NEW BOOKS
FROM SOONERS
AND THE O.U. PRESS

The Reviewer . . .
BILL CRAWFORD, '54
Reporter and Critic,
Lawton Constitution

The Author . . .
LONNY CHAPMAN,
'47bfa

His Work . . .

THE BUFFALO SKINNER

The mail clerk tossed me a normal-enough release envelope bearing a New York postmark. It was one of those days when news and deadlines were popping like mortars at nearby Fort Sill.

"I'll save it for a rainy day next year," I muttered as the demanding telephone jangled. The frightened envelope made its way to the back of a cluttered drawer.

A couple of rainy days later I once again spied the envelope during a hasty desk-cleaning spree.

The return address read: Linda Productions, 665 Fifth Avenue, New York 22.

The contents read like an old Holmberg Hall play cast, plus a proposal: a proposal to invest $270 in an off-Broadway show written, produced, directed and acted by a talented crew of O. U. graduates.

It was a news item all right—but a news item for the day when they either went broke or made it. So I forgot I was a reporter for a moment, wistfully eyed the mimeographed sheets enumerating production costs for a play with music dubbed the Buffalo Skinner, and I tried to imagine myself as a financier.

The dream of adventure blossomed . . . then faded as the epistle again filtered to the back of the messy drawer. Off-Broadway platters are notoriously laden with turkeys. That was in December.

On February 19th, Buffalo Skinner, written by O. U. graduate Lonnie Chapman, '47bfa; co-produced by O. U. graduate Monte Frierson, '53bfa; set-designed by O. U. graduate Charles Rosen, '52bfa; and starring O. U. graduates Margaret de Priest, '53bfa; Lou Antonio, '55bfa; and Lou's brother, Jim, '54bfa—in late February, this play, the play which could be tagged an alumni production of O. U.'s school of drama, opened in New York City's Theatre Marquee. Theatre Marquee is a small off-Broadway hall at 110 East 59th, but it is not so small nor so off-off-Broadway that such eminent New York drama critics as Brooks Atkinson of The New York Times and Walter Kerr of The New York Herald-Tribune couldn't find their way to aisle seats on the opening night. Also on the aisle was Dennis "Chester" Weaver, '48bfa, a close friend of Chapman's (they hitch-hiked together to New York for a career in drama).

Not seated on the aisle, and—worst of all—not holding an interest in Buffalo Skinner was—me.

Worst of all, because the next reports which came from New York showed that Buffalo Skinner had won unanimous critical acclaim; that it was a hit; and that I could have done much worse than to invest the 270 bucks I didn't have in talent I had known and admired at O. U.

Lonnie Chapman, the playwright and director of Buffalo Skinner, is a native of Tulsa and a former O. U. track star. He is the best known of the O. U. group as he has acted in nine Broadway productions, including Mister Roberts, The Glass Menagerie, and Come Back, Little Sheba; also three movies, including East of Eden, and Baby Doll. In addition to playing the title role in last season's NBC series, The Investigator, Chapman directed the west coast production of Career, which starred Cliff Robertson.

Chapman's new success, Buffalo Skinner (originally titled Return to Paul's Valley), is the story of a gun-touchy young man named Woody Royal (played by Lou Antonio) who has a tendency to sputnik off to nowhere for beatnik reasons. An unwilling incentive is his evangelist father who uses Woody and the family (including Jim Antonio) for collection-plate passing, hallelujahing, and other layings on of the Bible belt.

Handsome Woody rebels, roams easily through dough and women, but finds the religious training he received from his father is not as easy to lose as he figured.

It's doubly hard when he meets up with Lois Mae (played by Margaret de Priest) who is an angel in his father's heavenly choir. Woody's problems are nothing compared to hers.

Determined to convert him back to re-
Rosen has designed several imaginative and critically acclaimed productions, including The Clandestine Marriage and Giraudoux’s The Apollo of Bellae and Virtuous Island.

For two years, he designed the sets for the San Antonio, Texas, Opera Company, and his many TV credits include his current assignment, The Jack Paar Show. Rosen designed sets, lights and costumes for The Buffalo Skinner.

Friedson, an O. U. business school graduate, was east coast manager for the Stratford (Ontario) Canadian Players and has been associated with The Theatre Guild and The American Shakespeare Festival. Last summer, he was treasurer of St. John Terrell’s Music Circus.

Incidentally, his childhood ambition as a stage-struck youngster in Bristow was to some day produce a Broadway show starring his playmate, Margaret dePriest.

This enterprising group of Sooners manufactured its own way in the big time. Their names look good on theater marquees—and on news releases which no longer drift to the back of my desk.

