (a sense of inappropriateness about belonging to society) to ignore the demands of social protocol. In Rand's terms the Egoists possess what she calls a virtue of selfishness or dignity of the individual. It is interesting that Feiffer's egoistical characters who insist on breaking norms of behaviour patterns do so as misfits. Feiffer's Egoists contrast with Rand's on the basis of individual integrity. Feiffer's have none, instead they are pathetic examples of lost causes. Self-image appears self-defeating in the same manner that most of the cartoons about men and women are also destructive.

To compare Feiffer's vision of selflessness or selfishness with Ayn Rand's Altruism and Egoism is extremely pertinent when one realizes that Rand allows for integrity, but only through sadism. Social self-alignment is unavoidably manifested through neurosis. This is the commonality of Feiffer and Rand. Certainly there is no intention to compare them artistically but the correlation has been made because Feiffer and Rand share two components of American modernism in their message: they are concerned with image as

manifested through behaviour (either forced behaviour or independent behaviour) and that image, no matter which way you slice it, is an expression of neurosis.

There is still a need to determine why the representation of image and self-image is a form of satire within the greater context of Feiffer's satire. According to Sutherland, a basic satiric requirement is met when a display of a contrast of values is present. Feiffer is contrasting obsequious behaviour or image with neurotic defensive behaviour or self-image. Where Feiffer is aligned must be made clear to the reader or else the satire is not satisfactory. Feiffer apparently favours the weak, neurotic, independent isolationist, which means the values of image are the object of attack. Through sophisticated pathos, a familiarity and identification with the weaknesses of the individual who is confronted with an inner and outer conflict of identity is established. Therefore the components of tragedy are also considerable. A satisfactory conclusion about the form of satire would be to call it tragi-comic. The comic element is a parody of individual behaviour. The tragic element is the realism of neurosis. The sum total is self-parody; an incredibly self-deprecating theme that makes one regard Feiffer as a terribly serious as well as hilariously funny satirist.

IT HASN'T ALWAYS
BEEN EASY CASE
I WAS ROTTEN.



I LOOKED ROTTEN
I THOUGHT ROTTEN
I COULD TELL BY
THE WAY PEOPLE
STARED AWAY
FROM ME THAT
THEY WERE
THINKING "THERE
GOES A ROTTEN
KID."



SO I DECIDED
TO COME UP
I STARTED
TO LOOK LIKE.



AT FIRST IT WAS PURE
AFFECTATION OUTSIDE
I DID FAVORS, LENT
MONEY, SMILED A
LOT. BUT INSIDE, I
STAYED ROTTEN



BUT GIVE NICENESS
AN INCH AND IT
TAKES A MILE.
NICENESS RAN
AROUND INSIDE OF
ME. I BECAME
A COMPULSIVE
DOLL



WHEN I CAME
INTO A ROOM
PEOPLE SMILED.
I GOT LOST
BUT ON IT
I GOT NICER
AND NICER!



EVEN WHEN IT
WASN'T NECESSARY
I WAS NICE. GUYS
WOULDN'T CURSE
IN MY COMPANY,
GIRLS BEGAN
TO THINK OF
ME AS A
FRIEND I
GAVE MY
MINISTER
GUILT
FEELINGS



I TRIED TO CUT
DOWN BUT I
HAD LOST THE
POWER OF
CHOICE. I
WAS HOOKED
ON NICE!



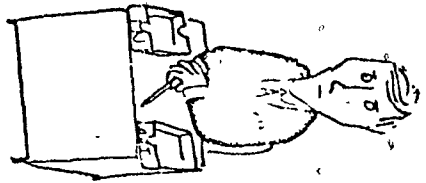
DO YOU
KNOW WHAT
IT'S LIKE
TO HAVE
A FORTY
POUND
MONKEY
ON
YOUR
BACK?



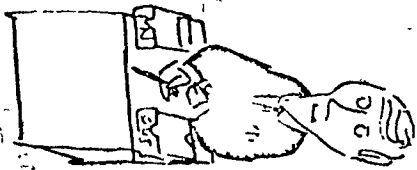
NOT THAT
I'M COMPLAINING,
MIND YOU



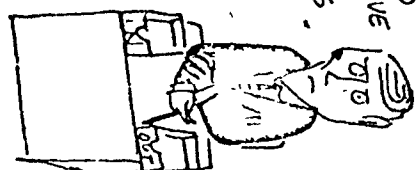
THE COMPANY'S
BEEN VERY
GOOD TO ME
SINCE I
GOT OUT OF
SCHOOL



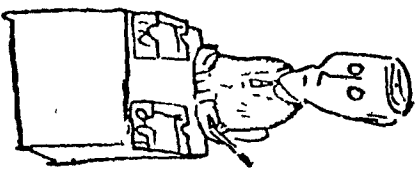
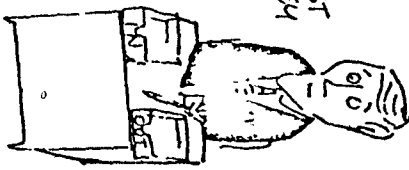
THEN THEY HELPED
EVELYN AND ME
FIND A HOUSE
CONVENIENTLY
LOCATED IN A
SECTION WHERE
NO OTHER YOUNG
EXECUTIVES
LIVE -



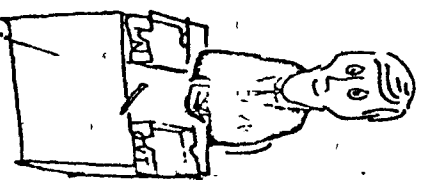
FIRST THEY ENROLLED
ME IN THEIR EXECUTIVE
TRAINING SQUAD
LEARNING ALL PARTS
OF THE FIELD AND
GETTING PAID FOR
IT AS WELL



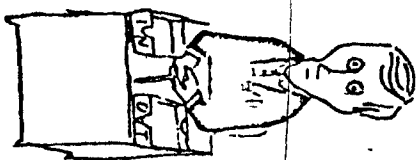
AND WHEN EVELYN
BECAME ILL SMACK
DAB IN THE MIDDLE
OF HER TWENTY FIRST
BIRTHDAY PARTY THEY
ALLOWED US FULL
BENEFIT OF THE
COMPANY'S HOSP-
ITALIZATION PLAN
EVEN THOUGH I
WAS A MONTH
SHORT ON
ELIGIBILITY -



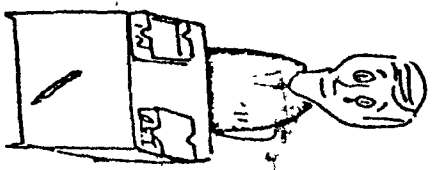
-AND IN SPITE
OF MY LOW SCORE
ON THE MONTHLY
PROMOTIONAL
EMOTIONAL QUIZ
AND SUBSEQUENT
DAILY MAKE-UP
SESSIONS WITH
THE MORALE
DEPARTMENTS
PSYCHOANALYST



AND THE LITTLE
WOMAN AND I ARE
BACK IN STEP HERE
I AM ONLY TWENTY-
FOUR AND ALREADY
A SECOND CONSULT-
ATION ASSISTANT.
AND JUST YESTER-
DAY EVELYN
ENROLLED OUR THREE-
YEAR-OLD IN THE
EXECUTIVE JUNIORS
TRAINING SQUAD.

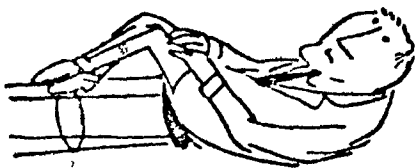


THEN WHEN, BECAUSE OF
EVELYN'S DRINKING
PROBLEM, IT LOOKED
LIKE I MIGHT BE
CASHTERED, THE EMER-
GENCY AID COMMITTEE
OF THE COMPANY'S
FAMILY COUNSELING
PLAN PLUS THE WIVES'
AUXILIARY'S "BE A
PAL" SERVICE HELPED
PULL US THROUGH.

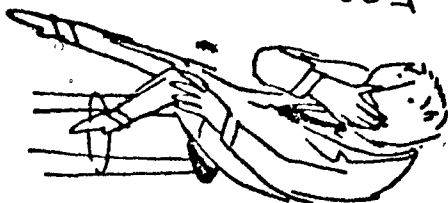


I COULD
DIE FOR
THE
COMPANY

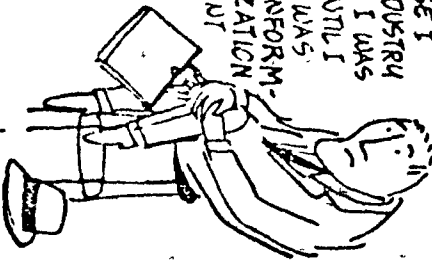
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN A STRUGGLE FOR ME TO FIND MY PLACE IN SOCIETY. THAT'S WHY I HAVE TO READ BOOKS.



FOR INSTANCE, IN COLLEGE I THOUGHT I WAS GETTING ON FINE UNTIL I READ THAT THERE WAS A SILENT GENERATION SO I SHUT UP.



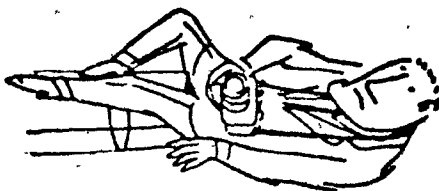
AFTER COLLEGE I WENT INTO INDUSTRY AND THOUGHT I WAS DOING FINE UNTIL I READ THAT I WAS REALLY A CONFORMIST ORGANIZATION BOSSMAN SO I WENT OUT AND CONFORMED AND BELONGED



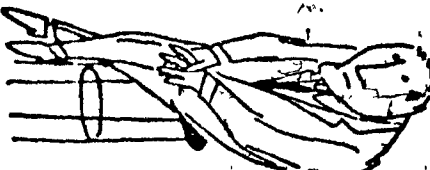
WELL, I BEGAN MAKING A LOT OF MONEY AND FELT THAT I WAS DOING FINE. UNTIL I READ THAT, IN TRUTH, I WAS A MEMBER OF AN ACQUISITIVE SOCIETY. SO I BOUGHT THINGS.



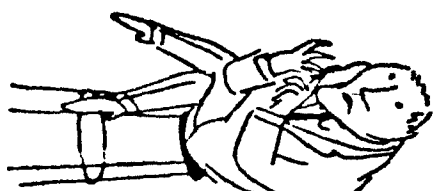
OF COURSE, I NOW HAD A LOT OF TIME ON MY HANDS, BUT I FELT FINE UNTIL I READ THAT MY INCOME GROUP HAD A LEISURE PROBLEM SO I LEARNED HOBBIES.



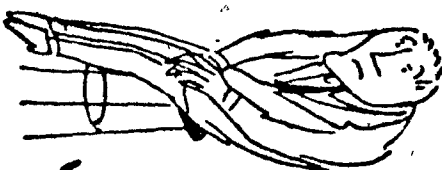
NOW FOR A WHILE THERE I FELT FINE UNTIL I READ THAT THE ROOT PROBLEM OF MY AFFLUENT SOCIETY WAS STATUS SEEKING.



WELL, IN BETWEEN BEING SILENT, CONFORMING, BELONGING, ACQUIRING AND TAKING CARE OF MY LEISURE PROBLEM I HAVEN'T YET HAD A CHANCE TO SEEK STATUS.



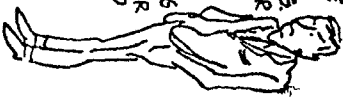
I GUESS I'LL FIT IT IN SOMEHOW.



ONE NIGHT AT A PARTY-
I WAS IN AN ARGUMENT
WHEN SUDDENLY JUST
BEFORE I WAS ABOUT TO
APPLY THE CRUSHER
AND QUOTE STATISTICS
FROM THE WALL STREET
JOURNAL - I REALIZED
I DIDNT BELIEVE A
SINGLE WORD I
WAS SAYING



AND I DIDNT BELIEVE
A SINGLE WORD MY
OPPONENT WAS SAYING
AND I THOUGHT FURTHER
AND I REALIZED THAT
I DIDNT BELIEVE A
SINGLE ARGUMENT I
HAD HEARD ALL EVENINGS
OR A SINGLE NEWSPAPER
EDITORIAL I HAD READ
IN MONTHS



AND THEN IT CAME
TO ME THAT I
HADNT BELIEVED
ANYTHING ANYBODY
HAD TOLD ME IN
YEARS. THAT DEEP
INSIDE THE ONLY
THING I REALLY
BELIEVED WAS THAT
EVERYBODY WAS
LYING!



THAT IT WAS
ALL SPECIAL
READING...
GIRLS!
JOBS!
GOVERNMENTS!
ME!
EVERY
THING!



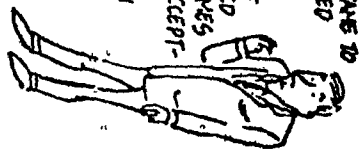
AND SO I GOT
VERY DEPRESSED
BECAUSE IF LIES
WERE THE ONLY
THING ANYONE
COULD BELIEVE
IN HOW DOES
ONE GO ABOUT
SELECTING THE
BEST LIE. THE
ONE THAT MAKES
YOU FEEL BETTER?



AND WASNT MY BELIEF
THAT EVERYTHING WAS A
LIE ONLY A DEVICE TO
ESCAPE RESPONSIBILITY
BY REALIZING THIS I
BECAME HUMBLE. I
CAME TO A NEW
BELIEF -



BUT THEN ANOTHER THOUGHT CAME TO
MIND- WAS I SO WELL INFORMED
THAT I COULD AFFORD TO MAKE
SUCH STATEMENTS? WERENT
THERE OTHERS IN POSITIONS OF
AUTHORITY FAR BETTER TRAINED
IN THE COMPLEXITY OF OUR TIMES
WHOSE GUIDANCE I SHOULD ACCEPT-
ESPECIALLY WHEN MY OWN
CONCLUSIONS WERE SO BADLY
CONFUSED?



-TO ACCEPT
GUIDANCE.
TO HAVE
TRUST IN
THE GOOD
SENSE OF
THE EXPERTS.



THAT IS
WHAT I
HAVE
FINALLY
COME
TO
BELIEVE.

MY LIE,
RIGHT
OR
WRONG.

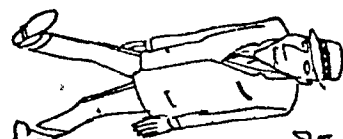


I FEEL
RESPONSIBLE
FOR
EVERYTHING.



FOR INSTANCE
IF THE WORLD
BLEW UP
TOMORROW
AND I
WAS THE
ONLY
SURVIVOR-
YOU KNOW
HOW TO
FEEL?

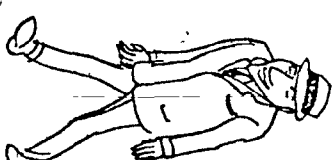
VERY
DEFENSIVE.



AS IF IT
WERE MY
IDEA IN THE
FIRST PLACE.
BUT THEN
I TELL
MYSELF
THAT'S
CRAZY!



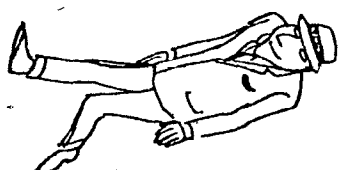
I DIDN'T
BLOW UP
THE WORLD
I JUST
THOUGHT
ABOUT
BLOWING UP
THE WORLD.
IS THINKING
A CRIME?



BUT NO
MATTER
HOW I
ARGUE
I KNOW
IT'S ONLY
AN ALIBI.



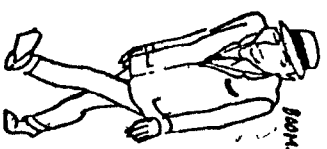
THAT'S
WHY I
SMILE A
LOT AT
PEOPLE.



I DON'T
ASK
THAT
THEY
LIKE ME-



ALL I
ASK IS
THEY FIND
ME NOT
GUILTY.



IM
OUTRAGEOUS.



LA LA LA

- 71 -
STEVIE -



MY WIT IS
BITING.
LA LA LA

STEVIE - IT'S THREE
IN THE MORNING.
PLEASE LET'S
GO HOME.



MY TONGUE IS
SHARP MY BITE
IS CLEAN I BREAK
UP PARTIES LA LA LA

STEVIE - THE
BOOZE IS
ALL GONE
AND THERE'S
NO ONE LEFT
TO IN-
SULT
PLEASE
LET'S
GO HOME.



COMPANIONS SHUN ME
LA LA LA. BECAUSE
THEY'RE JEALOUS
LA LA LA. BECAUSE
I'M

BETTER.
LA LA LA
BECAUSE
THEY'RE
STUPID
LA LA LA
BECAUSE
I KNOW
IT LA
LA LA.

LISTEN
WHEN
TALK
STEVIE



BUT I DON'T NEED THEM
LA LA LA THEY'RE ALL
TOO SHALLOW. LA LA LA



C'MON,
STEVIE
PUT ON
YOUR
COAT

THEY'RE NOT WORTH
HATING. THEY'RE
DISGUSTING
I SEE
RIGHT
THROUGH
THEM
LA LA LA

THAT'S RIGHT
SWEETHEART
NOW THE
OTHER ARM!



THEY'D JUST
RENDER
LA LA
FOR-
VE
SH
LA
LA
LA
LA
LA
LA
LA

THAT'S A GOOD
BOY, STEVIE NOW
LET ME
BRUSH
BACK
YOUR
HAIR



THE WORLD IS SILLY,
I THINK I'LL USE IT
I'M OUTRAGEOUS. LA
LA LA

TAXI!



Isolation

In the second cartoon anthology, Passionella and Other Short Stories, Feiffer uses an extended form of the cartoon to create what could be called modern fables. George's Moon is a perfect example of the tragic-comic mode of image and self-image described above. An analysis of George's Moon is included here because it genuinely represents Feiffer's closest contact with the absurd while remaining within the mode of the relationship of man to himself. George's Moon is also one of the first of Feiffer's cartoons to be dramatized. It was performed in Chicago at a playwrights cabaret theatre in 1961.

There has never been any serious critical debate about classifying Feiffer as an absurdist, such as there has been about Albee, for example. In the reviews of Feiffer's plays, only one critic mentions that Feiffer's style is midway between absurdist farce and social satire. As a cartoonist writing during the decade when Absurdism was at its peak (1955-1965), one would expect that more absurd themes might be identifiable in Feiffer's work, yet the term absurd rarely has been applied.

The term "sick", originating with the perverted exploits of Lenny Bruce, was slapped onto the cartoons much more readily than "absurd". One possible distinction between

absurdism and sick humour might be the level of psychological intention. Sick humour is exploitative, simplistic, vulgar, harsh, condemning and malicious. It is a psychopathological form of expression that realizes, through invective, a pernicious hostility of the individual toward society. Its source is deeply psychological but its intention is not really to effect, to a high degree, any real sympathy. Absurdism is rarely exploitative and never simple. It can be vulgar and demeaning but it does not employ invective. Its source, certainly stems more from a metaphysical point of view than from personal pathology. The psychological intention of absurdism is to instill in man a reasonable amount of doubt about the nature of his very existence. Absurdism confronts man's systems of self-justification, while sick humour only superficially condemns certain forms of behaviour.

Often, a component of absurdism is the environment within which man's systems of self-justification are confronted. The environments are often sterile, depleted, even void; there is a sense of omnipresent nullity, that nothing and no one is anywhere. Sick humour never creates such a universe.

George's Moon presents the void and the search for self-knowledge, self-justification and self-gratification. It is Feiffer's only cartoon story that builds thematically on man's relationship to himself within an absurdist environment.

One interpretation of absurdism implies that the

normal desires of man, such as self-knowledge, knowledge of God, honest relationship, and rewarding vocation are frustrated and must be compensated for. The compensation, in order to be absurdist, must border on the ridiculous or the surrealist.²² Beckett compensates through game, Genet through ritual, Albee and Ionesco through pretense and charade and Feiffer, in George's Moon, through apotheosis. The apotheosis of the self is ridiculous and the apotheosis of space is surreal. In George's Moon the combination of existential isolation with the search for human integrity presents a basic incongruity or frustration that must be compensated for.

George is the sole inhabitant of the moon. At first he is puzzled as to how he got on the moon, so he searches for a reason. His immediate desire to understand his environment is frustrated but his compensation is the knowledge of his name: "George". His name has no real meaning, but it temporarily serves his need to identify some element of his predicament. Trying to understand personal predicament through a confrontation with the environment is an absurdist motif easily recognizable in Genet's Deathwatch, Arrabel's And They Put Handcuffs on the Flowers and Satre's No Exit.

²²Brian Robinson, "Theatre of the Absurd," Graduate Seminar, McGill University, Fall 1961.

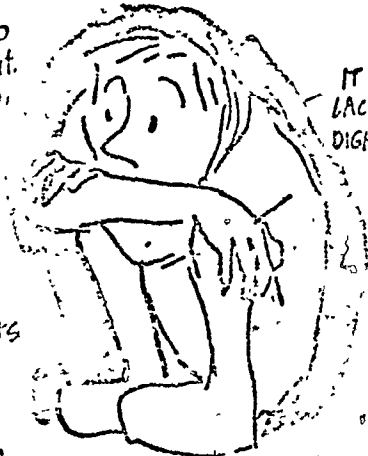
Laurence Kitchen in Modern Drama: Form and Interpretation speaks of two symbols of modern Drama. They are the cage and the scream. The cage implies environments that trap people like Pinter rooms and jail cells. George is as metaphorically trapped on his moon as any hero of modern drama is isolated in a limiting environment.

George's name serves as a beginning now that he knows himself within the immediate context of his environment, he extends his appetite for possession. He decides to own the moon; he claims it and feels quite smug about his possession. George's momentary exuberance is quelled, however, when he returns to his first dilemma. Not knowing how he got on the moon, and feeling essentially "non-moon", he wonders about his roots and his values. He becomes introspective, but is forced to submit to the impossibility of self-discovery when introspection is of no avail. He needs diversions, compensations. At first he plays games: rock collecting and drop kicking rocks into craters. He decides he hates rocks and he is bored with rock kicking.

