By Robert Fong
The MIT Dramashop's major production this term—Emmanuel Peter's Good Day and D. Lawrence's A Collier's Friday Night—is a mixed bag. Two plays written in widely different styles, employing different means to different ends. Unfortunately, their juxtaposition shows little other than that they are different, and the evening is at best a mixed success.

Good Day, opening the program, was first produced Off-Broadway less than five years ago. The protagonist is a young man, in his own words "a member of the intellectual elite," and an affable professor. Nonetheless, as the play opens he confidently arranges to be interviewed for a job. His confidence is only slightly shaken when his interviewer turns out to be an old woman, seemingly almost dead, yet enabling a steady stream of the most telling sarcastic remarks. She shockes him with the suggestion that he might be needed as a house servant, a situation he considers below his capabilities; but when she claims it is only money he wants, he has no reply, and his confidence only increases.

Eventually, the nature of the "real" job is revealed. He has been spatially relocated as closely resembling someone in the old woman's past; and he is to sit and talk to her, for another hour, in her bare review past events. From this point, as the talk begins to his own life, his confidence goes steadily downward. He proudly asserts that he both and words alone, only to be carelessly (and rightly) told that he just doesn't yet along with people. He protests his interviewer's twisted use of words, but must himself resort to the same language. Worst of all, he believes he does discover that which he considers right; yet when she brings up a difficult part of his history, he insists on "right to privacy," though still adamantly maintaining he has no "closed file."

The old woman becomes increasingly pressing, focusing on that one aspect of his life—his unkind behavior toward a girl he knew. She clearly identifies with the girl, by her own standards it seems she almost is the girl; but the point does not call for classification. The made-in-the important one, at least as far as the play's aim is concerned. By the end, the audience has seen what the young man's "capabilities" really are.

As for the play's capability, they are in evidence throughout. The idea is admirable—the play now; but, with skillful construction and dialogue, it is interesting, if not earth-shaking. It also requires courage, in which it generally received from Paul Roesel and Joan Towner.

The second play, D. H. Lawrence's A Collier's Friday Night, was, unfortunately, much less successful. Lawrence is best known as an important twentieth century novelist, and this is certainly a minor work. It is truly a character study, with no plot development at all; set in an English mining town, it is probably based on people the author knew, as is several of his novels. It could serve well as the exposition of a larger play, where something of importance might take place.

But, as an hour and a half, none of the title characters has sufficient chance to become interesting, nor do the relations between them. The overall effect is mainly one of weariness.

The acting is generally good individually, despite some trouble with accents; but, if anything, it only magnifies the impression that the characters are not many rather than as a whole.

In sum, then, the fall Dramashop production (repeated this Friday and Saturday) is only partially worth seeing. Still, especially at the low price ($1.50), it's far from a total waste.

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