RECOMMENDED: By Walter Kerr ... “A little play on a familiar theme; that of the youngster who must go all the way round the world to find his way home ... the amber-tinted mood, wonderfully supported by ... (a) distantly rumbling score and Charles Rosen’s chalk-streaked settings, never breaks. It never even falters, really ...(a journey) every inch beautifully charted, though winding up a long way from home ... Author Lanny Chapman has done his waydeleterielly well. The pious inflections of a cornball-tent preacher who cannot keep his disbeliefing son from becoming ‘a well-known sinner’ are not simply echoes of all the Bible-belt bravura that literature has already had so much fun with. They are curiously straightforward and free from cant ... When the grizzled American-Gothic figure of the father forces a reluctant boy to his knees for a bout prayer, you realize that—whatever horror wells up in the lad—the old man is honest granite. As the restless son, Lou Antonio bids his straight-backed mother an abrupt goodbye and hooks onto the nearest freight, the sights and sounds of all ‘dusty deserts and dry ravines’ that flicker past are just as accurate—and evocative enough to make you watch out for mosquitoes. As his own director, Mr. Chapman has done better still. Mr. Antonio, urgently driving a knife into the trunk of a tree or staring in prolonged silence at a girl who is all repose, brings fresh and engaging vitality to a part that one would have thought had been copyrighted by Ben Gazzara.

By Brooks Atkinson ...

“Lou Antonio anatomizes life with a good deal of gusto and good sense ...(Miss dePriest is in) two or three tenderly written and sweetly acted scenes.”

By me too ...

Soaring with Ambition

Show Biz is a tough biz to make good in, but the soaring young Sooners pictured on the opposite page are apparently soaring right out on that ether where stars are born:

1.) Loella Sansing, ‘55m.m, Italian opera companies; 2.) Edgar Springer, ‘57bfa, Boston stock; 3.) Ronnie Claire Edwards, ‘55bfa, Dallas, Cleveland, Memphis stock; 4.) Kenneth French, ‘55bfa, ‘56m, Colorado and California stock; 5.) June Ericson, standby for Judy Holliday in Bells Are Ringing, New York nightclub acts, stock and tour companies; 6.) Glenn Kezer, ‘50bfa, ’51m, with My Fair Lady since its opening, TV bits; 7.) Clint Kimbrough, ’50bfa, ’51m, My Fair Lady; 8.) Jack Ging, ’57bfa, movie bits; 9.) Camilla Duncan, ’48-’51, ’53, own TV show in Dallas, appearances on Godfrey and Welk TV shows; 10.) Donald May, ’49bfa, off-Broadway and TV roles—including MC on West Point series; 11.) Clyde Bassett, ’52bfa, Broadway tour companies; 12.) Helen Richardson, ’56m., opera and concert work in Germany; 13.) Josephine Landisit Holtzscheuer, ’50bfa, stock and TV roles; 14.) Monte Aubrey, ’57bfa, Colorado and Michigan stock, New York night club acts; 15.) Kathryn Sadlo, ’46bfa, ’47m, American opera.


Not pictured, but just as active are: Madgel Hart, ’42-’44, New England stock; Tom Hatcher, ’52, on and off-Broadway roles; Harold Hahn, ’57bfa, ’58m, California and Colorado stock; Bill Seay, ’55-’57, Colorado and Pennsylvania stock; Bob Harris, ’49’57, Perry Como Show choruses; Don Crabtree, ’38bfa, TV and off-Broadway roles, currently in Broadway musical Destry Rides Again; Bob Barr, ’48-’50, TV roles; Minnie Jo Curtis, ’41bfa, TV roles; Diana Rivers, Broadway roles; Ron Thompson, ’57bfa, ’58m, New York stock; Bob Minton, ’48-’50, off-Broadway roles; Bob Short, ’54bfa, Dallas stock.
JIM GARNER
BRET MAVERICK of TV's MAVERICK
Movie roles in Darby's Rangers, Sayonara, Up Periscope

THE GREEN HORNET
Jack SWINEFORD '38bfa

DENNIS WEAVE
Chester in TV's Gunsmoke

THE WHITE HORNET
Jack SWINEFORD '38bfa

Joe Callaway
Shakesperean Actor

ALICE HOSTLEY
'B41-3
Broadway, TV, Nightclub
COMEDIENNE
New Faces of '52's Boston Beguine Girl
Many other Broadway leads

Emily STEPHENSON '34bfa
Broadway Musicals - I'd Rather Be Right
Movies - Desert Song, Marco's Millions
radio, TV, concert work

Amzie STRICKLAND '40bfa
Leads in Inner Sanctum, Mr. D.A.,
Ford Theater and Playhouse 90

Joe Callaway
'B41bfa
Shakesperean Actor

BEST SUPPORTING ACTOR AWARD
for role in
Johnny Eager
Philadelphia Story on Broadway,
Many movies including Tap Roots,
Shane, Tempest

Van Heflin
Broadway and London '37-8

FRANCES
Broadway and London '37-8
European and American opera companies including the Metropolitan Drama, Radio, and Concert Work

MOBLEY-LUSHANYA

MIRIAM DEARTH

'25

'32 & '36bfa's

sophisticated comedy roles in many movies and plays

LOUISE ALLBRITTON '35-8

O.U.'s BILLBOARD GREATS