George becomes subdued again with his basic instinctual question about his origin. He realizes he is passing time with no discovery of his true identity in sight. His search for self-awareness is more important than his initial compensation through hobbies.

He was just filling up
time and he knew it.
What good was it to
collect rocks, to
count craters, to
fill the craters
you've counted
with the rocks
you've collected,
to empty the craters
and collect the
rocks all over
again?

Was this a way for a man to spend a life?



IT
LACKS
DIGNITY

George recognized
he had no sense
of himself. Also that
he had no sense of
others. How could he
have any dignity
without a context?
He didn't know who
he was or what
or anything.



A MAN
HAS TO
BELIEVE
IN
SOMETHING.

So since he was the only thing around, George decided to believe in himself.



He made up poems to himself.

GEORGE
George
GEORGE
george
GEORGE
George
GEORGE.



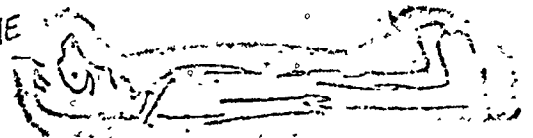
He made up stories to himself.

SO GEORGE
CURED THE
PLAGUE, ENDED
THE FAMINE,
TURNED BACK
THE FLOOD.



And then he awoke one morning and found that he had forgotten his name.

THAT'S WHAT
I LET
SERVES ME
RIGHT.



So he stopped believing in himself.

George decides that in order to have dignity he must have faith in something. He becomes disillusioned to such an extent that he believes that he himself can serve as his inspiration of faith. He idolizes himself in a ridiculous fashion:

George decides that he needs something greater than himself to idolize. He discovers space. Space has the perfect attributes for apotheosis. It is removed, unknown and non-disillusioning. The apotheosis of space symbolizes man's identity with emptiness; George however feels that he has discovered a mature belief.

As soon as George finds a sense of security through his relationship with space, he is confronted by rockets. His identification with his newly founded faith provider is quickly forsaken. The idea of being rescued by other people is a more tangible and desirable hope to George. The absurdist notion that man can be saved from his isolation and his predicament, but that he really does not want to be is one of the greatest moments in Waiting for Godot, when Vladimir and Estragon try to save Lucky, a slave, but Lucky attacks them. George, in a way, is the same slave to his predicament. His initial joy at the prospects of being saved is turned to malicious hostility, but admittedly, for very different reasons than Lucky's which are actually never revealed. Except that one might assume Lucky prefers the protection of a repressive environment to the multiple

and unknown possibilities of a free environment.

George suffers from a unique paranoia, possibly too human and too apparent to be called absurdist at this point. Upon the thought of rescue, paranoia sets in. At first George relies on his self-image as a paradigm of enviable knowledge: he is the only expert on the moon. This feeling of elation is transformed into an overwhelming sense of dread when he realizes he does not know a thing about the moon. He is a fraud; he panicks. He hides from the onslaught of his rescuers. He is retreating into an insecurity that is manifested by self-persecution of his inadequacies, a typical Feiffer theme.

Abandoning his fears, he gathers all his courage and a lot of rocks and declares war. George feels confident that he will win because he knows the terrain. His isolated environment appeases him.

This cartoon expresses the need man has to be saved from isolation but at the same time expresses the fear of being exposed as a fraud. The search for self-knowledge, justification and gratification is stultified by a paranoic reaction which does not allow for self-integrity. It is despairing to realize that George is defending his universe of solitude, a self-image built on an empty relationship with space. His desire for isolation is based on a sense of alienation from the self. Such an expression of insecurity that metamorphosizes

into defensive hostility is a tragic paradox of the human predicament. George is a hero of the modern misshapen personality. George is Feiffer's only true courageous hero, prepared to defend even his insecurity.

When absurdity can evoke sympathy, when absurdity borders on personal tragedy, the basis of satire becomes more serious than pretentious. George's Moon is satire of the image/self-image motif. George becomes aggressively hostile to the environment that imposes certain behavioural expectations upon him. These expectations directly confront his self-image which is composed of a sense of inadequacy or fear of inappropriateness at being able to cope with society's demands.

Art of Rationalization

"The people in Feiffer's cartoons spend their time explaining and justifying themselves - not only to others but to themselves. One of their central principles - though they do not often recognize it - was articulated by Groucho Marx's famous line: 'I wouldn't join a club that would have me for a member.' Yet if these men and women are capable of being bugged by almost anything, they still have an inexhaustible ability to rationalize today's defeat for tomorrow's disaster."²³

Segal recognizes Feiffer's predisposition towards defeat, but at the same time Feiffer includes an antithetical smugness in his characters that combines a sense of helplessness with complacency.

²³David Segal, "Feiffer, Steinberg and Others," p. 432.

I'VE BEEN LYING HERE
A LONG TIME TRYING
TO FIGURE OUT THE
RIGHT ANSWERS

BUT I COULDN'T
COME UP WITH
ANY.



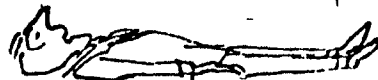
SO AFTER GIVING IT A
LOT OF THOUGHT I
CONCLUDED IT'S LESS
IMPORTANT TO KNOW
THE RIGHT ANSWERS
THAN TO BE ABLE TO
PHRASE THE RIGHT
QUESTIONS.

BUT THE ONLY QUESTION
I COULD COME UP WITH
WAS "YOU BUM- WHY
ARE YOU LYING HERE?"



SO I FINALLY SAW THAT THE
ROOT OF MY PROBLEM LAY
NEITHER IN FINDING THE RIGHT
ANSWER NOR IN PHRASING
THE RIGHT QUESTIONS.

THE ROOT OF MY PROBLEM
LAY IN THE AWARENESS
THAT IF THE RIGHT QUESTION
COULD BE PHRASED THEN
A RIGHT ANSWER UNDOUBTEDLY
MIGHT BE FOUND.



NOW KNOWING THIS HAS
ALLOWED ME TO TRANSCEND
THE SHALLOW DILEMMA OF
SEEKING ANSWERS OR
PHRASING QUESTIONS IN
ORDER TO ASSUAGE MY
GUILT. I KNOW AT LAST
WHY IT'S INEVITABLE THAT
I LIE HERE AS I NOW LIE!

I'M
GROWING.

"Irony characterizes the attitude of
one who, when confronted with two
things that are mutually exclusive
chooses both, which is but another way
of saying he chooses neither."*

Haakon Chevalier in The Satirist:
His Temperament, Motivation and
Influence, by L. Feinberg, p. 8.

*Which, if taken one step further in
Feiffer's case is to say, ~~he~~ choose
not to choose."



The use of inverted logic encapsulates the characters in a rhetorical debate that is essential in understanding Feiffer's style. A character poses a problematic question to himself; he transforms the issue into a dialectic, and then dissolves the issue completely by the process of rationalization. To understand the connection between the use of rationalization and the relationship of man to himself is to understand Feiffer's notion of self-deception. Feiffer is setting up the strongest relationship between his reading audience and his subject matter when he pictures man against himself in an attempt to resolve a conflict. This is because the object of the satire is none other than the individual and his pursuit of rationality. A polemical self-exploration is the result. This produces a polarity between intellect and emotions, both in the characters and in the readers. The standard form is a logical self-scrutiny; the debate always resembles, at least symbolically, the Hamletian query of "To be or not to be." Being Post-Cartesian, Feiffer's questions sound more like "To do or not to do," or "To understand or not to understand," or "To try or not to try." This is satire composed of controlled, rational self-deception; in short, a parody on man as the thinking animal.

PRETTY
SOON
I'LL
HAVE
TO
GET
UP.

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IT'S NOT HEALTHY TO LIE
HERE! GOT TO AROUSE MYSELF!
GOT TO GET INVOLVED!
NOW! RIGHT NOW!



BECAUSE WITHOUT FULLY
UNDERSTANDING MY
MOTIVATIONS, HOW CAN
EITHER ACT HAVE ANY
MEANING FOR ME?



OR AM I RATIONALIZING?



NOW I MUST QUESTION
MYSELF RELENTLESSLY
MY PATH IS CLEAR



IF I DON'T MOVE
I'LL BE UP. AS I
DON'T WANT TO
LOST MY ROLE



I MUST
I MUST



OR PERHAPS THOUGH LYING
HERE ATTRACTS ME, GETTING
UP ALSO ATTRACTS ME
HENCE MY INDECISION -



PRETTY SOON I'LL HAVE
TO START FROBING -



SO THE REAL ISSUE IS NOT
GETTING UP OR LYING DOWN
THE REAL ISSUE IS HOW DO I
NOT FEEL ABOUT
EITHER MOVE -



I'LL COUNT TO THREE.



Persiflage built by an artifice of logic is Feiffer's forte as a comic writer. What in fact is happening through the art of rationalization is the process of the subversion of order. In a sense, the logic is a derangement in contrast to an arrangement which easily allows for a disintegration-effect in character development. The art of rationalization is decomposition through the process of composition. Naturally, all writing is composition in the technical sense that it is a gradual development of idea or pure expression. The irony of rationalization is, however, that through the technicalities of writing, the opposite effect is achieved. The building of the writing is all thrust toward the disintegration of the subject. The age-old controversy over form and content as either inseparable or separable appears to be resolved here. The form is separable, in fact the opposite of the content. A logical form is the source of an illogical content. Herein lies the key to the dynamism of Feiffer as a playwright. The nature of his characters tend, first of all, to be representatives of the relationship of man to himself because technically when they are engaged in a dialogue, the effect appears to be a monologue. It could be attributed to a simple matter of bad communication, but there is something more subtle at hand: the implicit message of non-communication. Secondly, each rationalizes to some extent, in a blatant manner.

Thirdly, through rationalization, the characters are not formed, but rather unformed. One might say the characters are mystified rather than demystified. This serves Feiffer's ultimate satirical purpose: mockery. An illustration of rationalization as the subversion of order can be seen in Little Murders, Feiffer's first full length play. Lieutenant Practice is trying to demystify the facts of a recent crime wave:

"Every crime has its own pattern of logic. Everything has an order. If we can't find that order it's not because it doesn't exist, but only because we've incorrectly observed some vital piece of evidence. Let us examine the evidence. Number one. In the last six months three hundred and forty-five homicides have been committed in this city. The victims have ranged variously in sex, age, social status and color. Number two. In none of the three hundred and forty-five homicides have we been able to establish motive. Number three. All three hundred and forty-five homicides remain listed on our books as unsolved. So much for the evidence. A subtle pattern begins to emerge. What is this pattern? What is it that each of these three hundred and forty-five homicides have in common? They have in common three things; a) that they have nothing in common, b) that they have no motive, c) that, consequently, they remain unsolved. The pattern becomes clearer."²⁴

Lieutenant Practice unravels things quite methodically, then ravel's them just as methodically, bringing things into disorder, rather than order. The satire takes on a special irony.

²⁴ Jules Feiffer, Little Murders (London: Jonathan Cape Ltd., 1968), p. 95.

Literally, Lieutenant Practice admits to the non-conclusions of his conclusion, so the irony is not within the subtleties of meaning: something really meaning something else. The irony is in the honesty of disillusion, bringing the satire into the realm of self-parody, as was seen in George's Moon. The drollery is not projected at something so much as it is projected towards the person making the remarks. Inevitably, what becomes the most ironic is the association the reader makes with the character. The art of rationalization is, Feiffer's trapping of the reader into the process of identification with the rationalization. Such a process is quite different from the process Swift claimed as the satirist's: holding a glass that reflects every one else's face except the observer's. What Feiffer is doing by aligning the reader into an identification process with characters who parody logic structures through rationalization is to make the object of his satire everyone who understands at least the basics of social psychology. We all rationalize.

The art of rationalization is the means by which Feiffer establishes a universal target for his satire. He does this by making the reader aware of the process of self-deception on the part of his character. The self-deception is built on a logic structure that relegates order to disorder, a rhetorical device that marks one of Feiffer's comical distinctions. The reader becomes not only aware of the process

of self-deception on the part of the character, but also aware of the familiarity of the process, as rationalization is a commonly understood social psychological process. The self-deception of the character becomes parody of the reader, establishing an ironic satiric structure based on, not a deception of meaning, but on the level of personal confrontation of the art with the audience.

Conclusion: Relationship of Man to Himself

Feiffer's satire of the relationship of man to himself is built around three themes. They are the discrepancy between image and self-image, the predicament of isolation and the art of rationalization.

The discrepancy between self-image and image, inspired by Feiffer's hopes to construct the same dilemma of Dostoevsky's hero in Notes From the Underground, basically employs the notion that man views himself in one way and society views man in another way and that the two have no connection. Such a polarity produces a discrepancy between self-expectation and societal expectations of the individual. Feiffer's characters that represent the self-image/image theme do so in a distinctly behavioural fashion. The behavioural pattern of the characters has been examined in light of Ayn Rand's philosophy found in The Fountainhead. The basic motivational distinction in behaviour is in the varying degrees of the need

for social approval. The characters have been classed as Altruists, those having a high need for social approval who must integrate their behaviour according to society's expectations, or, they have been classed as Egoists, those having a low need for social approval, characters deliberately disobeying norms of behaviour. A label such as "behavioural satire" is based on a theory by W.O.S. Sutherland which states that an essential element in satire is the representation of either a value contrast or a moral discrepancy. Deciding that a value contrast was represented by unique behaviour patterns, in contrast to a moral discrepancy, a conclusion was made that satire of this type, distinctly Twentieth century, is based on neurosis.

The effect of both types of satirical personalities is to evoke pity, an unusual by-product of satire. Pity is felt, perhaps, because the characters of such cartoons may be classified as heroes in the ironic mode according to Frye. It is interesting to note that Frye classifies heroes in fiction specifically outside a moral context and within a behavioural context.

"... not morally, but by the heroes power of action . . . if inferior in power or intelligence to ourselves, so that we have the sense of looking down on a scene of bondage, frustration or absurdity, the hero belongs to the ironic mode. This is still true when the reader feels that he is or might be in the same situation, as the situation is being judged by the norms of a greater freedom."²⁵

²⁵Frye, p. 34.

Both types of behavioural patterns are situations in which the reader can realize the frustration involved in the character and at the same time recognize that he is also and always in the same predicament of choosing his alignment with image or self-image as his motivational impulse for behaviour. When satire causes a reaction of pity, a special bond is established between the object of satire and the reader. This special bond of emotional identification is most apparent when Feiffer depicts the relationship of man to himself. "Feiffer knows that he is writing to an audience of Georges, what is more remarkable, each George as he watches the fable, feels the futility of a crater counter, and is half convinced he is all alone on the moon."²⁶

The theme of isolation also evokes pity. One full length cartoon, George's Moon, was examined to show Feiffer's affiliation with the absurd. In the relationship of man to himself, isolation, within the absurdist context, shows man's search for an identity with integrity while confined to a limited environment. The search is futile and therefore compensation is required. George compensated by ridiculous and surreal apotheosis of himself and of space. When absurdism is the vehicle of satire, there is a strong sense that tragedy is not too far afield. George's Moon combines all three:

²⁶ Anonymous, "Pied Feiffer," Time Magazine, May 26, 1961, p. 34.

absurdism, satire and tragedy to create Feiffer's only true tragic hero. The transition from a curious and innocent character to a hostile and aggressive paranoid is an indication of Feiffer's incessant need to evoke some form of psychological maladjustment in many of his characters.

The art of rationalization as a motif for the relationship of man to himself is the mode in which Feiffer's rhetorical style of logic and irony is examined. There is an artifice of logic constructed by a character that builds into an affirmation of non-conclusion. The rhetoric functions to deceive the character, but ironically at the same time it functions to arouse the reader into a process of identification based on the social psychological awareness that rationalization is universal. The characters are left in a state of either dumbfoundedness or complacency while the reader realizes the self-deception experienced by the character is a parody of the reader.

Relationship of Man to Society

Eighty cartoons of the three hundred examine the theme of the relationship of man to society. The relationship of man to society can be broken down into two categories: emotive expression cartoons and blanket statement cartoons.

Emotive expression cartoons represent the relationship of man to society by depicting a human emotional response to the society.

WELCOME
BACK FOR
YOUR
13th
CONSECUTIVE
WEEK,
EVELYN.

THANK
YOU,
RED.



EVELYN, WILL YOU GO INTO THE
AUTO-SUGGESTION BOOTH AND
TAKE YOUR REGULAR PLACE
ON THE PSYCHO-PROMPTER
COUCH?

THANK
YOU,
RED.



I MIGHT SAY HERE THAT
ALL OF EVELYN'S
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
HAVE BEEN CHECKED FOR
ACCURACY WITH HER
ANALYST.



NOW, EVELYN, LAST WEEK YOU
WENT UP TO \$40,000 BY PROPERLY
CITING YOUR RIVALRY WITH
YOUR SIBLING AS A COMPULSIVE
SADO-MASOCHISTIC BEHAVIOR
PATTERN WHICH DEVELOPED OUT OF
AN EARLY POST-NATAL FEEDING
PROBLEM.

YES,
RED.



BUT- LATER, WHEN ASKED
ABOUT PRE-ADOLESCENT
CEDIPAL PHANTASY
REPRESSIONS, YOU
RATIONALIZED TWICE
AND MENTAL BLOCKED
THREE TIMES.

7.



NOW EVELYN, FOR \$80,000
EXPLAIN THE FAILURE OF
YOUR THREE HARRABAGES.

WELL
I-



NOW AT \$300 PER
RATIONALIZATION AND
\$500 PER MENTAL
BLOCK YOU LOST
\$2,100 OFF YOUR
\$40,000 LEAVING YOU
WITH A TOTAL OF
\$37,900!

YES,
RED.



NOW, ANY COMBINATION OF TWO MORE
MENTAL BLOCKS AND EITHER ONE
RATIONALIZATION OR THREE DEFENSIVE
PROJECTIONS WILL PUT YOU OUT OF
THE GAME. ARE YOU WILLING
TO GO AHEAD?

YES,
RED.



WE'LL GET BACK TO
EVELYN IN ONE
MINUTE FIRST A
WORD ABOUT OUR
PRODUCT.



Unlike the relationship of man to woman and man to himself, the character's emotional response to society represents the role of citizen, not the role of the individual. Although occasionally seeming to represent a personal dilemma or private attitude, these cartoons have been classified as part of the relationship of man to society because the character is always responding to a situation defined by society, never by the character. The character is called "citizen" as opposed to "individual" because the context of the cartoon is structured around the society and not the psyche. The themes of the emotive expression cartoons are social conscience and apathy, both important themes in Feiffer's plays.

Not too distinct from the theme of image and self-image, social conscience implies that behaviour patterns are justified by a sense of obligation to society. Feiffer makes society's demands of social conscience on its citizens irreconcilable with a personal sense of righteousness. Society is made the beast and man beastly because he must comply. Then, to compound man's denigration, society stigmatizes man's behaviour, making him feel the need to confess. Feiffer uses confession in his cartoons to satirize two things: the notion that society can pose as priest and that man willingly confesses to an imposter. The theme of social conscience is very strong in Feiffer's play God Bless. In God Bless, Feiffer sets up a mock confession between a famous political statesman and a priest.

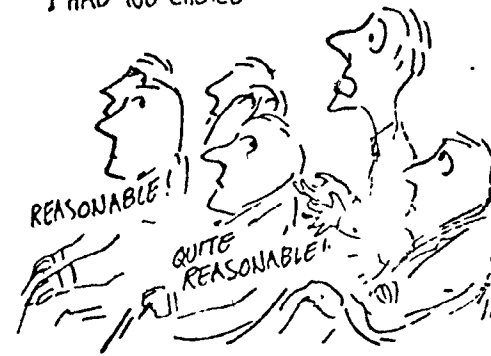
THE MEETING OF THE "I'M JUST DOING MY JOB CLUB" WILL COME TO ORDER WE WILL BEGIN WITH A REPORT FROM MEMBER ROCKWELL J



I BEGAN AS A MONITOR IN GRAMMAR SCHOOL. WHEN I WAS CALLED DOWN FOR REPORTING MY CLASS MATES, I YPLY ANSWERED- "DON'T BLAME ME I WAS TOLD TO DO IT"



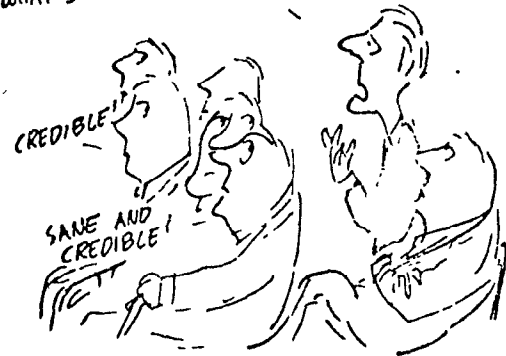
LATER ON I WAS IN THE MILITARY SERVICE. IT WAS MY JOB TO CLASSIFY PERSONNEL. I DIDN'T LIKE TO SEND MEN TO WAR. BUT THOSE WERE MY ORDERS. I HAD NO CHOICE



AFTER SERVICE I HAD TROUBLE FINDING MY NICHE FOR AWHILE I WAS REALTY AGENT FOR A SLUM THE TENANTS DIDN'T UNDERSTAND I WAS JUST DOING WHAT I WAS HIRED TO DO.



NEXT I WENT TO WORK AS A WITNESS I APPEARED BEFORE DOZENS OF CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES. I DIDN'T LIKE THE WORK BUT I HAD TO DO WHAT I WAS BEING PAID FOR.



