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Bioengineer Program Meets Health Needs

Now entering its third academic year, TAMU's bioengineering program is well on its way to helping meet the national need for an increase in health professionals. "Physicians and engineers alike are steadily recognizing that our society does not have persons broadly enough trained to solve critical health care delivery problems," noted Dr. Paul H. Newell Jr., professor and head of the bioengineering program.

The university's interest in social betterment led to the 1969 inception of the bioengineering program, mission-oriented to the educational preparation of future bioengineering and the execution of research and development on pressing social and medical problems.

"The interdisciplinary nature of our program produces a strong influence upon each student of the many variables which must be identified and dealt with in solving complex problems of living systems," Newell said.

Newell is also director of the Rehabilitation Engineering Center, a joint activity between TAMU, Baylor College of Medicine and the Texas Institute of Rehabilitation and Research. He cited rehabilitation engineering as a major opportunity for bioengineering involvement.

"The research and development projects in which our graduate students also participate, will offer new knowledge, techniques and systems that can eventually be incorporated into the clinical environment for direct patient benefit," Newell said.

Citing the ambitious efforts of the faculty to obtain research appropriations, Newell said that all present bioengineering graduate students are receiving research assistantships.

Graduate students in the Bioengineering Department at TAMU are involved in research programs ranging from pressure relief systems, instrumental in preventing and treating bedsores, to development of an artificial skin material which will be compatible with body tissue.

Another project deals with an inexpensive implantable system for mass-monitoring temperature in animals. Such instrumentation would make possible early detection of disease in animals and would have particular application in raising livestock.

One student is developing a model of the lymphatic system, which could result in an increased understanding of the dynamics of the lymphatic system, a vital ingredient in controlling cancer. Another student is dealing with the design of servo-systems for automobile controls which would be used by the disabled.

"The graduate students' interdisciplinary training is molded through a fusion of research con-

tributions and bioengineering courses," Newell noted, "Biomedical compatibility and biochemical thermodynamics are current graduate course offerings."

He said bioengineering undergraduate students will study biomedical and social systems as a program introduction. Other undergraduate courses in the department include bioelectric and biocontrol systems and the theoretical analysis.

"It's a major asset that our bioengineering students are acquiring a broad background under the guidance of an interdisciplinary faculty," Newell added. "And, the opportunity of clinically-based study, made possible through our agreements with Baylor College of Medicine and the Texas Institute for Rehabilitation and Research, has enhanced the total learning experience of this program."

Batt Film Review 'Harry in Pocket'

By JULIA JONES

The best time for movie reviews is right before the weekend. A reviewer can steer the innocent away from bad flicks and shove them toward the good ones before they go. However, in some cases a reviewer should forget the time rule and save as many as possible. There are only three days left on "Harry In Your Pocket," but a fan saved is a fan earned. In other words, don't go. "Harry" is not the worst effort that has been made, but it leaves a hungry feeling an hour after being seen (yes, like a Chinese restaurant). It is one of Hollywood's new fads, flicks made on location. These are often low-budgeted pictures that have a small cast and rely heavily on the civilian population for walk-on parts. Most of them are low on plot and high on scenery. They often rely on some gimmick the audience will be interested in.

'Harry' it is pick-pocketing. Some of the recent releases of this sort were "White Lightning," filmed in Little Rock, Ark, and "Sugarland Express" with Goldie Hawn. "Express" was made in Houston, as was "The Thief that came to Dinner," a mildly charming try. "Harry" follows this formula to the tee. The story is about two young pick-pockets, played by Michel Sarrazin and Trish Van Devere. Down on their luck they join forces with two professionals to learn the trade. The chief professional is Harry, played by James Coburn.

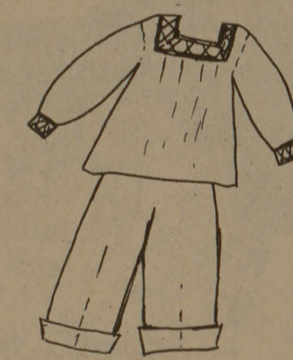
The rest of the story is learning to pick-pocket in three easy lessons while trying hard to keep the audience's sympathy. I found it hard to sympathize, but it was fascinating to see how a pick-pocket plies his trade. That was the only fascinating thing. The rest of the flick is filled with boy loves girl, Harry loves girl, girl loves both. It also has boy gets girl, boy loses girl, boy gets girl back, maybe. By the time boy gets girl back he could have been kissing his nurse for all I cared.

There are many inconsistencies in the plot. Harry is portrayed as a hard case that would sell his own mother to a fence, yet in the end he sacrifices himself for Sarrazine whom he despises. The director obviously expected the audience to sympathize with his characters, but as a poor aggie who values money, I was rooting for the cops. The only real action was picking pockets and endless meals in hotel restaurants. Obviously filmed in the same Holiday Inn, atmosphere is not one of its strong points. James Coburn gives a stony performance, however he is so good to look at that you might forgive him. Trish Van Devere, who incidentally is Ms. George C. Scott, is all right. She succeeds in looking fairly intelligent, which was not easy with the lines she has.

If you are thinking of a night out between now and Thursday save your money and try television instead. At least you can change the channel.

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