movies... 'Captain Newman' no comedy

By Mona Dickson

"Captain Newman, M.D." now playing at the Keith Memorial, is advertised as a comedy. If it is meant to laugh at a psychological condition, then this movie is a comedy.

The scene is an army hospital during World War II. Captain Newman runs Ward 7, the psychopathic ward, with too few doctors and too many patients.

In the background there are always the patients. Their condition is handled not delicately, but matter of factly. They are not censored; not the horror of their situation is toned down, although not so much that the imagination can't extrapolate. Many types of scenes are shown, so many that their depiction must be brief and a bit too shallow. Obviously this is a condensation of a book done with a valuable attempt at leaving nothing out.

With a plot like this, the movie could slip from "straight drama" to nausea at the slightest mistake. In it, the plot stays on a bearable, even entertaining level is a tribute to script and actors. The emphasis is on the patients' effect on the doctors rather than their own recovery. Even so the main patients are strongly characterized, not too shallow. Obviously this is a tribute to script and actors. The emphasis is on the patients' effect on the doctors rather than their own recovery. Even so the main patients are strongly characterized, not too shallow.