Ten years of "That's not funny; that's sick!"


"The Seventies was a decade defined by giving up cigarettes. Into this troubled, at any rate, anxious period of history, National Lampoon injected some much needed anesthetics. We have been accused of elitism, racism, anti-Catholicism, anti-Semitic, communism, fascism, anti-intellectualism, sadism, and a hatred of dogs and women. Fair accusations, all of them. And yet, in our thoroughgoing dislike of every living thing on earth, we like to feel that there is a certain pervasive overhandedness. All types and things are greeted with equal odium..." This summation of the National Lampoon's philosophy opens the Ten Anniversary Anthology, a collection of the magazine's best sataching satire and outright "bad taste." Where she could find "Children's Letters to the Gatypo" or "The Victorian Baby Book" — only between the covers of this collection.

The material is presented the way one would find it in any issue of National Lampoon. The first two pages contain a sampling of current events parody that have appeared over the years: "Mrs. Agnew's Diary," "Canadian Corner," "News on the March," and, of course, the spook's "poon's "Foreigners Around the World," "Laughing in America," "Scoo-God Comics," and "The Paranoid Abroad." The anthology also includes a comprehensive collection of cartoons which have appeared. One can find early work by Gahan Wilson, B. Kliban, and Sam Gross — artists whose current fame originated in the Lampoon. The "Funny Pages" contain the work of some of the lesser known artists and their regular features. Almost all the old favorites are represented: Bobby Londono's "Dicky Duck," Shary Flaniken's "Trots and Bonnie," Charles Rodrigue's "The Amos Brothers," Stan Mack's "Mule's Diner," and Vaughn Bod's "Church Women" — undoubtedly the funniest comic that has graced the Lampoon's pages.

The Anthology has a few flaws, all of them dealing with the selection or omission of material. A great deal of emphasis is placed on the earlier period (1970-1974) while hardly any material appears from the 1977-1978 season. Although this was a period when the Lampoon lost many writers, the good work produced during that time should not be slighted. The most glaring omission, however, is the absence of any material from the High School Yearbook Parody, the largest selling Lampoon publication. However, one should not expect to find all of one's favorites in a small collection, so the National Lampoon should be consulted for the best and most popular favorites. The Ten Anniversary Anthology should be owned by anyone who grew up reading the Lampoon, and by:

Merry Wives well played at Harvard

Lovett Hall Musical Society presents "The Merry Wives of Windsor at the College of William and Mary, Harvard, weekends through March 19." The Merry Wives of Windsor is a perfect hodgepodge of lively nonsense, with the wit of the master as two ardent lovers thrown in. Falstaff sends crude love letters to two respectable wives, Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Page, whom he punishes for their pursuits, while emphasizing the jealous Mr. Ford. Meanwhile, three suitors are after the Pages' daughter Anne. Two of them are giọngate and amusing; the best is the true lover whom we know must inevitably win.

Veronica Casey was, without doubt, the most sophisticated voice in the production. Strong, poised, directed, disciplined, full, and of all character, this was a sound to savour. Mrs. Page was so accurate in action as in voice — the vipsorous, vengeful character of the role was fully brought out.

Though she has a long way to go in developing vocal style and was perhaps not ideally paired with Mascarella, she did pretty well. The orchestra, although not technically perfect, had the strength of being able to change mood according to situation. With Susan Robinson's exquisite harp playing, it captured the frontal order of true love, the quality of coordination of music and action was characteristic of the direction of the work. The chorus' quality varied, but was excellent in the final scene, in which all combined to create enchantment. This was an evening of abandoned entertainment. As one member of the cast said to me at the party afterwards, "Why can't people realize that opera is fun?" A formation from MIT, Ken Seigel, who had never been to an opera before, was hooked and will be going to more. I trust you will too.

Jonathan Richmond

Junior Year Abroad Program: London School of Economics

Mr. James Potter, Senior Tutor to the General Course Students, will speak with applicants and other students from 10:30 to 12, Monday, March 17, 1980. Please call Office of Foreign Study, x-7979, Tuesday, Wednesday morning or Thursday.

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Get a job
Get married
Start a family
Get promoted
Retire at 65.

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Get a job, get married, etc.
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