AND NOW I'VE REACHED THE PINNACLE! I'VE GONE TO WORK IN A STATE PRISON I DON'T NECESSARILY BELIEVE IN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT BUT SOMEONE HAS TO PULL THE SWITCH



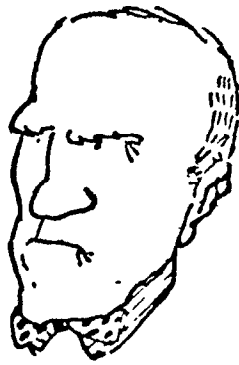
OF COURSE SOME PEOPLE DON'T UNDERSTAND THEY ASSOCIATE ME WITH THE WAY I MAKE A LIVING



NEXT WE HEAR FROM MEMBER ARNOLD K. HE WILL SPEAK ON INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILES.



ALL MY LIFE PEOPLE
EVEN TELLING ME I
HAVE A MORAL OBLIGATION.

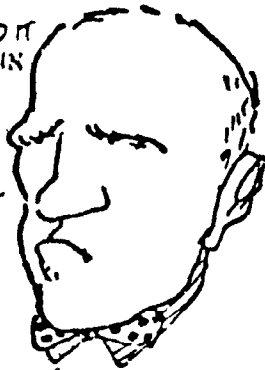


-94 -

BEFORE THE WAR I
HAD A MORAL
OBLIGATION TO
FIGHT FASCISM.



DURING THE WAR I OWED IT
TO MY COUNTRY TO JOIN
THE ARMY



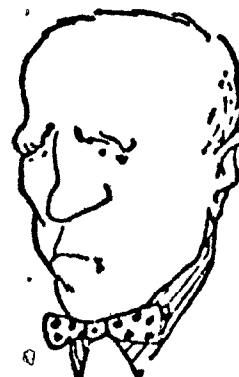
AFTER THE WAR IT WAS
MY DUTY TO WORK
FOR PEACE INTE-
GRATION DECENT
HOUSING AND
BETTER TELE-
VISION
PROGRAMS.



SO I CAN'T BE
FOR SOMETHING
BECAUSE ITS JUST
RIGHT ANYMORE.
I GOT TO BE
FOR IT BECAUSE
ID OWE SOME-
BODY IF I
WASNT.



I FEEL AS
IF IM
LIVING IN
A MORAL
DEBTORS
PRISON.



Apathy is the opposite of social conscience. Apathy allows the citizen to withdraw from the irritations of society.

"When there is apathy, there's a legitimate reason for it, and the reason is that people have realistically looked at the world around them and they find the alternatives so unrewarding that there's nothing better to do than turn off . . . I think it's more along the lines of an emotional and psychic process of natural selection. When it gets too dangerous out there, you move inside until you feel at one with yourself (pb., p. 96)."

To become apathetic is the choice of the individual and Feiffer does say that an emotional and psychic process of natural selection is the impetus. But to be apathetic is the means by which the individual defines himself as a citizen in regards to the society that he must relate to.

To find faith through apathy is supported by Feiffer in the above quote, but to call apathy faith is to satirize the idea that those who are not apathetic are acting-out exercises in futility. Feiffer incorporates the two opposing modes of behaviour, apathy and social conscience in Little Murders. Ironically, Patty, who symbolizes social conscience is murdered. The emotive expression cartoons make statements about man's emotional relationship with society: the society is parent, man is the child. The society demands that man has a social conscience and sense of obligation. As citizen man must accept social conscience, or else withdraw and ignore it.

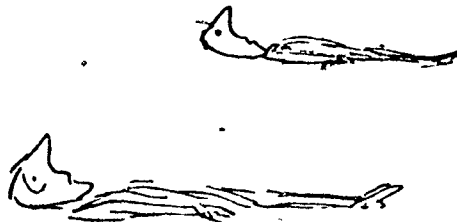
I DON'T
GET
AROUSSED
ANYMORE

NOR DO I
NOR DO I

- 96 -

YES, THAT'S A
GOOD ONE. THAT
CERTAINLY SHOULD
HAVE AROUSED
ME. BUT NO IT
DOESN'T

ATOMIC
HOLOCAUST!

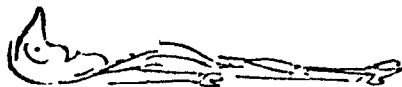


SAY
SOMETHING
TO
AROUSE
ME.

MISSILE
MADNESS!



VERY GOOD. VERY GOOD.
FOR A MOMENT THERE
I ALMOST FELT AROUSED.
I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE
THEY'RE SO CURRENT.



DO YOU THINK
WE'VE TURNED
APATHETIC?



AH, THAT USED
TO BE A VERY
EFFECTIVE ONE
YEARS AGO I
GOT AROUSED
ALL THE TIME
ON ATOMIC
HOLOCAUST
BUT NOW -

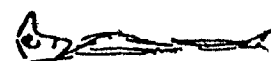
BRINKS-
MANSHIP!
ROCKET
DIPLOMACY!
INDIA!
BERLIN!



APATHY IS SUCH A
BAD WORD. I'D HATE
TO THINK IT'S
APATHY WE SUFFER
FROM.



LET'S JUST
CALL IT
FAITH.



ALL RIGHT NOW -
ALL AT ONCE -
WHO'S
AWARE?

is this
the
latest



WE'RE
AWARE



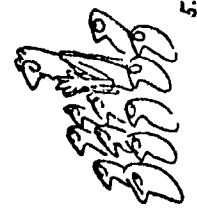
WHAT'S THE
PASSWORD?



ORGANIZATION
MAN!



THAT'S THE OLD
PASSWORD.



THAT WAS ON LAST
YEARS BOOK LIST.
WHAT'S THE NEW
PASSWORD?



LATENT?
MATERIALISTIC?
MATERIALIAL?
HOW ABOUT ORIENTAL?
THAT'S ALWAYS
SAFE.



HE'S NOT
AWARE!



MOTIVATIONAL
RESEARCH

NOW THEN
WHAT'S THE
PASSWORD?



GOOD - WITHOUT
THE LATEST
PASSWORD WED
NEVER KNOW
WHAT'S WRONG
WITH US.



If he accepts it, he needs to justify it because social conscience obliges him to do things he cannot understand. He justifies his behaviour by pleading for social acceptance from the very structure that defines his actions. The society as confessor is a paradox analogous to the criminal as judge.

The blanket statement cartoons are Feiffer's most blatant form of satire. Always directed specifically at societal hypocrisy, these cartoons represent the relationship of the satirist, Feiffer, to society. In the introduction to the Feiffer Album, when the fourth satirist says "one should be for something. Then he can attack those things that are against what he is for. That's the responsible approach,"²⁷ Feiffer is stating the need for a point of view of the satirist and for a dedicated commitment by the satirist to expose the social malignancies that run contrary to the satirist's sense of what is right.

It is from blanket statement cartoons that the reader gets the greatest sense that Feiffer is speaking personally and artistically, while always seriously. In all the other relationships depicted by Feiffer in his cartoons, there is always a sense of railery or jest that allows the reader the option of denying the authenticity intended by Feiffer. These

²⁷ Feiffer, Album, p. 3.

cartoons are appreciated first because they are funny and then because they strike a personal, but semi-uncomfortable note of truth. Feiffer is casting mild aspersions on the reader and the reader responds with a self-conscious nod of approval based on familiarity. The reader responds to the cartoon by saying, "look, this is what I am", not by saying, "look, this is what Feiffer thinks of me". The exact opposite response is experienced when a blanket statement cartoon is read. The attacks against society are Feiffer's attitudes about society projected at the reader in such a way that the reader responds by saying, "this is what Feiffer thinks". Projecting the attitude towards the reader is achieved most often by posing a single character in a monologue like so many of the cartoons that represent man with himself. But unlike the cartoons that represent man with himself, where a character exposes his neurosis, inadequacies and personal fears as though he were in a closet and the audience was a voyeur, the blanket statement single character is not lamenting to himself; he is speaking to the silent audience, the reader. These are the cartoons that most resemble essays, the most viable form of communication today according to Feiffer.

"The most interesting form today is probably the essay. It's what Godard puts on film, and it's in many ways what I try to do in the cartoon . . . it's what interests me in the theatre."²⁸

²⁸John Lahr, Transatlantic Review, p. 40.

The importance of the blanket statement cartoons cannot be overstressed. An examination of Feiffer's plays reveals a strong critical anti-American attitude, the source of which can be found in the cartoons. In fact, the noble indignation often spoken of as the valuable ingredient of a satirist's art is most recognizable in these cartoons. In the cartoons the satire is of the most obvious type; a common understanding of satire as the form of art that ridicules something by representing it in some absurd, fantastic or grotesque way so as to misrepresent it in the actual sense, but by representing it in the ironic sense, is the basis with which the cartoons are examined. The satire of the blanket statement cartoon, then, is not based on any of the psychological or motivational theories of satire as the other cartoons were.

A cartoon has been classified as a blanket statement if it in some way makes a direct statement about American society. It is interesting to note that only in the blanket statement cartoons can the assumption be made that America is the target of the satire. In all the other cartoons, people are the object of satire. The people can be anyone and the fact that Feiffer's cartoon anthologies have been translated into German, Italian, Dutch, French and Japanese is an indication that the characters are universal. Up until now no attempt has been made to represent the satire as a reflection

of specifically American values but, an examination of the blanket statement cartoons allows for no other possible emphasis except on the American political structure. This is especially important in making the transition from the cartoons to the plays because the plays are very definitely statements about America, anti-America. The themes of the blanket statement cartoons are repeated not only in the plays but also in interviews Feiffer has given. There is at times no distinction among the attitudes actually stated by Feiffer, the cartoons and the plays. This makes the blanket statement cartoons an extension of Feiffer's personal social commentary. The themes of the blanket statement cartoons are so numerous that an appendix has been included which gives brief descriptions trying to capture the content of each of the blanket statements. The cartoons included in the text have been included because Feiffer has either made public comment on the subject or included the subject in the plays, in many cases both. The themes are the Kennedy assassination, the Cold War, the bomb, corruption, and the Army.

The Kennedy assassination has a tremendous implication in Feiffer's art. It is only the subject of one cartoon, but an innumerable amount of lip service is paid to Kennedy in Feiffer's interviews. Little Murders is a direct result of the change in American life due to the assassination, according to Feiffer. In the cartoon there is a poignant realization

about the influence Kennedy had on the American nation: he transformed a dormant sleeping apathy into a critical and active nationalism. The cartoon, however, stops short of Feiffer's full understanding of the Kennedy assassination. ". . . Beginning with John Kennedy's assassination I have developed the view of society that's written into Little Murders. His assassination highlighted for me, the age of gratuitous violence we'd come into (pb., p. 94)." It is the postulation of gratuitous violence that bears the full thrust of Feiffer's reaction to the Kennedy assassination. In the three plays that are examined in Chapter II, there is an obvious display of this gratuitous violence Feiffer speaks of.

Hand and hand with the political turmoil of the Kennedy assassination is the threat of the Cold War, and the bomb seen in Feiffer's cartoons. In the cartoons there is an attempt to win the Cold War through economic means or, in another absurd context, to use the threat of the bomb and the arms race to arouse economic activity. Hypocritical methods suggest the government is a con artist.

When Feiffer calls the Cold War a "Church" in the Playboy interview, he implies that there are precepts of permanency about the Cold War, like religious precepts of faith, that maintain the Cold War as a conviction in the American way of life.

ONCE THERE WAS
A SLEEPING
COUNTRY THAT
HAD SPENT
EIGHT YEARS
UNDER A SPELL
NOBODY TALKED.
NOBODY AR-
GUED. EVERY-
BODY SLEPT.

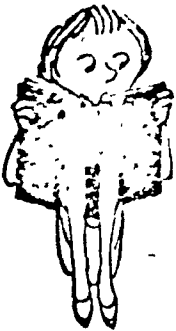


THEN ONE DAY INTO
THIS COUNTRY, ROSE
A HANDSOME YOUNG
PRINCE. "IT'S TIME TO
GET MOVING AGAIN"
THE PRINCE DECLARED
THE COUNTRY STIRRED
IN ITS SLEEP.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS
PEOPLE ACTUALLY BEGAN TO
TALK. THEY ARGUED THEY
TOOK SIDES. "STOP TALK-
ING SO LOUD!" THE REST
OF THE COUNTRY GRUM-
BLED IN ITS SLEEP. "HAVE
SOME CONSIDERATION
FOR THE REST OF US."



BUT THE TALKING ONLY
BECAME LOUDER MORE
AND MORE PEOPLE
AWOKE AND, ANGRY
THAT THEY HAD TO BE
AWAKE, BEGAN TO
TALK, BEGAN TO
ARGUE, BEGAN TO
TAKE SIDES.

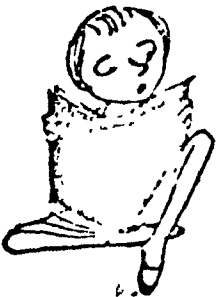


THEN ONE DAY THE
YOUNG PRINCE WAS
KILLED - NO ONE
COULD AGREE BY
WHOM - EVERY
SIDE ACCUSED
EVERY OTHER
SIDE. BUT
CALMER HEADS
PREVAILED.

"SEE WHAT WE HAVE
COME TO WITH THIS
WICKED DISSEN-
SION." CALMER
HEADS ARGUED.
"LET US
CLEANSE OUR
SOCIETY OF
THIS DIVISIVE
DEBATE!"



AND THE COUNTRY,
SUFFERING FROM
WOUNDS AND GUILT,
CHEERED. DEBATE
HALTED. ARGUMENT
DIED. AND THERE
WAS NO MORE
TALK IN THE
LAND.



AND AS THE COUNTRY
PREPARED FOR
SLEEP IT HOPED
NO ONE WOULD
EVER ASK IT
TO MOVE
AGAIN -



FOR IT
REALLY
DID NOT
WANT TO
KILL ANY
MORE
PRINCES.



"What the theologians (a small band of government officials) pray for is a permanent state of stabilized hostility. That means you can enjoy the financial benefits of trade while also enjoying the spiritual and financial benefits of an arms race (pb., p. 88)."

The Cold War and the arms race can be seen as part of the gratuitous violence that shapes Feiffer's political point of view. There is an ironic parallel between Feiffer's satire at times and gratuitous violence. When Feiffer satirizes the duplicity of the American people, he is working on the notion that gratuitous violence is essentially unnoticed in American society, which means he can get away with it. "In a more organized society Feiffer would be prosecuted . . ." ²⁹ In God Bless and The White House Murder Case the posture of the government tries to conceal violence or hypocrisy as the cartoons do by their subtlety and relative calmness.

The corruption of the American government is an overwhelming theme in Feiffer. Several cartoons imply that the American condition through evolution and values is one of corruption.

Feiffer's 12 Guy theory, a theory which implies that American Democracy is an elitist clique of twelve important men who make all the doctrines that govern America

²⁹ Clive Barnes, Revision of Little Murders Revival, New York Times, January 6, 1969, p. 38, Column 1.

is perhaps the most innocuous way Feiffer can insinuate that the American government engages in corruption. In The White House Murder Case, Feiffer goes so far as to show the President and his ministers devising a plan to conceal the truth about military mistakes and the murder of the President's wife, a very prophecy of Watergate.

The disgust Feiffer has for the Army cannot be overstated. In fact his contempt for the impersonal brutality of military life produced his first satire, Munro, which was about a four year-old boy who is drafted into the Army by mistake. Munro was made into an animated cartoon by Rembrandt films in 1965. It won the Oscar for the best short subject cartoon. That the Army was intolerable was made very clear by Feiffer:

"I found myself, during basic training, shocked in a more profound way than I had ever been, at the brutality and impersonality that's built into the system . . . It was the first time in my life I had been exposed to pure naked fascism. . . The role playing in the Army was one of Hitler. That's who they all wanted to be when they grew up. So while I felt totally miserable, I felt more justified and more in the right than I have ever felt before. It was a period when I could really allow myself the luxury of hate--pure and blissful hate. It helped me grow (pb., p. 206)."

In an article in Life Magazine in September 1965 Feiffer says, "The Army taught me the value of hate." In The White House Murder Case, the Army as the subject of attack is made out to be more stupid and burlesque than tyrannical,

but nevertheless, an authentic target for Feiffer's personal satirical revenge.

The blanket statement cartoons are the clearest lead into the substance of the satire in the plays. The basic move from an emotional (including sexual) satire to a political satire is the main distinction between the cartoons and the plays. Except for Little Murders the plays tend to avoid emotional relationships, concentrating instead on distinctly anti-American content.

DEAR MOTHER-

ARRIVED IN CAMP THIS A.M.
RECEIVED SIX SHOTS AND AN
INDOCTRINATION LECTURE
ABOUT DEFENDING THE FREE
WORLD. I
WANT TO
COME HOME-



DEAR SON-

BE A MAN YOU ARE
ALWAYS WITH US IN
OUR HEARTS. WE ARE
SURE YOU'LL GET
USED TO IT-



DEAR MOTHER-

THIS A.M. THEY SHOWED US FILMS
ABOUT THE ENEMIES OF THE FREE
WORLD. THEY ARE ALL FROM THE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA. ONE
OF THE FELLOWS IN OUR
BARRACKS COMES
FROM THERE. WE
ARE HIDING HIM.
I WANT TO
COME HOME-



DEAR SON-

TELL YOUR SERGEANT WED
ONLY SEND YOU TO A GOOD
SCHOOL. BE A MAN. DONT
ASSOCIATE WITH
TROUBLEMAKERS.
YOU ARE ALWAYS
WITH US IN OUR
HEARTS-



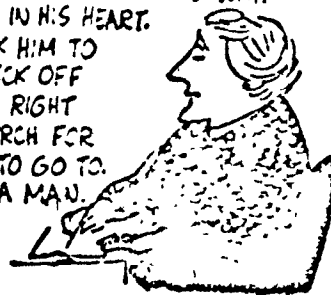
DEAR MOTHER-

MARCHED TO AND FROM THE CHURCH
OF OUR CHOICE THIS A.M. AND GIVEN
OUR 12TH INDOCTRINATION LECTURE.
CAPTAIN TOLD US WE IN THE FREE
WORLD MUST DEFEND
OURSELVES AGAINST
ENEMIES FROM WITHIN.
EVERYONE WHO
CHOSE WRONG
CHURCH OF HIS
CHOICE RECEIVED A
STERN WARNING. I
WANT TO COME HOME-



DEAR SON-

IM SURE YOUR CAPTAIN IS
ONLY INTERESTED IN WHAT'S
BEST FOR YOU AND, AS DO
WE, HAS YOU ALWAYS WITH
HIM IN HIS HEART.
ASK HIM TO
CHECK OFF
THE RIGHT
CHURCH FOR
US TO GO TO.
BE A MAN.



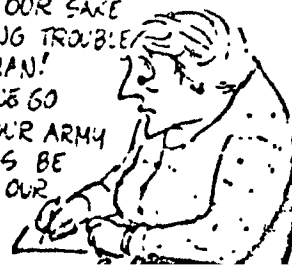
DEAR MOTHER-

RECEIVED OUR 25TH INDOCTRINATION LECTURE
THIS A.M. FROM A NEW CAPTAIN HE SAID THE
ARMY WAS LIBERALIZING ITS INFORMATION
PROGRAM AND ENCOURAGED US TO ASK QUES-
TIONS. I ASKED HIM TO
DEFINE "FREE WORLD". THE
CAPTAIN CALLED ME A PINKO
COLLEGE WISE GUY, CRIBBER
ME ON EXTRA DETAIL,
AND WANTED TO KNOW
WHAT KIND OF FAMILY
I CAME FROM. I WANT
TO COME HOME-

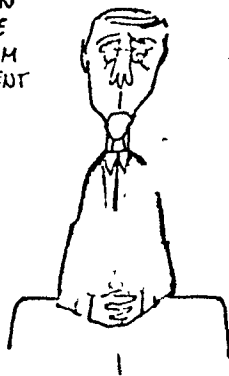


DEAR SON-

IF YOU CAME HOME NOW THEYD ONLY
FOLLOW YOU TO FIND US. DONT TELL
THEM A THING UNTIL WE'RE ABLE
TO MOVE AND CHANGE OUR NAME.
PLEASE FOR OUR SAKE
STOP MAKING TROUBLE
AND BE A MAN!
WHEREVER WE GO
YOU AND YOUR ARMY
WILL ALWAYS BE
WITH US IN OUR
HEARTS.



THE EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS IN GOVERNMENT CONTINUES. WE HAVE PASSED FROM FEUDALISM TO CAPITALISM. OUR CURRENT STAGE, AS WE ALL KNOW, IS CORRUPTION.



- 108 -

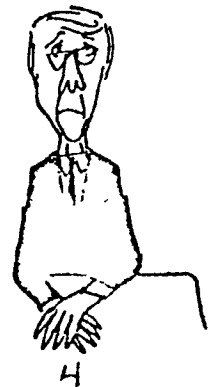
CORRUPTION AS A FORM OF GOVERNMENT IS, ITSELF, WITHIN VARYING STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT. IN THE SOVIET UNION, WHERE YOU HAVE THE "STATE" OR "TRICKLE DOWN" THEORY OF CORRUPTION, IT OPERATES WITH THE MOST EFFICIENCY.



IN OUR OWN COUNTRY WE ARE IN THE TRANSITIONAL, MORE DYNAMIC PHASE - FREE FORM CORRUPTION. IT IS AN UNPREDICTABLE PHASE BECAUSE IT CONTINUES, SELF CONSCIOUSLY, TO DENY ITS EXISTENCE IN FEAR THAT, WERE ITS TRUE NATURE MADE KNOWN, IT WOULD BE OVERTHROWN.



THEREFORE, IN LINE WITH THE CURRENT PRACTICES OF ENLIGHTENED LEADERSHIP, IT PUBLICLY DEPLORES WHAT IT PRIVATELY OWES ITS EXISTENCE TO.



