

stage manager Jeanie Parrent. Parrent says Doigg has memorized 90 percent of the lines in four days.

Theater students also spent a lot of time in the library. Elliot says it takes a lot of digging to come up with an audition piece a director hasn't heard a thousand times before.

Theater students seem to think they are different from the rest of campus, but probably not for the reasons people think. Aggie Players president Jeff Danish says the difference is that theater people have nothing to hide from one another.

**"T**heater arts majors have a real tendency to be... bitchy," he says. "We have no manners when we're around each other. But we do know how to act in public and we'll accept anyone if they'll accept us."

English major Emma Reading says it's this bond between the people in a production which attracts her to theater.

"It's like a family," she says. "They're complete strangers and you have to trust them."

Freshman Steve McCauley says that when a rehearsal goes badly for one actor, the other actors step in and keep the dialogue going so only a spectator with script in hand would realize the lines had been jumbled.

Consequently, theater students tend to be very close. Close enough to moan through a warm up session together (it

gets their voices going, Parrent says), hug whoever's sitting in the next seat, or do a boisterous rendition of the "hokey pokey" before rehearsal.

"You can tell the majors from the ones who aren't," she says, pointing to the self-conscious figure of a physics major. "It's tough being a theater arts major at A&M, because it's new. They're not your typical Aggies."

**B**ut in fact, theater majors don't look or act appreciably different from other A&M students.

"I was real shy last semester," says McCauley, a burly member of the "Twelfth Night" crew, who is later told to watch the volume in his scenes.

Theater has had its place in Aggieland since the 1893, when the College Drama Society was formed. In 1946, the Aggie Players were started, and A&M approved the theater major in 1977.

At the end of a two-hour rehearsal, Greenwald gathers everyone on the stage for a critique.

"Sometimes I envy Jackie Sherrill enormously," he tells the cast. "He can call time-out and regroup. You don't have that luxury in the theater."

"It wasn't so good that we can relax and say we've got it in the bag. You're just about where you ought to be."

The cast goes on rehearsing.



Sonya Merriam, a freshman theater arts major, plays Viola in "Twelfth Night," which is scheduled to run April 18, 19, 24, 25 and 26 in the Rudder Forum. Tickets are available at the Rudder box office.

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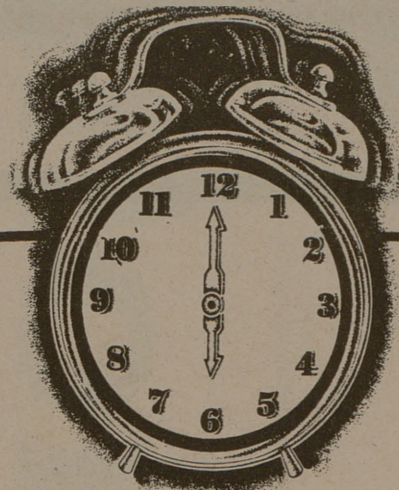
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