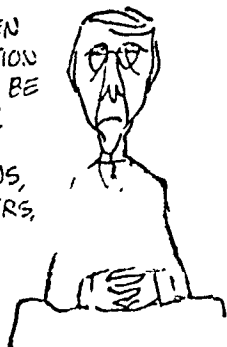
AS PART OF THIS PHILOSOPHY IT OFFERS A REGULAR PROGRAM OF PLANNED EXPOSURES TO SATISFY THE PUBLIC'S APPETITE - A BUILDING INSPECTOR ONE MONTH, A CITY OFFICIAL ANOTHER MONTH - ANYTHING WHICH WILL MISDIRECT THE GAZE OF AN ANTI-CORRUPT CITIZENRY.



THUS THE PUBLIC IS ENCOURAGED TO THINK OF CORRUPTION AS AN UNWELCOME STRANGER IN ITS HOUSE RATHER THAN AS THE HOST.



IN THE MEANTIME, TO SOFTEN THE PUBLIC'S ANTI CORRUPTION NEO-IDEALISM, THERE WILL BE A GROWING LIST OF PEER GROUP EXPOSURES - PROMINENT PRIVATE CITIZENS, IMPORTANT BUSINESS LEADERS, LEADING INTELLECTUALS -



WITH SO MUCH CORRUPTION MADE SO APALLINGLY EVIDENT, PUBLIC RESPONSE WILL DEADEN AND WITHDRAW. ACCEPTANCE WILL SET IN. CORRUPTION'S TAKE OVER WILL BE COMPLETE.



IN EVERY SCHOOL IN THE LAND WILL BE ENGRAVED OUR NEW MORAL BANNER -



"WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT? I'D DO IT MYSELF."

8

OK. YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT'S CAUSING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY? THE BREAKDOWN OF THE SYSTEM THAT'S WHAT'S CAUSING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY.

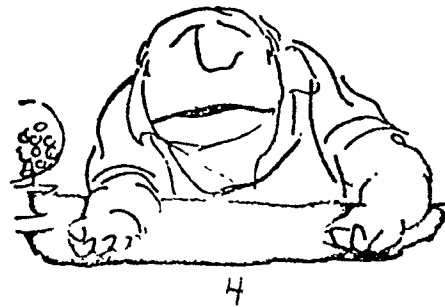


LOOK, YOU'RE LIVING IN A WORLD WHERE U'GOTTA GO WITH THE SYSTEM. THAT'S CIVILIZATION! IF YOU GOT NO SYSTEM, YOU GOT NO RULES. IF YOU GOT NO RULES — WHAMMY! ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.



NOW WE GOT A SYSTEM OUR SYSTEM IS CORRUPTION. IT WAS LIKE THAT WHEN I WAS A KID. IT'S LIKE THAT TODAY. YOU UNDERMINE A KID'S FAITH IN CORRUPTION AND YOU'RE ASKING FOR TROUBLE.

SO MAKE A BIG STINK OUTA POLICE PAYOFFS AND BUTCHER'S FAT THUMBS. THAT'S NOTHING NEW. KIDS'VE KNOWN THAT STUFF FOR YEARS!



ONLY THEY NEVER KNEW IT WAS WRONG.

YOU TELL KIDS THE VALUES THEY GREW UP WITH ARE WRONG AND THEY LOSE RESPECT FOR THE SYSTEM. THEY GO OFF THEIR NUT.

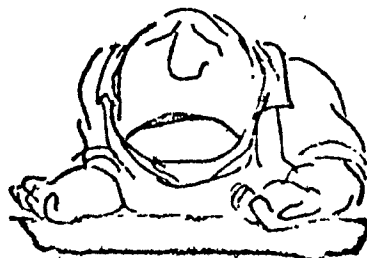


OK - SO YOU ARREST A FEW PEOPLE. WHADATTA CHANGE? COPS AIN'T GONNA TAKE PAYOFFS? LANDLORDS ARE GONNA VOLUNTEER YOU REPAIRS?

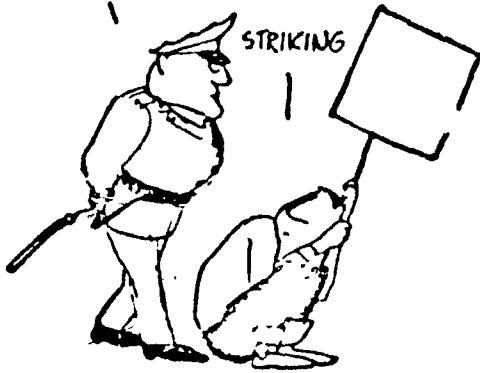
LOOK - IT'S GONNA GO ON ANYHOW! STOP ALL THE SCREAMING! LEGALIZE CORRUPTION!



GIVE OUR CHILDREN BACK THEIR ROOTS.



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?



STRIKING

1

STRIKING? WHAT IN THE WORLD FOR?

I HAVEN'T SELECTED AN ISSUE YET



2

WELL, WHERE ARE THE OTHERS?

WHAT OTHERS?



3

THE OTHER STRIKERS.

WHERE ARE THE OTHER POLICEMEN?



4

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I'M THE ONLY POLICEMAN.

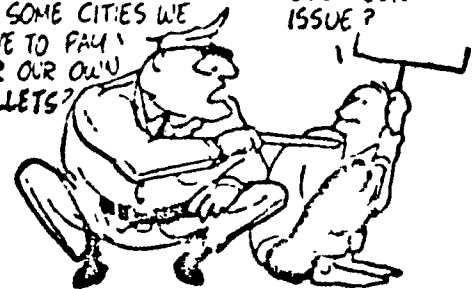
YOU GET OTHER POLICEMEN AND I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT GETTING OTHER STRIKERS.



5

THAT STILL DOESN'T SETTLE THE ISSUE. HEY, WHY NOT STRIKE FOR HIGHER PAY FOR POLICEMEN? DO YOU KNOW THAT IN SOME CITIES WE HAVE TO PAY FOR OUR OWN BULLETS?

SHOCKING! WILL YOU DRAG US OFF TO JAIL IF WE USE YOUR ISSUE?



6

POLICEMEN DON'T MAKE DEALS - NOT ON YOUR LEVEL AT LEAST. WE HAVE TO MAINTAIN SOME STANDARDS. YOU KNOW!

WAIT! I'VE GOT AN ISSUE!



7

WHAT'S EVER BECOME OF YOUTHFUL IDEALISM?

BRING DEMOCRACY TO CORRUPTION



8

THE FIRST ONE
WE BUILT WAS
RELATIVELY
THIS SMALL.

BUT IT
HAD THIS
MUCH
FALLOUT-

- 111 -



BUT IN THOSE
DAYS FALLOUT
WAS NOT YET
A FAD. SO WE
IGNORED IT

THE NEXT ONE
WE BUILT WAS
THIS BIG.

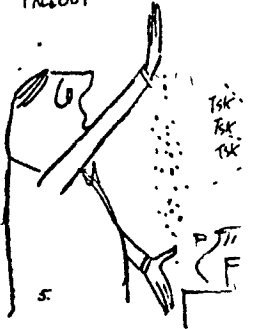


BUT IT HAD
THIS MUCH
FALLOUT

OF COURSE NONE OF
US FELT GOOD ABOUT IT.
MY WIFE AND I DOUBLED
OUR DONATION TO OUR
REGULAR CHARITIES.

THE NEXT ONE
WE BUILT WAS
YEA BIG

BUT WE HAD REDUCED
THE FALLOUT TO
THIS MUCH.

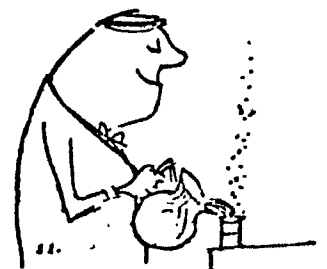


AND NOW AT LAST,
WE HAVE BUILT ONE
SO BIG IT WILL
BLOW UP EVERY-
THING!

AND ITS
100%
CLEAN!



WE FEEL OUR
PROGRESS
HAS BEEN
AMAZING.



CHAPTER II

THE PLAYS

An anecdote about Feiffer's conflicting talents as cartoonist and as playwright appears in every interview with Feiffer:

"What I find most amusing about the charge that my plays are really cartoons, is that for the first six or seven years of doing cartoons, people used to tell me these weren't cartoons at all. To be recognized as a cartoonist I had to start writing plays."¹

Unfortunately, the reputation of cartoonist stigmatized Feiffer's dramatic material from the start. Critics were excruciatingly ruthless with Little Murders, his first attempt at a full length play and a Broadway production. There are two sides to the story however; critics adequately pinpointed structural defects in thematic construction and character development, and rightly attributed the flaw to the cartoonist's pen, but at the same time they were subjectively responding to the open and aggressive attack. Feiffer leveled overtly on Broadway stage convention and covertly on American (specifically New York) decay of human

¹ John Lahr, Transatlantic Review, p. 38.

decency. "The Boston critics who didn't understand it understood it better than the New York critics who totally withdrew from it, followed immediately by the audience."²

While Feiffer transformed his cartoon world into a theatrical world he also transformed the intensity of his subversive attitude from a relatively firm and despondent one in the cartoons to an absolutely firm and outraged one in the plays. The themes in the cartoon anthologies, although they continue to concern Feiffer (this is readily discernible from interviews and letters), are no longer the substance of the artistic material. The contrast is indisputable, but did not come overnight. One can see the birth of the shift by examining all the anthologies. By 1965 and 1966 Feiffer was more adamant and abundant in his use of anti-American cartoons. "Feiffer on Civil Rights," his 1966 anthology, is the key touchstone. After "Feiffer on Civil Rights" there are no more anthologies, but there is a play each year from 1967 to 1970.

The movement from cartoon to drama is significant in exploring Feiffer's artistic form and his social intention.

"The two conscious reasons I had for branching out from the cartoon were that, first, the audience for the cartoon wasn't big enough and, second, the

²Jules Feiffer, Little Murders (London: Jonathan Cape 1970), p. 107. Quotations from Little Murders will be indicated by (L.M., p. ____).

cartoon was becoming so widely accepted that I figured I must be getting misunderstood, so I decided to move into forms in which I could be better understood (pb., p. 82)."

Amiable acceptance was disarming the power of social criticism in the cartoons. This was partially due to Feiffer's own transformation from cartoons centered on personal relationships one week and the war in VietNam the next week in the Village Voice, the New York newspaper that carried his weekly cartoon (which was syndicated in 56 newspapers in America and England). The cartoon had won him an international reputation but Feiffer needed even more space to express the anger that grew from the frustration that can be seen in the cartoons. "The reason I went into theatre was that I felt the cartoon didn't give me enough room."³ An angry cartoon is easily forgotten; an angry play is controversial. "The cartoon-reading audience is passive and after the fact, the theatre audience is active, all too present and collaboratively inclined to interrupt. Another kind of hearing is involved," Walter Kerr said in the New York Times review of Little Murders in 1967 (June 3). That "other kind of hearing" which Kerr so aptly distinguished between the cartoon and theatre audience is based on a primary distinction between the

³ John Lahr, Transatlantic Review, p. 36.

cartoon form and the dramatic form. The cartoon is a static experience, while drama is kinetic. Inasmuch as the static nature of Feiffer's cartoons contain dramatic quality, this is recognizable in the fluidity and dialogue-likeness of the wording. The cartoons contain the completeness of dramatic episode, beginning, middle, end, but finally, they succumb to a momentary fragment of experience, thus, the static quality in regard to duration. This is not a defect or flaw of the cartoon but is rather a distinguishing characteristic of cartoons. The rapport Feiffer was able to create with his reading audience was instantaneous, but nevertheless fleeting, while drama has what Susanne Langer calls "form in Suspense" because it moves toward the future while one experiences it. Another distinguishing theory Langer puts forth is the notion of literary experiences as the "mode of Memory" as opposed to the theatrical experience as the "mode of Destiny".⁴ A cartoon does not necessarily conform to the notion of a literary experience, but certainly the prospect of either summoning memory or the expectation of destiny is a valid distinction between a static art such as the cartoon and a kinetic art such as drama or dance or perhaps music under

⁴Susanne Langer, Feeling and Form (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1953), p. 306-350.

special circumstances. The connection Feiffer's cartoon audience makes with the cartoon is one of memory. In drama there is decidedly a reaching out toward the audience, and an invitation to pursue, for more than a moment, the artist's perception and projection of the world and its fate. In Feiffer's cartoons the audience receives a momentary perception, more often of the self, not the world. When Feiffer said he felt he was becoming misunderstood because he was so readily accepted he sensed, more than likely, that the audience was absorbing his social satire in the same manner they absorbed his personal satire. When he started to satirize government, the audience, so accustomed to seeing their personal lives satirized, still saw themselves in these political cartoons. For Feiffer the theatre could do more than satirize those "pet peeves" of the "little man" that he, as a cartoonist-satirist, wanted to bombard.

"When I go to the theatre I like to be forced to think, to be taken out of the position I'm in and be moved, if need be, involuntarily. This threatens me, yet if I follow through will lead to new perceptions and possibly even new truths."⁵

Feiffer's cartoons do just the opposite by reaffirming the position the audience is in by capturing a familiar moment most often automated by memory. Feiffer wanted to take the audience's reaction in the theatre much further than

⁵ John Lahr, Transatlantic Review, p. 45.

the personalized emotional message of the cartoons. He wanted social change:

"There's a hope in my plays . . . by showing certain things, you can institute insights which later can lead to action . . . if you're arguing or befuddled or angry in the theatre, it will go outside with you."⁶

While many of the cartoons over the years were satirizing social institutions they were not satisfying Feiffer's personal integrity of the satirist's social commitment:

"Friends warned that while I was skilled at my usual profession of writing one anti-American cartoon a week, if I ventured into the field of anti-American plays, I'd be in danger of spreading myself thin. My reply was that I'd be hardly an artist and less than a man if I didn't say, in whatever form necessary, what I felt had to be said."⁷

Practically speaking, Feiffer's friends were warning him not to 'dive off the deep end' with his adamancy and, definitely, they were implicitly warning him not to jeopardize the success of his career as a cartoonist. It was, however, precisely this success as a cartoonist that gave Feiffer the courage to explore other forms:

"I'm not the least ambivalent about it. Success is good and failure isn't . . . you spend so much time and energy at the business

⁶Ibid., p. 41.

⁷J. Ethridge, I. B. Kopala, C. Riky. Contemporary Authors, p. 113.

of making it that there's very little time or energy left to pay attention to the craft itself. Finally, with the question of success taken care of, you can start paying attention to being an artist, and it's a hell of a lot more interesting, because until you're secure enough, and I don't mean financially, to be willing to risk failure, the hunger to make it keeps getting in the way (pb., p. 206)."

The cartoon anthology years (1959-1966) certainly paved the way for Feiffer to explore other forms. Writing plays was the next step and a predictable one at that. For several years Feiffer had been lecturing at college campuses against the war in Vietnam; he spoke at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968; he was leading peace rallies in New York. All of these activities are inherently theatrical according to Robert Brustein in his book Revolution as Theatre. Langer's theoretical "mode of Destiny" is made viable in such highly charged experiences where destiny is shaping itself literally. The re-creation of this form of activity in art is best done on the stage. Feiffer's move into playwrighting then, is as biographical as those cartoons that reflected the disheartening themes between men and women. Now ("grownup"), Feiffer was a political activist, a dove, a Eugene McGovern man. A political energy was imposed on his plays in the same way the cartoons embraced the notion of unresolved personal dilemma. That is, with an unprecedented honesty.

The effect of such honesty, the plays with a somewhat more controversial subject matter, was met with critical scrutiny. The major emphasis of the critic's attacks was on Feiffer's poorly developed notions of the continuity demanded in a play. The word "vignettes" was used frequently as an epithet. Feiffer's breach with dramatic form was isolated as a major flaw. The critics could not label his work Absurd because it fell too closely under the disguise of living room comedy, but then dared to deny this form. The artistic innovation of presenting something under the guise of conventional comedy and then transforming the piece with a touch of the Theatre of Cruelty was simply not received by the critics as representative of Broadway etiquette. Critics unanimously disclaimed Feiffer's attempt at characterization, labelling his characters caricatures, in the same manner of his cartoons. Feiffer claims it is impossible to make such a mistake:

"They're my people but the forms are very very different. In one case I'm dealing with stereotyping and in the other I'm trying for people . . . because of the time that one is allowed in the theatre - I etch them more deeply; in terms of detail, relationships, in expressing ideas. They can't really be similar approaches."⁸

Unfortunately, however, the critics were correct and the statement made in the introduction, that Feiffer was writing cartoon-

⁸ John Lahr, Transatlantic Review, p. 36.

plays, proves itself by accepting this particular unanimous criticism of Feiffer's plays. The critics charged Feiffer with 'monologuing' his characters into confrontation.

Basically non-theatrical, this was an artistic problem that had its roots in the cartoons which were word-laden.

In sum, Feiffer's relative lack of success in American Broadway theatre had two reasons: first, the shift in content from the cartoon anthologies which were primarily Freudian to an open subversiveness in the plays which was primarily anti-American. Second, the dominance of Feiffer's skill as a cartoonist ultimately impeded his talent for creating a multi-dimensional dramatic character.

Little Murders, God Bless and The White House Murder Case are, to date, Feiffer's three major plays. Their case histories make a fascinating study of the transition in and representation of Feiffer's ideology and form.

Little Murders

The foreword to Little Murders reads: "Two four six eight who do we assassinate?" (New York Children's street chant, circa 1964.) Feiffer elaborately conceived an explanation of the political implications of Little Murders which he called a political allegory of the Cold War and VietNam. Conceived as a "post assassination" play,

according to Feiffer, Little Murders bears the sentiment of gratuitous violence that was highlighted by the Kennedy assassination in 1963.

"The play is a post assassination play . . . all of this the heritage of the Cold War that has taught us that power not only corrupts, it also disables, and that one American is no longer worth ten of the enemy (the previously accepted ratio), but rather that in guerilla war eight Americans are worth one Viet Cong. A trying time."⁹

In Little Murders the guerilla war-ground is the streets of New York and the Viet Cong and the Americans are indistinguishable in that everyone is potentially everyone else's enemy. That violence is rampant and that life is reduced to self-preservation is a bold and terrifying sub-text to a play that is ostensibly about middle class love and marriage.

Patsy Newquist brings Alfred home to meet her family and to announce their engagement. Alfred is a professional photographer and the family is representative of a Jewish household which automates stereotypical characterizations of a domineering mother, a useless, but always trying to

⁹Jules Feiffer, Little Murders, letter to Chris Morahan, p. 104. Compare the statement Feiffer makes to Chris Morahan in his letter and the statement Brackman makes in God Bless, Feiffer's next play one year later. "Into this desire for power, you're bound to be disappointed. It doesn't even corrupt anymore, it disables (p. 39)." This is a sample of how closely interwoven Feiffer's life is with his art. This was made readily obvious in the cartoons and is reconfirmed in the plays. Except now Feiffer is talking politics instead of defects.

be useful, balding, paunchy husband and a misfit college-age son wasting his parent's money on graduate education which gives him the unusual taste for reading paperback novels in the bathroom. All the trappings of Broadway comedy and Philistinian delight are destroyed when a sniper's bullet kills Patsy immediately after she and Alfred are married. Patsy is the Newquist's second child to be shot down and the aftermath is in the spirit of revenge when Alfred and the rest of the family take to shooting at passersby from their window. Feiffer has stretched the limits of interpretation when he calls this madness the spirit of the "frontier faith".

"... The family is shooting out of their windows at strangers in the street... this has nothing to do with apocalypse. It has to do with the frontier faith. It doesn't mean the world is ending; it means these particular people, while having gone mad, have gone mad in a very traditional, very American way. By their lights, they're protecting their home. They're taking action after remaining passive for too long. They're Tom Destry strapping on his guns to the cheers of the audience. They're doing what they see as right, and with exactly the self-justification as any B-52 pilot dropping blockbusters over VietNam. If the ending of Little Murders is apocalyptic, then what sort of vision do we get every day on NBC when they blandly give us the latest body count? All I was trying to do was show what we've become by putting together one sensibility with another--random murder out of windows with the sort of random murder we're playing around with in Southeast Asia (pb., p. 94)."

Such a huge conceptual interpretation does not apply to

the actual experience of Little Murders, and the critics' immediate response was far from the vast intercontinental interpretation Feiffer had. Certainly, this was not Broadway material.

Robert Brustein, the director of the Yale School of Drama in 1966, advised Feiffer not to produce his play on Broadway. Little Murders previewed at Yale, but when the theatre school discovered that Feiffer was using Yale as a pre-Broadway stint, the school became indignant. Brustein was trying to re-establish the reputation of Yale as experimental and avant-garde;¹⁰ Little Murders was Brustein's first choice and Feiffer was considerably blind not to realize the nature of the material he had on his hands. It was subversive and completely unconventional.

¹⁰ Brustein gives an interesting account of establishing the new image of the drama school at Yale in his book called The Third Theatre. He met with reluctance from many noteworthy people whom he wanted to hire from Europe and interestingly enough one of the reasons of this reluctance is attributed to what Feiffer calls gratuitous violence: "My first responsibility at Yale was hiring new people . . . I ran into trouble getting people I wanted from England. Although they were attracted to the idea of a repertory company connected with a school they were reluctant to pick up and leave . . . After all we are engaged in a war of which they disapprove; we are still trying to recover from an assassination which along with all the other violence in this country, has scared the life out of this world." Robert Brustein, The Third Theatre (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1969), p. 282.

Perfect for Off-Broadway, Feiffer insisted On-Broadway and he got exactly seven days of it.

The unanimous criticism was that Feiffer did not adequately prepare his audience for the shift between acts One and Two, from before to after Patsy's death, from the ideal, but ~~hooky~~ family, to the cynically violent world. Although there were allusions to the type of society they were living in, the audience confused these for purely comical insinuations. Alfred's professional career went from photographing models to objects to "shit". This was brought up at the family dinner table but not much more was made of it than the use of language that was, and was not, permitted in the Newquist home at the dinner table. Walter Kerr in the New York Times (June 4, 1967) made the connection between Alfred's career and the quality of New York life but at the same time found the style of acting incompatible with the breath of the image:

"Naturalistically speaking, no one does thrive on selling the more glamorous magazines carefully backlighted studies of excrement. Formally speaking, imagistically speaking, the notion is valid and invites us all to supply our own overtones. But a formal conceit, an image that overleaps the boundaries of the literal needs a formalized stage shape, formalized scenery, formalized behavior on the part of the actors to go with it. We must know what kind of world we have invaded . . . Feiffer's director, actors, scene designer hadn't created an all of a piece landscape in which cocktails and sudden death could companionably share the same sofa."

Another of the surreal qualities of American life covered up through comic allusion is Alfred's bad fortune of attracting muggers. He stands perfectly still humming to himself while he is mugged, daily.

Carol (Mr. Newquist): But why don't you fight back?

Alfred: I don't want to.

Carol: Jesus Christ you're not a pacifist.

Patsy (warning): Daddy.

Alfred (slowly shakes his head): An apathist. I
want to do what I want to do, not what they
want me to do. (L.M., p. 23.)

The charged quality of wit makes jokes more important than the meaningful content.

"The single insight I have brought out of two months of production is that if the actors play the jokes (as they were too inclined to do here) and not the family relationships with all their underlying tensions, we have an audience so very happy at the end of Act One they are thrown into confusion by the rest of the play."¹¹

Feiffer's insight of interpretation is shortsighted. It is not the underlying tension of family relationships that makes such a difference between Act One and Act Two. The characters have been too carefully stereotyped to dig for the "tension of relationships". There are Oedipal currents between mother and son, and father and daughter, open hostility between husband and wife and incestuous intimations between brother and sister, but this is exactly

¹¹Jules Feiffer, Letter to Chris Morahan, p. 108.

what the audience expects; it is obvious, not underlying.

Martin Esslin in The New York Times (July 10, 1967) said:

"Little Murders is what strikes me as essentially a three dimensional Feiffer strip cartoon. The characters are the traditional Feiffer types: the weak husband, the apathetic intellectual, the mannish girl, the fairy."

~~These stereotypes ring familiar from the cartoons and summon~~
criticism as a result. Clive Barnes in The New York Times (January 5, 1969) said "Mr. Feiffer shows his immaturity by a wayward self-indulgence, a love of the prolonged sound of his own jokes and a certain failure to balance form with content."

The difference between Act One and Act Two was a matter of balancing form with content. Feiffer had potentially a perfect piece of absurd drama, but the superimposition of Broadway-type naturalistic staging obscured the production.

John Simon in The Hudson Review (Summer 1967, p. 302) said:

"Feiffer elected to write in a style midway between absurdist farce and social satire. It may be that there was too much farce in the first act, so that the shift in the second was too sudden. It is certain that Feiffer is best at comic set pieces that sometimes fall flat and usually run on too long, and that the play tended to break into a series of vignettes without a continuous line of plot or character development. Little Murders was a thoroughly uneven play."

The stereotypes in Feiffer's cartoons are appreciated for their predictability. But the stereotype of the stage characters, seemingly predictable, but then no longer

predictable are foiled by their apparent predictability at the outset. Had Feiffer stylized the production in a more absurd context from the start so as not to mislead his audience, he could have exploited his use of stereotypes.

In a letter to Christopher Morahan, the director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, Jules Feiffer, wrote:

"Absolutely right on the style being naturalistic with the mutually understood reservation that, once having found the reality in their characters, the actors will be hilarious."

Feiffer adds a critical footnote to this letter which appears in the printed edition of Little Murders:

"Absolute nonsense. The play was given a considerably more stylized production in London, and played remarkably better than it did in New York. This has convinced me of nothing other than that the author, while always correct in his intention, is sometimes mistaken about the means to fulfill them."

One of the flaws in Little Murders is, in fact, the intentions of the author. One can easily see the elaborately worked out political interpretations by Feiffer are inconsistent with the content of the play. Little Murders is perhaps the bridge from the stereotypical emotionalism of the cartoons to the unique political burlesque of his next two plays. Unfortunately, the shift is impossible to do between acts in a single play.

When Feiffer insists on arguing the importance of the family relationships, he is forgetting about three

significant roles in the play that make complete intrusions, not only in continuity, but in relevance to the family structure which Feiffer is insisting is ultimately very important. On behalf of Patsy's father, an old friend of the family's, a judge, is invited to the house to speak to Patsy and Alfred about their not wanting God mentioned in the marriage ceremony. He gives a long-winded speech on the importance of God in America, starting from his family's immigration to the Land of the Free, embracing the years of his family's hardship and finally blessing his mother's retirement in Miami Beach. The judge amounts to a standup comedian monologuing his way through an absurdity that adds nothing truly relevant to the play. The same is true of Reverend Dupas, who marries Patsy and Alfred. He is a 'walk-on' with a fabulous retinue of jokes about the "existential all-rightness" of everything: masturbation, divorce, homosexuality. Finally, there is Lieutenant Practice, in the last scene, who tells the family, with the same undue amount of time allotted him as the judge and the minister, about the conspiracy all over America to disrupt law and order.

The saddest part of Little Murders is that these three characters deliver the best jokes in the most absurd context, with the most meaning, while the family delivers mediocre

jokes defined by their stereotypes in a typical family dilemma.

Three separate speeches in a play that reveal the strongest sense of the play is a separation of form from content. The significance of a single character in a cartoon is not the same in a play; but, Feiffer's most meaningful cartoons are usually ones that have a single character addressing the reading audience. The judge, the priest and the lieutenant are tantamount to a single character in a cartoon strip, but in the plays Feiffer lost some of the kinaesthetic experience of theatre when he wrote a long part to be delivered in a comic-sermonesque style in the middle of a play.

"Characters can stand on stage and argue from various fixed points, none of which is absolutely right. By listening, and you're forced to listen if the argument is interesting enough--we can get something out of it for ourselves . . . the action is in the language."¹²

Richard Gilman in Newsweek Magazine (May 8, 1967) found that "points of view" was precisely the problem with Little Murders:

". . . The play disintegrates rapidly into a dozen warring motifs . . . and a nearly absolute inability on Feiffer's part to get his main points across. That they are "points" is in a sense just what is wrong; in Albee at his early best in Ionesco and Pinter, all of whom are clearly Feiffer's exemplars, the points of view are

¹² John Lahr, Transatlantic Review, p. 42.

inseparable from the dramatic structure and its details."

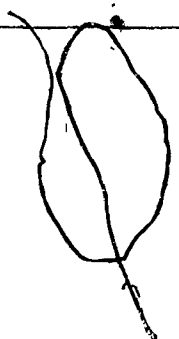
Feiffer's specific design to jolt the audience is partly responsible for the break of form with content:

"What I was trying to do in Little Murders was take familiar devices and set them loose in the America of Viet-Nam. Set them loose in a country that's been living for a long time in a Cold War morality. It's fascinating because what you're dealing with is the audience. You're showing them something they know and they're familiar with and immediately relaxed with, and then showing them how it really is."¹³

Feiffer, in all his idealism to impress a vivid and horrifying truth on the audience, combined too many styles and came out with no style. The shot that kills Patsy is as horrific as any device of the Theatre of Cruelty. The vision of American society in the bloodstream of absurdism is meaningful but was never directly created in the context of the production. The monologue-quality is in the tradition of the cartoons or a stand-up comedy routine. In short, Feiffer's changing form and ideology is caught in Little Murders.

That Little Murders should close after seven performances On-Broadway but then be selected the best foreign play of the year in London where it opened only one month after closing in New York, is, besides being amazing, a statement

¹³ John Lahr, Interview, p. 43.



about satire and its effect on the audience. Little Murders worked in London as a Swiftian satire and closed in New York because it was a modern satire. In London the "Beholder" was not confronted with his own image. Martin Esslin in The New York Times (July 18, 1967) said:

"The principal reason for the difference in reactions of the New York and London audience of Little Murders is that in New York the play, with its suggestion that life in that city is becoming ever more noisy, mad and violent, must have been pretty disturbing. In London it is positively reassuring . . . this diagnosis of the sickness of America through sick humor is bound to please an English audience . . . as satire is so totally enjoyable when it is so clearly directed against vices of which one knows oneself to be totally free."

But if the satire of Feiffer's cartoons are so wholly appreciable because they expose man to himself, and this has been labelled the touchstone of the modern response to satire, how can the rejection of Little Murders On-Broadway be accounted for? The answer is primarily a matter of distinguishing the sensibilities of different audiences. It also raises the issue of private or public confrontation between the artistic material and the audience.

The London production was received more graciously because according to Esslin, "the audience at the Royal Shakespeare's London home, the Aldwych, have been conditioned by seven years of experience to demand more from a play than merely entertainment. Hence, the serious or disturbing

plays have a better chance of surviving here than on Broadway." The same can be said of Broadway and Off-Broadway in New York. The Off-Broadway audience is more prone to accept open confrontation than the Broadway audience. Two years later in 1969, Little Murders was revived Off-Broadway and had over two hundred performances. This successful Off-Broadway revival is linked to the level of defensiveness an audience brings to satiric art. The defensive refusal to "Behold" oneself in the 1967 Broadway production was mainly due to the lack of willingness to recognize gratuitous violence in America in 1967. The audience could not actually deny the experience in Little Murders as an untruthful representation of the quality of life in America but to admit openly that life had deteriorated was as shameful as admitting to sexual impotency before Freudian notions of impotency made the symptom a common one. By 1969 gratuitous violence was everywhere and many (admittedly not everyone and especially still, Broadway clientele) were willing to accept their condition as presented by Little Murders. There is a great likelihood that had Little Murders originally been produced Off-Broadway, it would have met with success. The Off-Broadway reputation (which was dying fast however by the late Sixties) was notorious for plays that confronted the audience with a

vital, life-threatening or life-revealing experience. Little Murders was both, but On-Broadway it was an anachronism to an audience who defensively shied away from the mirror image of life that Feiffer was able, as a cartoonist, to hold up to everyone. Private affirmation of the cartoons became public disavowal when Feiffer dared denigrate man by showing him his depravity in public. The satire of Feiffer's cartoon and the satire of Feiffer's theatre were met with distinctly different responses. Admittedly, the lack of artistic proficiency of Little Murders evoked a critical response purely on an aesthetic basis. But the meaning of Little Murders attacked New York on a class consciousness level and the public denigration, the cattle-grouping, as it were, was not the mental or private experience of the cartoon.

Feiffer had been called prophetic for seeing in 1967 what the rest of America saw only in 1969, or was only willing to admit to seeing in 1969. Gratuitous violence was everywhere in the later Sixties in America. God Bless in 1968 and The White House Murder Case in 1970 make this very clear.

God Bless

Rx: Hate America! See how fast it frees you from analysis!¹⁴

¹⁴ Jules Feiffer, "God Bless," Plays and Players Magazine (London), October 1968. Quotations from God Bless will be indicated immediately after the quote by (G.B., p. ____).

The 1967 Broadway failure of Little Murders irritated Feiffer enough to do two things: to keep writing and to keep away from Broadway. The result was God Bless which previewed at Yale (where the critics were kept out) and then went, not unwisely, straight to London where the Royal Shakespeare Company performed, with pleasure, a perfectly nihilistic anti-American play. The unrecognizability of gratuitous violence in Little Murders which needed Feiffer's explanations in order to surface, was made monstrously apparent in God Bless which Feiffer admitted was a political cartoon: "God Bless is, in a sense deliberately a political cartoon. So the people there are archtypical figures."¹⁵

The archtypes are distinctly American however. William Brackman, aged one hundred and ten, is a statesman and trusted confidant of every president from Cleveland to Kennedy. He is a pragmatic liberal who, over the years, adopted a policy of flexibility so as to maintain "effectiveness". In short, he is perfectly corrupt.

"Betrayal was often the only way liberals of my time were able to prove they were serious. It eventually became recognized as a tribal rite: no one resents it anymore (G.B., p. 42)."

Brackman has a secretary/wife Eve, who Feiffer decided was a "power fucker"¹⁶ after he wrote her role. She 'screws'

¹⁵ John Lahr, Interview, p. 38.

¹⁶ John Lahr, Interview, p. 46.

everyone in the play except the priest.

There are two radicals, (one black, one white) who, under the tutelage of Brackman during their Harvard years, have now decided that power is their answer. They are fed up with the 'conservative liberalism' of the president and fed up with the barbaric imperialism of the America engaged in wars with Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa. They lead the ~~American~~ Liberation Front into a revolution against the system.

Father Whiting, a priest is a writer for the American Heretic: The Radical Catholic Weekly. He is a moralist who dies from "inflexibility".

Lawrence Sloane is the president of the United States. He is noted for paradoxical behaviour. He campaigned for peace in an armoured car. He actually hired the radicals to start the demonstration in Washington, where the play takes place, but is now helpless against their betrayal.

"In God Bless I was trying to show what our heritage of pragmatic liberalism has brought us in the last 20 years, using the framework of this century and before. The liberal mentality that chooses to be affective rather than woolly minded, moralistic and idealistic. And where that affectiveness has brought us. Viet-Nam is one of its major betrayals."¹⁷

¹⁷ John Lahr, Interview, p. 41.

The London performance of God Bless did not live up to the expectations Feiffer had hoped for. He certainly was moving toward expressing a point of view, but was getting no closer to good playwrighting than he was with Little Murders. Martin Esslin said in The New York Times (November 3, 1968):

"As a political tract, the piece is very interesting and contains many wise insights and witty remarks. As a piece of drama it is the dearest of dead ducks . . . It is the story of the continuous sellouts and betrayals of the American liberal who always somehow comes to terms with the powers that be and always consoles himself that even isolationism or the Cold War somehow contributed to social progress. Yes, the text is witty, but there is no play. As a topic of conversation developed by a witty pundit after a good dinner, this would be splendid, but it simply does not make a play. . . In America some of the sharp things that are being said might strike home. But only as political aphorisms, not as theatre. Feiffer is a great cartoonist; this, in a way, is a political cartoon strip. It just does not come to life."

"God Bless is overtly political. I wanted to write a play dealing with ideas in the air today."¹⁸ God Bless is extremely cynical and perhaps even crude, but not in a vulgar sense. Despite the exaggerations, the depth of political insight and shocking representation of the condition of America are, in the final analysis, authentically conceived. The argumentative tone, the intellectual incongruities,

¹⁸ John Lahr, Interview, p. 43.

the frightening deceptions of every incident make God Bless Feiffer's most distinctly subversive play. "It's a work of fairly total criticism: making a round tour of every fashionable hope and attitude concerning America today."¹⁹

God Bless is a staged interview of William Brackman, America's greatest statesman, by a Catholic priest. During the interview two radicals show up at Brackman's home in Washington to inform him that the revolution has arrived. They intend to assassinate the president when he arrives at Brackman's for advice. The time is somewhere in the future and the Revolution looks despairingly grim for Americans. The Revolution has become as grotesque as what it purports to overthrow.

Norman: We're radical murders. You're liberal murders. The difference is we don't go overseas to do our killing . . . we plan to murder the eldest male white child in every family in America. We have extensive mutilation plans. Mutilation temples! Mutilation festivals! . . . We plan to bomb one city a week for a year (G.B., p. 45)."

This type of action is the stretching of logic to the insane conclusion that Feiffer defines as satire. If the radicals learned their tactics from American diplomacy, they learned their philosophy from Brackman, a noted intellectual and two-time recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize:

¹⁹Ronald Bryden, "America on the Rocks," The Observer Review, October 24, 1968, p. 60, cols. 1-2.

Ames (reads from book): Once we take up the faith that a good society is not our inheritance but a corrupt society is we see signs of that faith everywhere. We insist on seeing them. We claim that Utopia at best would be corrupt (and there lies the American dream) and at worst would be totalitarian (and there lies the Communist dream). Any system men use to organise society must, in the end, be a bad system because men are bad. The best to be done is to choose the least bad men to govern the least bad system. Once chosen that system is forevermore known as the system, and is regarded as permanent and unchanging. The resultant despair is viewed with equanimity. Despair ceases to wound once it achieves tenure. We see that sin lies not in the system, but in man. Not in free enterprise, but in you and me. Change us, but, for heaven's sake, leave the system alone! Conc One of the New Holiness (G.B., p. 39)."

Feiffer is imposing the essay-sermon form here as he did in Little Murders, but it is in keeping with the play this time. Unfortunately, it is still not a theatrical play and long speeches by Brackman are the device around which the play revolves.

Brackman has the most extraordinary personal history. The interview with Father Whiting is broken by spells of senility, but Brackman manages to tell about his personal history and extensive political betrayals before the play is through. He was raised in Indiana. His father used to hide slaves; his mother used to turn them in. His father believed in morality, his mother law. His father published a newspaper and wrote editorials in support of the miner's strike,

but since he printed both sides of the story the miners hated him too. A lynch mob, composed of "friends and neighbors" broke into his office one night but he managed to escape to the mines, where the miners hanged him. The first three miners that were found were arrested on the spot, a Negro, an Italian and a Jew. Brackman's mother went to the jail and spoke out in favor of a fair trial for these miners, whereupon Brackman led a lynch mob which trampled his mother to death and hanged the three miners. It was at this time that he recognized his qualities of leadership and how to use them for the rest of his life.

The tone of God Bless is entirely different from Little Murders. There are no Freudian preoccupations and the representation of American political and moral thought is not obscured. It is a straightforward cutting thrust against America's archtypes to expose the maliciousness of hypocrisy. Feiffer remains consistent in the structure of plot throughout. The play is unified conceptually around two themes: betrayal and power. Everyone is seen as capable of betrayal and the motivation for this is power:

President: I know the name of the game. It's power. I got it. They want it. There are not other issues. There never have been any other issues. Power is not to do good with or to do bad with. Power is to keep (G.B., p. 45)."

The play ends with the radicals negotiating with the president

about which American cities will be burned. When Feiffer has pushed the conservatism of logic beyond 'insane conclusion' and conceived the most cutting satire on American political ethics.

Ronald Bryden in The London Observer (October 24, 1968) again suggested the pleasure of the satirical experience that does not relegate oneself to a subhuman experience:

"At the end it leaves America burning; the inevitable end, it implies, of a civilization built on the will to win. It seems to be marvellous; as dazzling an extravaganza of pure ideas as any since Shaw's 'On the Rocks', which I take to be its model, and easily the funniest most literate and far sighted new play to reach London this year . . . the distinction and delight of this play is the way it nets all the fluttering ideas of a moment, pins them down and scrutinizes them with the cool critical intelligence of a historian writing a decade from now. Few contemporary plays give so passionate a sense of commitment. Every line breathes appalled love for the anguished nation it sacrifices."

Two things are put into perspective by this comment. That Feiffer expresses appalled love for the nation he sacrifices, is not a contradiction. For inexplicable reasons perhaps, an English critic is able to see this more readily than an American. The same sentimentality that lurks under the veneer of the cartoons is present in Feiffer's plays. Secondly, the prophetic oversight that Feiffer definitely had in Little Murders is also present in God Bless. Feiffer can extract from his immediate environment and project, with

great insight, into a situation whether it be the psycho-analytic insight in the cartoons or the political predictions in the plays. The White House Murder Case is the most amazing evidence of this cunning power.

The White House Murder Case

"The government deserves credit for making a satirist's life more challenging. This began for me some years ago when there was an Atomic Energy Commission committee set up to investigate the effects of radioactive fallout, and they called it 'Operation Sunshine'. How do you compete with that? In my play The White House Murder Case, the name of the disastrous military operation that back-fires and kills 750 GI's was 'Operation Total Win'. When Nixon went into Cambodia, three months later, they called it 'Operation Ultimate Victory'. A week after Cambodia, the play died. George S. Kaufman once said, 'Satire is what closes Saturday Night.' It's not true. It's reality that closes Saturday night (pb., p. 94)."

Feiffer's subversive tendencies in his art were inspired by the incongruities he saw in American politics. His attitude that satire pushed logic to the brink until it became absurd was born in his response to the American government. The result was a satire that was the same as reality if the meaning was not misrepresented by the production. However, this was a recurring problem in Feiffer's plays. Clive Barnes in The New York Times (February 19, 1970) said: "The author's ingenuity has here outpaced his comic material . . . the idea of the play is a great deal more gripping than the play itself, and this is where it falls apart." The more

preoccupied Feiffer was with a vital political satire, the less concerned he became with theatrical form. The White House Murder Case had a considerably good run Off-Broadway, but still, the critics were depressingly frustrated by the relatively little growth of three years' work of Feiffer's dramatic style. Marya Mannes in The New York Times (March 1, 1970) wrote:

"The savage contempt of the ugliness and deception of our times has usually been coupled with a marvelous lunacy both in his drawings and his words. But somehow they don't work here . . . the funny lines are mostly unfunny because these are not people, good or despicable. Anger at betrayal, hatred for war, contempt for this government: all this many share. But the targets are too important for buckshot, too tragic for derision, too serious for caricature."

Clive Barnes said in The New York Times (February 19, 1970):

"There is a load of sick fun in the play but it never accounts up . . . the entire pattern of unfeeling bureaucracy in alignment with insensate masses is vividly pertinent. Yet Mr. Feiffer never brings his bird home to roost and to breed in the imagination. He is flippant where he should be flip, sloppy where he should be surgical. In short this is precisely the kind of engaged play we should be writing. Mr. Feiffer - and I love him - hasn't written it."

By 1970 the critics recognized the validity, exactness and relevance in Feiffer's plays, but they also recognized the lack of growth in his talent for stage writing. Why so many of the critics apparently wanted to praise Feiffer as a satirist and yet had to disclaim his dramatic form,

might be analyzed in regard to the extent of the subversive content of Feiffer's message. Feiffer was going too far and something had to curtail him. According to most critics Feiffer was still writing cartoons, still perfecting the caricature and getting nowhere in regard to creating an authentic, psychologically justifiable, understandable, explorable character. Instead, situation predominated; this was the opposite extreme of the cartoons where no environment was ever necessitated and rarely created. The plays tended to create more environment and none of the omnipotent analytical interest so vital in the cartoons.

In White House, the environment is divided between a Brazilian jungle and the inner office of the president's council room in the White House. Like in God Bless, the president of the United States is one of the characters. In both plays, Feiffer is deliberately using political figureheads as symbols of betrayal. Ultimately, the message is stretched to mean America is betraying all its people.

America is involved in Brazil in a war that replicates America's involvement in VietNam. The Army releases a nerve gas on its enemy, but the wind shifts at precisely the wrong moment and 750 American soldiers are killed, 90 are paralyzed. In Washington the president is confronted with the problem of explaining a military catastrophe to the

American people. He calls a meeting of his executive council; the Attorney General, the Postmaster General, the Secretary of Defense and the Director of Research and Development. They are confronted with two issues. The first is a moral issue concerning the deployment of nerve gas, a weapon that was outlawed at the last Geneva Convention. There is also the issue of how to tell the American public of the incident. In short, the incident is "covered up" and packed with lies before the public is told:

Parson: In matters involving the national security ---

Cole: We have the right to withhold certain information ---

Sweeney: CB97 is a comparatively humane --

Stiles: We could say they used the gas on us.

Cole: The Brazilians? We couldn't make it stick.

Stiles: Why not? The Russians supplied them.

Cole shakes his head.

The Chinese?

President: One foreign crisis at a time, Tim, please.

Stiles: The Russians will understand. They know American politics.

Cole: I don't see any way out of conceding deployment.

Parson: If we concede deployment, there goes your ball game.

Cole: Not if intelligence reports led us to suspect the Brazilians were in the process of being supplied with nerve gas.

Stiles: Isn't that what I said?

Cole: I'm not finished. We could not risk the safety of our command by overlooking these reports, so strictly as a deterrent -- to keep them from using their gas on us -- deployment of CB97 was ordered.

Pratt: This could very well be the case.

Parson: I like that. Intelligence reports--

Cole: and captured enemy documents.

Stiles: But then what? Do they use it and we responded, or what?

Pratt: Colonel Dawn ordered it.

Stiles: He's dead, isn't he? We can't blame it on anybody dead.

Cole: I lean toward a mishap--an accident.

Parson: Everytime we report an accident the military is made to look like fools.

Cole: This won't be blamed on you. A gas leak.

Sweeney: Our gas doesn't leak!

Cole: Well, it's got to be something like a gas leak.

Stiles: An act of God.

Parson: Maybe it was hit by lightning.

Pratt: The rainy season is five months away.

Parson: Maybe one of the storage tanks gets hit by an enemy shell.

Pratt: That could happen.

Sweeney: What are CB97 storage tanks doing within the range of enemy shells?

Parson: All right, say a stray enemy shell.

Pratt: A guerilla patrol could have gotten behind our lines. That does happen.

Cole: That's very good, General Pratt.

Parson: Excellent, General Pratt. A suicide patrol. We don't know if they knew what those storage tanks contained and deliberately shelled them or--

Cole: It could have been an accident or deliberate.

Parson: We'll never know. No one will ever know.

Stiles: That's it! By Golly, that does it!

Sweeney: It does seem the simplest way.

President: Now that we know what happened, how do we release it? (WHMC, p. 34-35).

The scenes shift between the president's office and Brazil. The aftermath of the nerve gas is producing very strange decomposition effects on the American soldiers:

Weems: It sounds funny to say it--so all together.
My leg is coming loose.

Cutler: Throw it over with my leg.

Weems: I can't see your leg. I can't really see too well anymore. And I'm having trouble talking.

Cutler: I don't have any trouble understanding.

Weems: Does my voice sound funny to you?

Cutler: It sounds more like what you're really about.

Weems: I'm getting down to roots.

Cutler: That's what I mean.

Weems: Look what just came off. (Holds object over his head.)

Cutler: I can't see too good either. What is it?

Weems: My pecker. I was scratching it and it came off.
(WHMC., p. 82.)

Oddly, the nerve gas is semi-euphoric and the two soldiers, one of whom is a CIA agent looking for the real reasons behind the release of the gas, explore the potential for a utopia where all men would be brothers. Feiffer infuses these scenes with an immense compassion and at the same time makes them extraordinarily funny. They are, however, static dialogues and resemble the cartoons.

Cutler: Next stage of what?

Weems: Evolution. Everybody joined together. Maybe the way we've been all our lives isn't natural. The way we are now. You and me and whoever comes along--a rescue squad--they take our hands and their hands get locked into our hands, and a squad of Chicos

comes along and they see this squad and guys holding hands. You think they'll shoot? They won't be able to shoot. Because it's the wave of the future. They'll take our hands. And more and more guys come along--their side and our side--gooks and colored guys--they'll see this daisy chain--in the middle of a war zone. This beautiful, peace-loving daisy chain, and they'll drop their guns. It will sound like a very loud bomb, the sound of all those guns dropping at one time. And they'll join hands with our hands so that there's no reason to fight anymore because we're all one body with these millions of held hands. No more outsiders. Just one enormous insider. (WHMC., p. 65.)

In the meantime back at the White House the strangest murder has just taken place. The president's wife has been stabbed with a peace sign that says "Make Love Not War." The president's men despised the First Lady anyway as she was a leader of the peace movement. Their marriage reminds us of the relationships between the men and women in the cartoons.

President: You always mock me.

Mrs. Hale: ~~He~~ never listen to me!

President: Most of Washington thinks I listen too much to you.

Mrs. Hale: Washington!

President: Why do you hate Washington? Because I'm it's first citizen?

Mrs. Hale: I hate it because it's unreal. Stop feeling sorry for yourself.

President: Am I unreal?

Mrs. Hale: You don't exist. Nobody here exists. That's what scares me most about Washington. All these absent people making war.

The White House murder must be covered up; elections are only six weeks away and this strange incident is too close to the Brazilian catastrophe. The same 'shake-down' of ideas as to how to cover up the First Lady fiasco parallels the cover up of the Brazilian fiasco:

Cole: Why can't we make it be Communists? Or a peace group?

Stiles: I don't care who we have do it. But one thing I'm strong on. We can't have her killed in the White House.

Parson: Why not?

Stiles: Not six weeks before election. It makes us look ineffectual.

Cole: Stiles is right. She's got to be killed somewhere else.

Sweeney: But where?

Cole: Tim, where are we most in trouble?

Stiles: In the cities, according to Gallup.

Cole: So we're not risking very much if we have her killed in New York?

Stiles: New York, Chicago, San Francisco. Doesn't matter.

Cole: We may even pull a sympathy vote.

Stiles: For a sympathy vote, I'd scratch New York. Better make it Chicago.

Parson: There are lots of Communists in Chicago. Can't we do something with that?

Stiles: I'd like to help you out on this morale business, Biff, but the more I look at it, the less likely it seems.

Cole: Let's not forget the picket sign.

Sweeney: Make Love Not War."

Cole: I favor a peace group.

Pratt: Or students.

Parson: Why not make it the blacks?

Stiles: Chicago's full of them.

Sweeney: Why always look for left-wing villains?
Why not pick on the Birch Society?

Parson: Come off it, Sweeney. The Birch Society?
"Make Love Not War?"

Sweeney: I just don't see why everyone has to
pick on the left. Anyhow, no one will believe
they did it. She was anti-war, pro-Negro,
and pro-student.

Stiles: No one will believe it.

Parson: I think they'll believe it.

Pratt: It could very easily be the Negroes.

Stiles: You're out of touch. It's out of the question.

Cole: So who did it?

Sweeney: Why does she have to have been murdered?

Stiles: That's very good, Sweeney.

Cole: An accident?

Parson: A plane crash?

Sweeney: A car crash?

Pratt: A hunting accident?

Parson: A fatal illness?

Pratt: Pneumonia?

Cole: Takes too long.

Pratt: Cancer.

Stiles: Bad image.

Cole: And it takes too long.

Parson: A heart attack!

Sweeney: I know, food poisoning!

Cole: Food poisoning!

Parson: Food poisoning!

Stiles: I like it!

Pratt: Food poisoning in Chicago. It could have
happened.

Finally, the Postmaster General takes the president

aside and confesses that it was he who killed the First Lady, thinking she was the president. He was hoping that if the president was assassinated the present vice-president would be elected by a sympathy vote, because otherwise the incumbent would lose. Upon hearing all this the president decides that the guilty man is not going to be arrested, that the truth would be harmful to the rest of the country:

Stiles: You seemed pretty eager to spread the truth a little while ago.

President: Among ourselves, yes. Of course! We're equipped to deal with it. But the public--it wouldn't do them any good to hear this sort of thing. It would shake their faith badly. We wouldn't be able to carry on. We've made our share of mistakes, but good Lord, can you imagine those other fellows in power? No, it's vital that we carry on (WHMC., p. 104).

The Postmaster General has the president 'over a barrel' and blackmails him into obtaining the position of Secretary of State or else he will confess to the murder, which would indicate the instability of the Party. The president has rationalized his way through two enormous and complex crimes that convey the corruption of the Military and the Government. Henry Hewes in The Saturday Review (March 7, 1970) said:

"Feiffer's concern is not the murder of one character, but the murder of compassionate human response in all of us; murder that results from the kind of schizoid thinking that makes it possible for man to rationalize any act as long as it helps him do his job."

Feiffer for the first time manages a psychological composition

in character: the president is a mock hero posing as a martyr for the good of the country. Blindness in the guise of altruism is, however, a strongly deprecatory view of the leaders of America. White House had a successful run Off-Broadway because the play was staged as a comedy, and the socially demeaning content was relegated by the extremes of the zaniness and implausibility of the characters. The Review in the Nation (March 9, 1970, p. 285) stated: "There is always the danger in such high jinks that their very success diminishes their satiric impact."

In terms of form and content, White House echoes the mid-road of Little Murders and God Bless. The president's council are very like the family in Little Murders, but the message is made more blatant than in Little Murders. The political overtones are those of God Bless. Formally, the play is tightly constructed and the shift in geographical locations are constructed to play the harmlessness of the soldiers off the harmful and powerful branch of government that never suffers from their mistakes.

But as for reputation as a playwright, Feiffer was instead becoming appreciated for his cartoon style of playwrighting by some critics and still condemned by others for the same reason. Walter Kerr said in The New York Times (March 5, 1970):

"The new wool gathering cartoon that is spinning its web all over the open floor of Circle in the Square seems to me to represent a marked advance, theatrically speaking, for the always outraged and occasionally outrageous Mr. Feiffer."

Clive Barnes sums it up in The New York Times (February 19, 1970) when he remarks that "The White House Murder Case and its performance dazzlingly directed by Alan Arkin and acted by a cast that must be a cartoonist's dream. . . ." Paul D. Zimmerman in Newsweek (March 9, p. 78) said:

"The cartoonist's brilliant talent for etching character in a line or two deserts the playwright. His officials, like the cartoons they are, do not develop . . . What Feiffer needs is not clarity of vision or deftness of dialogue, but flesh and blood persona. Instead he has written a play in search of s'x characters."

Edith Oliver in The New Yorker (March 9, 1970, p. 200) concludes:

"The best of them, Paul Benedict, plays the Postmaster General, political manager of the president's party, as if the role were not a comic strip character at all, as for Mr. Feiffer, he clearly knows what he is doing, but what he is doing is just not good enough."

Conclusions about Feiffer as a dramatist are ambiguous. Stylistically, the critics attacked him for poor characterization and a non-dramatic form. Satirically, he was prophetic and this forced him to take some of his drama out of America, which was successful abroad. The plays that 'made it' in America, did so because the satire was adumbrated by comedy.

CONCLUSION

Conclusions about Feiffer's movement from cartoonist to playwright are integrally related to the changing ideology of Feiffer's satire.

In studying the cartoons it was apparent that Feiffer's satire was self-reflexive, that it was motivated from Freudian inspired relationships, or in a more specific context from Feiffer's personal confrontations with and observances of life. This is not to exclude the existential cartoons whose themes are at times metaphysical, but is to say that the Freudian analytical mentality was significantly more pervasive; Feiffer satirized personally everything he was as a man and everything he was not, and hoped to be.

This, in essence, was the rationale for a thesis that linked an artist's personal history with his artistic material. In the Freudian cartoon years of Feiffer's satire, the emphasis was on a mental construction of cartoons that blatantly revealed psychological notions of inadequacy, persecution, apathy, rationalization and isolation. This allowed for a classification of the ideology in the cartoons as a personal and emotional one. Hence, the term 'emotion content.'

When Feiffer's satire shifted ideologically from Freud to anti-Americanism, the base of motivation shifted

from the personal internalization and expression of emotional experiences to the impersonal externalization and expression of political experiences. Hence, the term 'gratuitous violence' and the Cold War morphology Feiffer used to explain his plays. The transparent reason for shifting ideology was the Kennedy assassination. Feiffer responded to the assassination by becoming politically active and as a result, disappointed, disillusioned and angered by American politics.

Feiffer explained the transformation in his art form as being consonant with his need for a larger audience to participate with a more vital message than was afforded the cartoons. As a playwright, however, something of the artistic genius that was in the cartoons was qualitatively lost in the plays. This was explained by the critics as a matter of non-dimensionality in Feiffer's characters, conveniently labelling them caricatures, and finally cartoons. However, there was something more significant in the critics' refusal to appreciate the plays. The plays were overtly anti-American and daringly subversive. This complied with Feiffer's definition of a satire that was antagonistic to the system it satirized, but, unlike the cartoons, the satire in the plays was publicly denigrating an enormous structure: American society and government. A defensive reaction was the result.

Abroad, Feiffer's plays had quite the opposite

reaction; the satirization of America satisfied an English audience. This raised an interesting issue concerning the definition of Swiftian satire and the modern definition of satire proposed in this thesis. It was suggested that the difference between Swiftian and modern satire was in the response to the representation of human depravity and that the modern response was to receive a 'masochistic pleasure.' In the eighteenth century the response to satire was on the level of class consciousness; not on the level of the mental complexity that 'masochistic pleasure' implies. It could be expected that Americans would revel in the masochistic delight of Little Murders, but they did not; the English audience did not associate and identify with the object of the satire, but viewed the satire as a statement of class consciousness of Americans. Why Little Murders stands as an exception to the expected modern reaction to Feiffer's satire was related to a defensiveness that springs from open confrontation in the theatre when compared with the private confrontation of the cartoon. The silence of the cartoons was non-threatening while the public 'screaming' at America in the plays was intolerably antagonistic to the American audience.

That the critics dared not accept the brutal vision of America on such public terms was a dampening agent on the validity of their conclusions about the plays. It is suggested

here that the unanimous and collective disclaimings of Feiffer as a dramatist by the American critics was more than an aesthetic and critical appraisal of Feiffer's satire. That, in fact, the critics were responding in exactly the opposite manner to the cartoons specifically because they were susceptible to public criticism if they dared align themselves openly with the anti-American sentiment of Feiffer's satire. It is possible to stretch this point right into Feiffer's cartoon representation of the phenomenology of behaviour; the critics were altruistically obsequious to societal expectation. Where the cartoons tacitly and privately allowed for audience response, the plays demanded a social commitment from the audience.

Although the plays were decidedly distinct in content from the cartoons, the use of stereotypes prevailed. There was a very different employment of a 'type' in the plays in comparison to the cartoons. Feiffer's characters in the plays were functional only to the extent that they defined a situation. The 'mental construction' of the cartoon character was the contrapuntal to the environmental or situational employment of the characters in the plays. The stereotypes in the cartoons never explained an environment but instead explained the psychology, behaviour and reality of the stereotype. While in the plays the stereotype was never explored mentally but was used to construct something

altogether unrelated, a decaying American society. Feiffer's ideology changed, but not his employment of stereotyped characterization. Unfortunately the characterization in the cartoons appeared fuller and more developed than the characterization in the plays. This was related to the difference in perceiving the forms. The immediate and fleeting experience of the cartoon summoned the reader's emotional identification with the cartoon character while the prolonged dramatic experience summoned the expectation of growth, development, psychological complexity and resolution which was definitely lacking in the plays.

To define Feiffer as a satirist and evaluate him as a satirist is clearly, after examining the cartoons and the plays, a mixed and problematic appraisal.

The classic and then reworked definition of a subversive satire, by Feiffer, was accessible in both the cartoons and the plays. In fact, the broadest applicable spectrum of satire was exemplified by both these art forms. Satisfying a 'masochistic pleasure,' the personal post-Freudian internalization of the response to the satire in the cartoons was a significant representation of a new satire or a modern satire. The plays were leveled in a more traditional mode against the class consciousness of America as citizens of a violent and hypocritical country.

An evaluation of Feiffer as a satirist demands an

awareness of the personal integrity of the artist. This, in essence, has been the rationale behind the employment of biographical material. The substantiation of the shift in Feiffer's ideology and form is discerned by connecting these changes with a changing personality. Feiffer moved from a spokesman of himself in the cartoons to a spokesman of Americans in his plays. The cartoons spoke for themselves and spoke privately to a silent audience. The plays, on the contrary, spoke for America and spoke publicly to an active audience.

A benevolent appraisal would make allowances for structural defects in the plays that the critics justifiably condemned and classify Feiffer as a superior satirist of a truly prophetic and dedicated l'esprit d'invention. This, however, is based on a knowledge of the man behind the art; an argumentative position between theorists who deny the biographical implication behind any art form and those who account for the art through the life of the artist. This thesis presented the latter, making Feiffer's life integral with his art.

APPENDIX I

CHRONOLOGY

Staged Cartoons - Plays - Dialogues* - Films

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Location</u>
The Explainers (a satirical review based on cartoons)	1961	Playwrights Cabaret Theatre, Chicago
Munro (animated film)	1961	Rembrandt Films (wins Oscar for the best short subject cartoon)
Crawling Arnold (play)	1961	Gian Carlo Menotti's Festival of Two Worlds, Italy Horizon Magazine, first American printing
Introduction: Dialogue Superman: Dialogue	1963	Feiffer's Album
Feiffer Film (film version of cartoons)	1965	Feiffer brought this film on tour when he lectured at universities.
The Apple Tree (Passionella) A fable.	1966	New York
Harry the Rat with Women (Feiffer's only novel: staged as a play)	1966	Detroit Institute of the Arts
Little Murders (play)	1966	Yale School of Drama
Little Murders	1967	Broadway
Little Murders	1967	London, England

*Dialogues appear rarely throughout the anthologies. They are included here to indicate the movement away from cartoon into play form.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Location</u>
God Bless	1968	Yale School of Drama
God Bless	1968	London, England
Collision Course (Unexpurgated Memoirs of Bernard Morgendeiler)	1968	New York, Off-Broadway
Little Murders	1969	New York, Off-Broadway Revival
Oh! Calcutta! (Dick and Jane)	1969	New York, Off-Broadway
White House Murder Case (play)	1970	New York, Off-Broadway
Little Murders (screen script)	1970	Hollywood
Carnal Knowledge* (screen script)	1971	Hollywood
Feiffer skits (staged cartoons)	1974	McGill University**

*Carnal Knowledge was conceived as a play but was produced as a movie because director Mike Nichols convinced Feiffer of its merits as a screen script. Considering the relative lack of success On Broadway of Feiffer's plays (see Appendix II) Feiffer was wise to heed the advice. Interestingly enough the movie was considered too controversial in its representation of sexual values and morals and was banned in several states in America, while Oh! Calcutta! was flourishing in the nude in New York.

**Undoubtedly, skits of Feiffer cartoons have been performed a countless number of times in Universities and nightclubs all over North America.

APPENDIX II

The New York Times:

Theater Reviews

Season's Statistics

Closing The Record Book on 1966-67

Another theater season draws to an official close this Friday, June 30. That's the date when, according to Actors Equity, run-of-the-play

contracts expire. So, for theater buffs with a penchant for titles—and figures—here's a tally of the season's productions and their runs.

BROADWAY			REPERTORY THEATER LINCOLN CENTER		SWEET CHARITY		MAME		
	1966	1965	Galileo	76		590	My Wife and I	8	
	67	66	Yerma	60		462	Blitzstein!	7	
Plays	27	33	The East Wind	60			Shoemakers' Holiday	6	
Musicals	12	13	The Alchemist	52	POSTSCRIPTS				
Revs	2	2	NEW YORK STATE THEATER LINCOLN CENTER			The following productions, hold-overs from previous seasons, completed their Broadway runs during the season just ending:			
Revs	2	4	Show Boat	63	Barefoot in the Park	1,532	ABSOLUTELY FREEEE	76	
Miscellaneous	3	2	Annie Get Your Gun	47	Half a Sixpence	902	Davy Jones Locker	734	
	46	54	Subsequent engagement at Broadway Theater	78	Wait a Minute	672	In the Nick of Time	22	
PLAYS			SOUTH PACIFIC	22	Wait Until Dark	512	Silence Frontiers	17	
Shows listed in capital letters are still running			CITY CENTER		Philadelphia, Here I Come!	374	An Evening With The Times Square Two	10	
DON'T DRINK THE WATER 251			Carousel	24	Hostile Witness	325			
THE STAR-SPANGLED GIRL 220			Friar's Rainbow	23	It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's Superman	157	REVIEWS		
The Killing of Sister George			The Sound of Music	23			By Junior	118	
THE HOMECOMING			Wonderful Town	23	THE COACH WITH THE SIX INSIDES				57
BLACK COMEDY			The Country Girl	22	The Butler and Egg Man				32
A Delicate Balance			The Rose Tattoo	14	Dynamite Tonite				9
YOU KNOW I CAN'T HEAR YOU WHEN THE WATER'S RUNNING			Moved to Billy Rose Theater for Elizabeth the Queen	61	The Diary of a Madman				4
The Investigation				14	Antigone				3
How's the World Treating You?			APA-PHOENIX		MISCELLANEOUS				
My Sweet Charlie			War and Peace	56	Israeli Mime Theater				63
Love in E-Fist			The School for Scandal	48	The World of My America				11
Help Stamp Out Marmagel!			The Wild Duck	45	AMERICAN SAVOYARDS				
The Loves of Cass McGuire			Right You Are	42	The Mikado				36
The Astrakhan Coat			You Can't Take It With You	16	The Pirates of Penzance				29
Under the Weather			We Comrades Three	11	Princess Ida				28
That Summer—That Fall			NATIONAL REPERTORY THEATER		Tulal By Juv and H.M.S. Pinelore				27
The Paisley Convertible			The Imaginary Invalid	6	LE TRETEAU DE PARIS				
Of Love Remembered			A Touch of the Poet	5	Los Femmes Savantes				21
We Have Always Lived in the Castle			Tonight at 8:30	5	AMERICAN PLACE THEATER				
Hail Scrawdykel!			BRISTOL OLD VIC		La Turista				29
Little Murders			Hamlet	9	Posterity for Sale				25
Agathe Sue, I Love You			Romeo and Juliet	8	Who's Got His Own				19
Those That Play the Clowns			Measure for Measure	7	The Displaced Person				18
Come Live With Me			WEST BERLIN ENSEMBLE THEATER		NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL CENTRAL PARK				
The Girl in the Freudian Slip			Nathan Der Weiss	3	Measure for Measure				17
The Natural Look			Burget Schipool	3	King Richard III				17
A Warm Body			Kenne Sie Die Milschstrasse?	2	All's Well That Ends Well				16
MUSICALS			DOYLE CARTE OPERA COMPANY		THE COMEDY OF ERRORS				16
THE APPLE TREE			The Mikado	9	MONOLOGISTS				
CABARET			H.M.S. Pinelore	8	A Funny Kind of Evening with David Kozloff				3
I DO! I DO!			The Pirates of Penzance	7	An After Dinner Evening with Oskar Werner				1
Walking Happy			Ruddigore	4	ANTA MATINEE SERIES				
Let's Sing Yiddish			Patience	4	Come Slowly Edna				2
ILYA DARLING			ICE SHOWS		The Viewing and Conditioned Reflex				2
HALLELUJAH, BABY!			Holiday On Ice	24	Will'n Doesn't Live Here Anymore				2
Sheryl			Ice Follies of 1967	20	Seven Acts of Shaw				2
Sing Israel Sing			Ice Capades	8	LONG RUNS				
Gilbert Becard on Broadway			LONG RUNS		THE FANTASTICKS				2,977
A Joyful Noise			Eight of the current Broadway attractions have been on view for more than a year. They are listed below with the number of performances they will have given through Friday		POSTSCRIPTS				
REVUES			HELLO DOLLY!	1,441	A View From the Bridge				720
At the Drop of Another Hat			FUNNY GIRL	1,346	The Mad Show				760
Hello, Solly!			FIDDLER ON THE ROOF	1,153	The Patchi Witch				624
REVIVALS			THE ODD COUPLE	953	Hogan's Goat				607
Dinner at Eight			MAN OF LA MANCHA	607	Happy Ending and Day of Absence				504
The Persecution and Assassination of Jean Paul Marat as Performed by the inmates of the Asylum of Charenton Under the Direction of the Marquis De Sade			CACTUS FLOWER	652	The Kitchen				127
MISCELLANEOUS			Compiled by CLARA ROTTER		Sergeant Mustgrave's Dance				135
A Hand Is on the Gate					The World of Gunter Grass				80
The Apparition Theater of Pique					Until the Monkey Comes				54
The Stockholm Marionette Theater of Fantasy in The Theopenny Opera					Command Performance				12

Note: Little Murders appeared On Broadway and is #23 out of 27 plays with only seven performances. The Apple Tree was the best musical for the season. Feiffer's Passionella is a fable about a plain chimney sweep who has her wish come true and is transformed into a big-bosomed movie star, only to find that fame does not bring love.

1968

Closing The Record Book on 1967-68

Interrupted for three days, June 17-19, by the actors' strike on Broadway, the 1967-68 theater season draws to an official close today. For theater buffs, here are the season's productions and their runs.

BROADWAY

	1967-68	1968-69
Plays	41	27
Musicals	11	12
Revue	4	2
	56	41

Shows listed in capital letters are still running

ROSENCRANTZ AND GUILDENSTERN ARE DEAD	293
THERE'S A GIRL IN MY SOUP	290
Spofford	202
THE PRIME OF MISS JEAN BRODIE	188
THE PRICE	162
Joe Egg	154
PLAZA SUITE	153
More Stetely Mansions	141
The Birthday Party	126
I Never Sang For My Father	124
Something Different	103
Everything in the Garden	85
After the Rain	64
Halfway Up the Tree	61
Staircase	61
Portrait of a Queen	60
What Did We Do Wrong?	48
Daphne in Cottage D	41
Before You Go	29
The Seven Descents of Myrtle	28
Ninety-Nine Nights	24
The Promise	23
Weekend	22
Loot	22
Soldiers	22
How to Be a Jewish Mother	21
Avanti!	21
The Only Game in Town	16
Brief Lives	16
By George	13
The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald	9
Dr. Cook's Garden	8
Carry Me Back to Morningside Heights	7
Keep It in the Family	5
The Guide	5
The Exercise	5
Song of the Grasshopper	4
Mike Downstairs	4
A Minor Adjustment	3
Johnny No-Trump	1
Happiest Is Just a Little Thing Called a Rolls Royce	1

MUSICALS

How Now, Dow Jones	221
THE HAPPY TIME	182
GOLDEN RAINBOW	165
GEORGE M!	90
Henry, Sweet Henry	80
HAIR	68
The Grand Music Hall of Israel	4
Darling of the Day	33
The Education of H*Y*M*A*N K*A*P*L*A*N	23

I'm Solomon ... 7
Here's Where I Belong ... 1

REVUES

Leonard Sillman's New Faces of 1968	52
Marlene Dietrich	46
Eddie Fisher-Buddy Hackett	42
Judy Garland	27

REPERTORY THEATER LINCOLN CENTER

Summertime	127
The Unknown Soldier and His Wife	84
Moved to George Abbott Theater for	65
The Little Foxes	60
Moved to Ethel Barrymore Theater for	40
Cyrano De Bergerac	57
Saint Joan	44
Tiger at the Gates	44
Walking to Waldheim and Happiness	43

NEW YORK STATE THEATER LINCOLN CENTER

South Pacific	105
WEST SIDE STORY	8
CITY CENTER	
The Tenth Man	23
Bogdanov	23
Life With Father	22
The King and I	22
MY FAIR LADY	22
The Mikado	22
H.M.S. Pinafore	8
The Pirates of Persence	7
The Yeomen of the Guard	3
Patience	3

APA PHOENIX

The Show-Off	81
Pantagruize	59
Exit the King	47
The Cherry Orchard	38

THEATRE DE LA CITE

THE THREE MUSKETEERS	4
GEORGE DANDIN	2

ATELJE 212 (Belgrade)

JOA, THE TAILOR	4
KING UBU	3

THE JEWISH STATE THEATER OF POLAND

Misde Efor	42
Mother Courage	11

THEATER OF GENOA

The Venetian Twins	22
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THE VIENNA BURGTHEATER

Professor Bernhardt	6
Das Konzert	6
Marie Stuart	6
He Wants to Have a Good Time	6

Compiled by CLARA ROTTER

LONG RUNS

Seven of the current Broadway attractions have been on view for more than a year. They are listed below with the number of performances they have given through last night

HELLO, DOLLY!	1,858
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF	1,572
MAN OF LA MANCHA	1,084
CACTUS FLOWER	1,066
MAME	877
CABARET	670
YOU KNOW I CAN'T HEAR YOU WHEN THE WATERS RUNNING	540

OFF BROADWAY

PLAYS

SCUBA DUBA	300
Iphigenia in Aulis	232
The Indian Wants the Bronx	171
The Trials of Brother Jero and The Strong Breed	115
TOM PAINE	111
The Beard	100
THE BOYS IN THE BAND	89
Saturday Night	66
Ped Cross and Muscels	65
THE CONCEPT	63
COLLISION COURSE	62
Stephen D	56
Nighthawks	52
The Peddler and The Dodo	29
Erd	28
Goo	28
I Must Be Talking to My Friends	27
The Niggerlovers	25
Fragments	24
Jonah!	22
FUTZ!	22
Two Camps by Koutoubas	17
The Poker Session	16
Carving a Statue	16
The Hawk	15
Oh, Say You Can See L.A.	14
Beyond Desire	8
The Little Private World of Arthur Morton Fenwick and No Exit	8
A Certain Young Man	8
The Victims	8
Carol Lullaby	8
I Only Want an Answer	8
Where People's Gather	7
The Four Seasons	6
The Bench	2
Rate of Exchange	1

MUSICALS

CUTLEY McDIMPLE	256
IN CIRCLES	222
Moved to Gramercy Arts	8
YOUR OWN THING	194
Now Is the Time for A! Good	117
THE BELIEVERS	64

Who's Who, Baby?	16
Love and Let Love	14
Frere Jacques	9
Have I Got One for You	1

REVUES

JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS	180
Fun City	11
Now	23
WALK DOWN MAH STREET!	23
Take It from the Top	13
The Musical World of Bertolt Brecht	2

REVIVALS

House of Flowers	57
A MOON FOR THE MISBEHAVING	23
GOTTEN	15
Winter Journey	9
Private Lives	5
Jenco-Jim Crow	5

LE TRETEAU DE PARIS

Le Tartuffe	28
En Attendant Godot	12

ITUCH—The Theater of Latin America

La Remolienda	6
Ituch Anthology	2

AMERICAN PLACE THEATER

Ceremony of Innocence	36
Endecott and the Red Cross	36
Father Uxbridge Wants to Marry	27
The Electronic Nigger and Others	26
Moved to Martinique for	70

THE NEGRO

ENSEMBLE COMPANY

The Song of the Lusitanian	40
Bogey	40
Summer of the Seventeenth Doll	40
Kong's Harvest	39
DADDY GOODNESS	32

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL CENTRAL PARK

The Comedy of Errors	22
King John	19
Titus Andronicus	17
HENRY IV, PART I	9
HENRY IV, PART II	8

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

PUBLIC THEATER

HAIR	65
Moved to Cheetah for	45
Moved to Biltmore	68
Hamlet	64
The Memorandum	64
Ergo	63

LONG RUNS

THE FANTASTICKS	3,414
YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN	556

1968 Jo 30, 11, 6 5

Note: Off-Broadway Collision Course. See Appendix III for a reprint of The Unexpurgated Memoirs of Bernard Morgendeiler.

Closing The Record Book on 1968-69

The curtain rings down on the 1968-69 theater season tomorrow.
Here is a summary of the season's productions and their runs.

BROADWAY			OKLAHOMA!			CITY CENTER			APA PHOENIX		
	1968-69	1967-68									
Plays	28	41	Carnival	30		Tea Party and The Basement	176		The Millionaire	17	
Musicals	13	11				ADAPTATION and NEXT	150		The Firebugs	8	
Revue	1	4				Big Time Buck White	129		LE TRETEAU DE PARIS		
	42	56				THE MAN WITH THE FLOWER IN HIS MOUTH	80		Pique-Nique En Campagne	16	
						Sweet Eros and Witness	78		and Guernica	11	
						Tango	75		Quasi-Quasi		
						CEREMONIES IN DARK			DIE BRUCKE		
						OLD MEN	72		Minna von Barnhelm	8	
						DE SADE ILLUSTRATED	55		Das Schloss	6	
						Spitting Image	49		THE PIRAIKON THEATRON		
						The People vs. Ranchman	41		Iphigenia In Aulis	8	
						Spare Who?	41		Hippolytus	8	
						Stop, You're Killing Me	39		AMERICAN PLACE THEATER		
						The Grab Bag	37		Trainer, Dean Liepolt and Company	44	
						Riot	31		Papp	44	
						Lemonade and The Auto-graph Hound	28		Boy on the Straight-Back Chair	43	
						In the Bar of a Tokyo Hotel	25		The Cannibals	39	
						An Ordinary Man	24		NEGRO		
						Philosophy in the Boudoir	24		ENSEMBLE COMPANY		
						Eccl's	23		Ceremonies in Dark Old Men	40	
						TONIGHT IN LIVING COLOR	23		God Is a (Guess What?)	32	
						Open 24 Hours			An Evening of One Acts	32	
						and Satisfaction Guaranteed	22		The Song of the Lutesian-Bogey	24	
						The Perfect Party	22		Daddy Goodness	24	
						War Games	22		NEW YORK		
						TIME FOR BED			SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL		
						TAKE ME TO BED	21		CENTRAL PARK		
						Before I Wake	17		King Henry IV, Part One	23	
						Troia Play	17		Romeo and Juliet	21	
						Shoot Anything with Haw	17		King Henry IV, Part Two	13	
						That Moves	17		NEW YORK		
						Frank Gagliano's City Scene	16		SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL		
						Someone's Comin' Hungry	16		PUBLIC THEATER		
						The Triumph of Robert Emmet	15		Cities in Bezique	67	
						Pets	15		Invitation to a Beheading	67	
						Lime Green/Khal Blue	13		NO PLACE TO BE	66	
						The Honest-to-God Schnezzels	8		SOMEBODY	51	
						A Home Away From	8		Huu, Huu	51	
						Another City, Another Land	8		ROUNABOUT THEATER		
						Make Me Disappear	8		Candida	91	
						The World of Mrs. Solomon	8		King Lear	54	
						Americana Pastoral	7		Journey's End	32	
						A Corner of the Bed	7		DANCE OF DEATH	26	
						God Bless You	7		LONG RUNS		
						Harold Fineberg	7		THE FANTASTICKS	3,834	
						The Empire Builders	6		YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN	937	
						Exhibition	6		CURLEY McDIMPLE	680	
						Art and The Great			YOUR OWN THING	606	
						Airplane Snatch	5		JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE		
						Fireworks	5		AND WELL AND LIVING		
						Papers	2		IN PARIS	596	
						PEQUOD	1		THE BOYS IN THE BAND	501	
						The Transgressor Rides Again	1		POSTSCRIPTS		
						Don't Shoot Mable	1		Scuba Duba	704	
						It's Your Husband	1		Tom Paine	295	
						Possibilities	1		The Believers	295	
						The David Show	1		Futzi	233	
						Yes Yes, No No	1		The Concept	215	
						World War 2 1/2	1		A Moon for the Misbegotten	197	
						THE GLORIOUS RULER	1		The Indian Wants The Bronx and It's Called the Sugar Plum	177	
						MUSICALS			Walk Down Mah Street!	135	
						DAMES AT SEA	217		Collision Course	78	
						PEACE	176		In Circles	56	
						How to Steal an Election	30		SOLO SHOWS		
						Horsemen, Pass By	39		An Evening with Max Morath at the Turn of the Century	140	
						PROMENADE	31		Vinnie Burrows	24	
						Get Thee to Canterbury	20		Chad Mitchell	12	
						The Happy Houdini	17				
						Month of Sundays	8				
						Up Eden	8				
						Bailed for a Finny Squad	7				
						Just for Love	6				
						REVUES					
						The Fourth Wall	141				
						WHORES WARS AND					
						IN PAN ALLEY	16				
						CHI CALCUTTA!	16				
						REVIVALS					
						LITTLE MURDERS	223				
						Of Thee I Sing	21				
						OFF BROADWAY					
						PLAYS					
						TO BE YOUNG, GIFTED AND BLACK	205				
						GESE	193				
						POSTSCRIPTS					
						Cactus Flower	1,234				
						You Know I Can't Hear You	756				
						When the Water's Running	435				
						George M!	426				
						The Price	421				
						Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead	383				
						Golden Rainbow	380				
						The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie	322				
						There's a Girl in My Soup	286				
						The Happy Time					
						REVUE					
						NOEL COWARD'S SWEET POTATO	44				
						REPERTORY THEATER LINCOLN CENTER					
						IN THE MATTER OF ROBERT OPPENHEIMER	60				
						King Lear	57				
						A Cry of Playrs	56				
						The Miser	52				
						Bananas	42				
						The Inner Journey	36				
						The Year Boston Won the Pennant	36				
						An Evening for Merlin Finch and A Great Career	35				
						NEW YORK STATE THEATER LINCOLN CENTER					
						West Side Story	59				

Compiled by CLARA ROTTEN

Note: Revues: Oh! Calcutta! opens. Feiffer, along 1968-69. Leonard Melfi, John Lennon, Sam Sheppard and Samuel Beckett co-authored a sex-revue performed in the nude. It was originated and coordinated by Kenneth Tynan, a long-time respected London critic.

Revivals: Little Murders is the number one revival in 1969, after being chosen as the best foreign play of the year (1968) in London.

Closing The Record Book on 1969-70

The curtain rings down on the 1969-70 theater season Tuesday.
Here is a summary of the season's productions and their runs.

BROADWAY

	1969-70	1968-69
Plays	20	28
Musicals	13	13
Revue	1	1
	24	42

PLAYS

Shows listed in capital letters are still running.

BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE	290
LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS	212
CHILD'S PLAY	183
BORSTAL BOY	106
Sheep on the Runway	105
Paris Is Out!	104
Indians	96
A Patriot for Me	49
Inquest	28
Grin and Bore It! and Postcards	16
The Chinese and Dr. Fish	15
Norman, Is That You?	12
Love Is a Time of Day	8
The Penny Wren	5
Angela	4
The Mundy Schems	4
The Engagement Baby	4
Brightower	1
Blood Red Roses	1
A Place for Polly	1

MUSICALS

COCO	223
PURLIE	122
APPLAUSE	104
Jimmy	84
Minne's Boys	76
COMPANY	75
Look to the Ladies	25
Cry for Us All	9
Buck White	7
Park	5
Gatsby	4
Georgy	4
La Strada	1

REVUE

The New Music Hall of Israel	60
REPERTORY THEATER OF LINCOLN CENTER	
In the Matter of J. Robert Oppenheimer	174
Landscape and Silence	53
Beggar on Horseback	52
Operation Sideshow	52
Comino Real	52
The Time of Your Life	52
The Increased Difficulty of Concentration	28
The Disintegration of James Cherry	28
Amphitryon	28

NEW YORK STATE THEATER	
Oklahoma!	83

CITY CENTER	
Marcel Marceau	24
The Grand Kabab	18
Rebels	16

COMEDIE FRANCAISE	
Le Malade Imaginaire	8
La Troupe Du Roi and	

Amphitryon	4
Don Juan	5
Les Femmes Savantes	5

ANTA INVITATIONAL SERIES

Harvey	80
Our Town	36
Timy Alice	26
A Flea in Her Ear	23
The Three Sisters	20
Henry V	16
No Place to Be Somebody	15
Gloria and Esperanza	12
The National Theater of the Deaf	8
Wilson in the Promise Land	7
Watercolor and Cross-Crossing	5
The Cherry Orchard	5

SOLD SHOW

Charles Aznavour	23
------------------	----

REVIVALS

Private Lives	239
The Front Page	158
Three Men on a Horse	100
THE BOY FRIEND	89
Canoe	8

ICE SHOWS

Ice Capades	20
Holiday on Ice	19
Ice Follies of 1970	18
Eurocirc	16

LONG RUNS

HELLO, DOLLY!	2,639
HADDLER ON THE ROOF	2,405
MAN OF LA MANCHA	1,918
PLAZA SUITE	985
HAIR	903
PROMISES, PROMISES	660
FORTY CARATS	631
1776	540

POSTSCRIPTS

Mame	1,508
Cabaret	1,166
The Great White Hope	557
Play It Again, Sam	454
Madman Vii	359
Zorba	306

OFF BROADWAY

	1969-70	1968-69
Plays	55	55
Musicals	22	11
	77	66

PLAYS

The Concept	268
And Puppy Dog Tails	141
The White House Murder Case	119
A Black Quartet	111
A Whistle in the Dark	100
THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS	96
The Reckoning	94
A Scout of Flowers	72

WHAT THE BUTLER SAW	65
COLETTE	64
Passing Through from Exotic Places	60
Seven Days of Mourning	55
The Trees Die Standing	53
Dear Janet Rosenberg, Dear Mr. Kooning	48
Hello and Goodbye	44
The Ofay Watcher	40
Who's Happy Now?	40
Transfers	36
The Memory Bank	25
The Moon Dreamers	24
Nature of the Crime	24
How Much, How Much?	24
Chicago 70	24
The Unseen Hand and Forensic and the Navigators	21
The Persians	21
The Jumping Fool	16
Contributions	16
Lemon Sky	16
Calling in Crazy	15
Little Boxes	15
The Criminals	15
THE CAGE	15
Slave Ship	13
Arena Conta Zumbi	13
BOESMAN AND LENA	10
Crimes of Passion	9
Silhouettes	8
The Haunted Host	8
Rose	8
The Local Stigmatic	8
Love Your Crooked Neighbor	8
The Brownstone Uge	7
Instructions for the Running of Trains, Etc., on the Erie Railway, to Go-Into Effect January 1, 1862	7
Nobody Hears a Broken Drum	6
The Nest	6
The End of All Things Natural	5
The Shepherd of Avenue B and Steal the Old Man's Bundle	5
Candide, Commissioner	5
THE DIRTIEST SHOW IN TOWN	4
And I Met a Man	4
Sourball	1
The American Hamburger League	1
The Moths	1
The Nuns	1
STEAMBOAT	1

Salvation	239
THE LAST SWEET DAYS OF ISAAC	177
JOY	175
Jhs Was Burlesque	106
The Hoofers	94
Unfair to Golath	75
Whores, War and Tin Pan Alley	57
THE ME NOBODY KNOWS	49
Billy Nomme	46
The Drunkard	42
Gertrude Stein's First Reader	40
Show Me Where the Good Times Are	29
From Israel with Laughter	20
Rondelay	15

MUSICALS

God Is Back, Black and Sing-ing Gospel	15
Love and Maple Syrup	15
Whispers on the Wind	9
Mahagonny	8
I Dreamt I Dwelt in Bloom-ingdale's	6
Lyle	3
Exchange	1
The House of Leather	1

REVIVALS

Fortune and Men's Eyes	231
Summertime	184
Dark of the Moon	86
Madde Gabler	81
ROOM SERVICE	56
Awake and Sing	40
Slow Dance on the Killing Ground	36
From the Second City	31
Mirale Eftos	15
The Madwoman of Chaillet	7
Lulu	1

LE TRETEAU DE PARIS

Lettere Morte/Archibue	10
Oh Les Beaux Jours	10
Le Grand Vair/Le Cosmonaute Agnole	9
La Lacune/Le Jeune Fille A Maier/Les Chances	8

DIE SCHAUSPIELTRUPPE ZURICH

The Marriage of Mr. Mississippi	6
Philipp Hotz and The Firebugs	6
Iphigenie of Tauro	1

POLISH LAS THEATER

The Constant Prince	15
Acropolis	11
Apocalypse Cum Figure	8

CHELSEA THEATER

Slave Ship	41
The Brass Butterfly	7
The Universal Nigger	6

OPEN THEATER

Terminal	9
Endgame	8
The Serpent	3

AMERICAN PLACE THEATER

Five on the Black Hand Side	83
Mercy Street	52
The Pig Pen	46
Two Times One	37

NEGRO ENSEMBLE CO.

Brotherhood and Day of Absence	64
The Herangres	54
Alokeve	44
Man Better Man	32

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Stamp	174
Sambo	66
Mod Donna	54

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL CENTRAL PARK

Tenth Night	20
Peer Gynt	19

THE WARS OF THE ROSES, PART I	3
THE WARS OF THE ROSES, PART II	2
RICHARD III	2

ROUNDABOUT THEATER

Dance of Death	55
Oedipus	52
Trumpets and Drums	40
The Lady From Mazms	40
Macbeth	37

ANTA MATINEE SERIES

Dream of a Blacklisted Actor	3
A Round with King	2
Oh, Pioneers	2
Cruising Speed 600 MPH and Mrs. Snow	2

SOLO SHOW

Go Fly A Kite	8
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LONG RUNS

THE FANTASTICKS	4,253
YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN	1,388
JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS	1,008
THE BOYS IN THE BAND	923
ADAPTATION-NEXT	579
NO PLACE TO BE SOMEBODY	449
OHI CALCUTTA!	432

POSTSCRIPTS

Your Own Thing	933
Curly McDimples	931
Dames at Sea	575
Little Murders	400
To Be Young, Gifted and Black	380
Grease	336
Ceremonies in Dark Old Man	323
Promenade	259
Peace	192
De Sede Illustrated	117
The Glorious Ruler	8

Compiled by CLERE ROTTER

Note: Off-Broadway: The White House Murder Case is the 3rd longest run of the season.

Long runs: Oh! Calcutta!

Closing The Record Book on 1970-71

The curtain rings down on the 1970-71 season Wednesday.
Here is a summary of the season's productions and their runs.

BROADWAY

	1970-71	1969-70
Plays	33	52
Musicals	12	16
Revue	0	1
	45	69

PLAYS

Shows listed in capital letters are still running.

SLEUTH	265
PAUL SILL'S STORY	240
THEATER	193
The Gingerbread Lady	158
Bob And Ray—The Two And Only	144
Conduct Unbecoming	111
Home	108
And Miss Reardon Drinks A Little	104
How The Other Half Loves	72
The Philanthropist	57
Four On A Garden	53
Abelard And Heloise	42
All Over	42
LENNY	40
Les Blancs	33
METAMORPHOSES	21
Not Now, Darling	4
Scratch	1
Father's Day	1

MUSICALS

THE ROTHSCHILDS	292
TWO BY TWO	268
FOLLIES	101
Light, Lovely And Yiddish	85
The President's Daughter	78
70, Girls, 70	36
Ad	19
Lovely Ladies, Kind Gentlemen	16
Earl of Ruston	5
Frank Memmivell	1

REPERTORY THEATER, LINCOLN CENTER

An Enemy Of The People	54
The Playboy Of The Western World	52
The Good Woman Of Setzuan	46
Antigone	46
The Birthday Party	39
PLAY STRINDBERG	32
Scenes From American Life	30
Pictures In The Hallway	20
Landscape & Silence	6

REVIVALS

NO, NO, NANETTE	187
A Midsummer Night's Dream	77
You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown	32
May Fever	24
Othello	16
Charley's Aunt	9

PHOENIX

The Trial Of The Catonsville Nine	152
The School For Wives	120

ICE SHOWS

Moscow Circus On Ice	39
Ice Capades	20

Disney On Parade	22
Holiday On Ice Of 1971	19
LONG RUNS	
FIDDLER ON THE ROOF	2,823
HAIR	1,321
PROMISES, PROMISES	1,069
1776	956
OH! CALCUTTA!	847
BUTTERFLIES ARE FREE	708
LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS	630
PURLIE	541
APPLAUSE	525
COMPANY	494
THE ME NOBODY KNOWS	431

POSTSCRIPTS

Hello, Dolly!	2,844
Man Of La Mancha	2,328
Plaza Suite	1,098
Forty Carats	781
Child's Play	343
Coco	333
Borstal Boy	143
The Boy Friend	111

OFF BROADWAY

	1970-71	1969-70
Plays	82	108
Musicals	16	22
Revue	3	1
	101	125

PLAYS

THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES	162
Happy Birthday, Wanda June	143
Alice In Wonderland	122
A Dream Out Of Time	49
Foreplay	38
Acrobats & Line	31
A Place Without Doors	30
Behold! Cometh The Vanderkellans	23
Score	23
Charlie Was Here And Now He's Gone	17
BLACK GIRL	17
In New England Winter	13
The Emerald Slippers	10
Any Resemblance To Persons Living Or Dead	9
THE LAST ANALYSIS	9
Three By Ferlinghetti	8
The Justice Box	8
Istanbul	7
Opium	7
The Castro Complex	7
One Night Stands Of A Noisy Passenger	7
The Olathe Response	6
Things That Almost Happen	5
The Immaculate Conception	2
Gandhi	1
The Shrinking Bride	1
The Candyapple	1
My House Is Your House	1
Children In The Rain	1
Johnny Johnson	1
And Whose Little Boy Are You?	1

MUSICALS

TOUCH	305
Golden Bat	152
Stage Movie	89
Earthlight	56
GODSPELL	50
The Survival Of St. Joan	17
Stations	16
The Ballad Of Johnny Pat	14
Do It Again!	14
Sa	8
A Day In The Life Of Just About Everyone	7
Kiss Now	3
Soon	3
Look Where I'm At	1
The Red White And Black	1

REVUES

THE PROPOSITION	127
To Be Or Not To Be—What Kind Of Question Is That?	40
Cooler Near The Lake	22

REVIVALS

Days At Sea	170
WAITING FOR GODOT	170
Macbeth	132
A Doll's House	111
ONE FLEW OVER THE CUCKOO'S NEST	114
LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT	61
Hedda Gabler	56
The Homecoming	34
Wayback	5
Dance Of Death	4

LE TRETEAU DE PARIS

Amente Anglaise	16
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DIE BRUCKE

Keimbürgerhochzeit & Die Kurve	10
Amphitryon	8

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

PUBLIC THEATER

Subject To Fit's Treachery Of The Wells'	127
Here Are Ladies	67
Jack MacGowan In The Works Of Samuel Beckett	54
THE BASIC TRAINING OF PAVLO HUMMEL	53
The Happiness Cage	40
Eood	40
Underground	38
Sag	32
DANCE WITH ME	31
Candide	19
Bread And Puppet Theater	11

NEW YORK SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

CENTRAL PARK

Richard III	20
The Wars Of The Roses, Part I	18
The Wars Of The Roses, Part II	17

AMERICAN PLACE THEATER

The Carpenters	44
Sunday Dinner	42

Pinkville	42
Back Bay Beast Bait	39

NEGRO ENSEMBLE CO.

Ododo	48
Rosales Pritchett & Perry's Mission	44
The Dream On Monkey Mountain	48
Ride A Black Horse	24

CHELSEA THEATER CENTER

AC/DC	28
Saved	31
Moved Off Broadway	29
Tarot	15
Moved Off Broadway	33
Self-Accusation & My Foot My Tutor	2

ROUNDABOUT THEATRE

Hamlet	54
Uncle Vanya	45
Moved Off Broadway	3
She Stoops To Conquer	44
Chas. Abbott & Son	24

CSC REPERTORY

Rosencrans & Guildenstern Are Dead	48
Pericles	22
Hamlet	18
Twelfth Night	16
Uncle Vanya	15
Men And Superman	14
Moby Dick	8

ANTA MATINEE SERIES

A Passage To E. M. Fowler	2
The Perfect Match & Slow Memories	2
The Life And Times Of J. Walter Smith	2
Heritage	2

LONG RUNS

THE FANTASTICKS	4,842
JACQUES BREL IS ALIVE AND WELL AND LIVING IN PARIS	1,423
THE EFFECT OF GAMMA RAYS ON MAN-IN-THE-MOON MARIGOLDS	455
THE DIRTIEST SHOW IN TOWN	417

POSTSCRIPTS

You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown	1,597
The Boys In The Band	1,001
Adaptation & Next	707
No Place To Be Somebody	376
The Last Sweet Days Of Isaac	485
What The Butler Saw	224
Joy	208
Boesman And Lena	205
Steam Bath	127
Colette	108
The Cage	97
Room Service	71

MISCELLANY

Orlando Furioso	27
Jonathan Miller's Hamlet	7
Theater On The Balustrade Of Prague	6
Emlyn Williams As Charles Dickens	5
Noh Kyogen	3
Judith Anderson's Hamlet	2

Compiled by CLARA ROTTER

Note: Long runs: Oh! Calcutta!

APPENDIX III

Collision Course

The Unexpurgated Memoirs of Bernard Morgendeiler

The Unexpurgated Memoirs of Bernard Morgendeiler is a dialogue that appeared in 1965 in a cartoon anthology of the same name. It later appeared in 1968 as a skit in a play called Collision Course and then it appeared again as a written play in an anthology of plays compiled by Edward Parone. (I have been told by Dr. Peter Ohlin, Chairman of the Graduate Department of English at McGill, that the same dialogue appeared in Playboy some years earlier than 1965, and that it was in the form of a cartoon.) The Unexpurgated Memoirs of Bernard Morgendeiler is a perfect example of the progression of Feiffer as a cartoonist to a playwright. That this brief play was selected for the Collision Course anthology is a clear indication of the type of satire Feiffer was writing in the 60's and what Feiffer hoped to do with his satire.

The introduction to Collision Course includes the famous question Thoreau asked of Emerson when he was in jail: "Waldo why are you not here?" The implication, of course,

is that society's hypocrisy cannot be faced with complicity, but must be challenged by some form of rebellion. Collision Course is composed of artists' work who have challenged the system by dissenting from aesthetic norms and exposing some of the basic hypocritical realities in America. Feiffer's piece in Collision Course is a sexual exploit. It epitomizes the absolute and genuine utter confusion that surrounds sexual attitudes in America in the 1960's. It exposes the hypocritical basis of sexual behaviour admitting desire, trying to abnegate guilt but at the same time suffering from it. The theme of castration is also included which is so often important in understanding Feiffer's notion of the relationship between men and women.

The purpose of Edward Parone's anthology links him closely with Feiffer in an uncanny way. Parone apparently had been effected by the Kennedy assassination and felt that public art should no longer be a Philistinean experience. "... the artist and the audience must confront each other."¹

I am certain he felt the incoherence in the American (specifically New York) culture that Feiffer calls Gratuitous Violence, when he flings a remark like this to his readers:

"Maybe they (the audience) are waiting and hoping for paradise to be painted again; but maybe they are there to know the paradise they live in. Nothing is sure. Yes, maybe one thing is sure: the news of assassinations keeps arriving - as sure as shit."

Edward Parone.
Introduction
Collision Course, p. viii

¹Edward Parone, ed. Collision Course (New York: Random House, 1968), p. vii.

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The Unexpurgated Memoirs of Bernard Morgendeiler.

INTRODUCTION

*(The scene is a bedroom late at night. BERNARD and
NAOMI sit disconsolately)*

NAOMI Don't feel too bad.

BERNARD I'm sorry. You understand?

NAOMI What's there to be sorry about?

BERNARD I had too much to drink. You understand? I mean
ordinarily I *never* have trouble like this.

NAOMI Will you please believe me? You don't owe me any
explanation. It's not as if it's a *test* or anything.

BERNARD Well, it's when I have too much to drink you see—

NAOMI *(Trying to placate)* What do you think—I *grade* men?

BERNARD *(Winces)* It's the alcohol—I just can't *(Gropes for right
word)* function—

NAOMI Please, you needn't be so much on the *defensive*

BERNARD *(Freezes)* Who's on the defensive?

NAOMI All I'm saying is it's not that much of a big—



BERNARD (*Tersely*) Don't tell me I'm on the defensive when I'm not on the defensive.

NAOMI Listen, I don't want to make a big thing out of—

BERNARD (*Bitterly*) Yeah? Yeah? Yeah, I bet you don't, don't you? Yeah!

NAOMI What's the matter with you?

BERNARD Saying that I'm on the defensive *puts* me on the defensive. Before you said I was on the defensive do you think I was on the defensive? I *wasn't* on the defensive.

NAOMI I'm sorry. O.K.? I'm sorry.

BERNARD (*Coldly*) That was a castrating remark.

NAOMI (*Amazed*) Saying I'm sorry?

BERNARD (*Nastily*) Don't take it out of context. I'm an authority on castrating remarks. Women *always* try to get away with them on me. They *never* do. I can recognize a castrating remark a hundred miles away!

(THEY stare at each other glumly)

NAOMI (*Softly*) Can I say something? (HE *nods*) You're not going to believe this but it's true.

BERNARD (*Impatiently*) Sure. Sure.

NAOMI I—I didn't mean to make a castrating remark.

BERNARD Sure. Sure.

NAOMI Sometimes they just come out.

BERNARD Yeah.

NAOMI It's like sometimes every word I say is exactly like my

mother! I could kill myself. Some things are a mistake. (SHE touches him) Not everything is deliberate. (HE looks at her with warmth. THEY touch hands) Want to try again?

BERNARD (*Withdraws*) The alcohol—you know— It wouldn't. I couldn't— The alcohol—(Pauses to collect himself) How about tomorrow?

NAOMI If I ask a question will it offend you?

BERNARD I don't know. Try.

NAOMI You want to go home now, don't you?

BERNARD Well, I wouldn't say— Well, we are sort of finished here, aren't we?

NAOMI You're very uncomfortable.

BERNARD (*Weakly*) Well, I've got a lot on my mind lately. Southeast Asia and everything. (Pause as SHE stares at him uncomforted) Nuclear holocaust. (Pause) The depression.

NAOMI What depression?

BERNARD Mine.

NAOMI It's like you've already left. It's like you're out of the room right now.

BERNARD (*Giggles uncomfortably*) I guess I am. I often don't know until I'm told.

NAOMI Listen. This is a difficult question to ask. Do you—do you enjoy making love?

BERNARD (*Leaps up*) Listen! I just had a little too much to drink!

NAOMI Look, I know it's hard to talk about. Will you please listen

to me for a minute. I'm a difficult person, all right?

BERNARD Boy!
(HE sits down)

NAOMI But tell me—when it's over—do you feel *happy*? (No answer) Can't you talk to me? Then answer this. Do you feel good? (No answer) Listen. Do me a favor? This one favor? You don't have to talk about it, all right? We'll do it so you don't have to talk about it. I'll ask the question—and you blink once for yes and twice for no. (HE looks at her as if SHE's mad) When it's over do you feel happy? (Long pause) Once for yes—twice for no. (Long pause. HE blinks twice. SHE nods knowingly) Do you feel guilty? (HE blinks once instantly) Everybody I know feels guilty! Why do you feel guilty? (No answer) Is it because we don't really know each other? You feel we're not really having a relationship? (No answer) Blink.

BERNARD (Explodes) I'm tired of blinking! Well, is there a relationship? Is there? Is there? We meet at a party, we talk maybe twenty minutes in all, we come up here and I can't do it. I admit it—you've broken me down! I don't like being in this position. I don't enjoy it—you're right there—I don't—and you're right again—I do feel guilty! And I want to thank you. I've gotten more sexual gratification out of this speech I just made than if I had gone to bed with you!

NAOMI Don't you understand what the trouble is?

BERNARD I'm that rare kind of person who can't have sex out of context. I want a relationship! I'm a nut!

NAOMI Crap! (HE winces) Why does every bourgeois male I meet have to put a value judgment on sex?

BERNARD (Frostily) You don't frighten me. I am not afraid of the term bourgeois!

NAOMI Everybody has to prove it's not *wrong*! Why for God's sake? Why? You don't mind cheating on your income tax and *that's* wrong, you don't mind lying to girls who you're tired of and *that's* wrong, but the one thing that's *super-wrong* you can't admit is wrong!

BERNARD There is nothing wrong with the sexual act. Properly administered it can be beautiful. Where are you from? Out of the dark ages?

NAOMI Don't believe it for a minute.

BERNARD Psychologists tell us—

NAOMI Don't believe it.

BERNARD I do believe it. It's not wrong!

NAOMI Then it must be *right*.

BERNARD (Uncertainly) Well, just because it may not be right doesn't mean it's wrong. Sex is clean you know.

NAOMI Don't believe it!

BERNARD It is! Psychologists tell us—

NAOMI They're lying! Nobody really believes sex is clean.

BERNARD Psychologists tell us—

NAOMI Nobody believes it. Do you believe it?

BERNARD Mine is a unique case.

NAOMI They're lying! That's what confuses everybody. You can't turn sex into something pure like brushing your teeth! Sex is

exactly what you thought it was when you first learned about it!

BERNARD (With growing excitement) You mean on the streets? It's dirty?

NAOMI (Nods) Sex is dirty!

BERNARD (Alarmed) ~~It is dirty!~~ As soon as I said it I knew!

NAOMI Right!

BERNARD It is! It is! It always has been! It always will be! They were lying to me! It's dirty! It's evil! It's bad!

NAOMI Right!

BERNARD (Delighted) I can enjoy it now!

NAOMI My own!

(SHE opens her arms, BERNARD emits an ugly laugh. THEY embrace violently)

Blackout

APPENDIX IV

Blanket Statements

The following is a listing, by anthology, of the subject matter of the blanket statement cartoons not included in the text. This appendix will give the reader a survey of every different subject Feiffer examines in a socio-political way.

Sick, Sick, Sick (1958)

1. Fall-out, a push for a commercial campaign to popularize fallout.
2. Eisenhower says the law is to be obeyed. White law and colored law, so the world can respect America's moral stand.
3. Fall-out, bigger bombs, but less fallout.
4. Anger, make anger marketable, "loud but harmless, take the threat out of anger, make anger friendly."
5. Rebellion can be profitable.

Passionella (1959)

1. Boom! (a fable) The government dupes the Americans to buy fall-out. Fall-out is profitable.
2. Munro (a fable) The military inducts a four year-old.

The Explainers (1960)

1. Corruption causes juvenile delinquency; legalize corruption to give kids back their roots.

2. Television is mediocre; infiltrate quality slowly to get the public to think it is still mediocre.
3. Humor is dead.
4. America's stage of governmental development is labeled "free-form corruption."
5. Writers sacrifice their integrity for commercial success.
6. Eisenhower stands in the middle of the road and endorses everything.

Boy, Girl, Boy, Girl (1961)

1. Cold War: Instill middle class values in under-privileged nations to solve the Cold War.
2. Middle income housing is very expensive.
3. High-rise alienation.
4. The crime on television readies one for life.
5. The world is split into two classes: those afraid of cops and those who don't realize the issue is at stake.
6. Integrated cocktail parties; the next one will have two black people.
7. The family builds two fallout shelters: one for their "girl" and one for themselves.
8. WWII pre-centennial celebration as there won't be an opportunity afterwards.
9. Commercial entertainments: blacklists on movies gives guilt to the movie makers; this leads to improvement of quality.
10. Conservatism in publishing.
11. "Take away crime from the white collar worker and you will rob him of his last vestige of job interest."
12. Newspapers are prejudice.
13. Deception in publishing; know the market, not the content.

14. "If suppression cannot disarm criticism, amiable acceptance can."

Hold Me (1963)

1. Youth are afraid of the responsibility of defending their country.
2. Government tries to control anti-American sentiment.
3. Military is tyrannical.
4. Television culture teaches the youth, not school.
5. News personalities, not content, control our reaction to the news.
6. Architecture is destroyed in the name of progress.
7. A mass migration to the suburbs after the bomb drops.
8. Black men incite integration by instilling fear.
9. Bring democracy to corruption!?
10. The Military's strategy is based on comic strips.
11. Radical Middle: "Bold times call for bold answers, within reason in a manner of speaking, more or less."
12. Neutron bomb does not harm machines; it only kills people. Then we're all safe.

Feiffer on Civil Rights (1966)

All cartoons express social themes concerning racism.

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