

KEND PLAN



Dispatch photo by Mary Circelli

Charlotte Dougherty plays the title character in the Otterbein College production of *Agnes of God*, opening Friday. See theater listings and story on Page 18.

'Agnes of God' is OC season finale

The three-act drama, "Agnes of God," by John Pielmeier, will close the 1984-85 season of the Otterbein College Theatre.

Evening performances are set for 8:15 p.m. on May 31, June 1, and June 5-8, with a special Sunday matinee scheduled for June 2, all in the air-conditioned arena theatre of the Campus Center.

"Agnes of God," a psychological-religious drama about the murder of a newborn infant in a Catholic convent, opened on Broadway at the Music Box just three years ago.

The play was referred to in *Variety* as "the work of a gifted writer with a keen sense of drama." Pielmeier has received several honors for his work, including being co-winner of the 1980 Festival of New American Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville.

Agnes (Charlotte Dougherty) is an obsessed, 21-year-old nun who has given birth in her convent room and, it is charged, murdered the baby immediately. She claims to have no recollection of the child's conception, birth or murder.

Under those circumstances, a court-appointed psychiatrist, Dr. Martha Livingstone (Jodie Silk) is sent to report on the girl, and the play is, in effect, the psychiatrist's story.

THE CHALLENGE the analyst faces is to unlock the truth about the shocking incident in the convent from the frightened, waifish novice, and determine whether Agnes is sane enough to stand trial.

But the psychiatrist is also a strange woman. A lapsed Catholic, she has a grudge against nuns because she feels their neglect killed her sister while she was a novice.

The protective mother superior of the convent, Mother Miriam Ruth (Laura Stitt) demonstrates an approach to religion and the church that is refreshingly realistic, but her religious beliefs are scorned one by one by Dr. Livingstone.

In Pielmeier's play, the three women convene on a stark stage and slowly peel away the layers of protective subterfuge and explore the truth.

"Agnes of God" will be directed by Suzanne Blackburn, assistant professor of acting and directing at The Ohio State University.

FORMERLY WITH the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, Blackburn has directed more than 80 plays, and is an experienced actress and director in both educational and professional theatre.

The student technical staff is comprised of set designer Michael Blankenship,

lighting designer Anne Barnes, and stage manager Joanna Fabian. Otterbein costume designer Lucy Lee Reuther has created costumes.

Tickets for "Agnes of God" will be available from May 23 at the Cowan Hall box office, 1-4:30 p.m. weekdays.

Gripping *Agnes of God* Closes 1984-85 Season

John Pielmeier's suspenseful, three-act drama *Agnes of God* will be staged in the Campus Center Arena Theatre for two consecutive weekends. Evening performances are set for 8:15 p.m. May 31, June 1, and June 5-8, and a 2:30 p.m. matinee will be offered Sunday, June 2.

Agnes of God, a gripping psychological-religious drama about the murder of a newborn infant in a Catholic convent, opened on Broadway at the Music Box Theatre just three years ago. The play was referred to in *Variety* magazine as "the work of a gifted writer with a keen sense of drama."

NEWSLETTER

Spring 1985

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Under those circumstances, a court-appointed psychiatrist, Dr. Martha Livingstone, is sent to report on the girl, and the play is, in effect, the psychiatrist's story. The challenge the analyst faces is to unlock the truth about the shocking incident in the convent from the frightened, waifish novice, and determine whether *Agnes* is sane enough to stand trial.

But the psychiatrist is also a strange woman. A lapsed Catholic, she has a grudge against nuns because she feels their neglect killed her sister while she was a novice.

The protective mother superior of the convent, Mother Miriam Ruth, demonstrates an approach to religion and the church that is refreshingly realistic, but her religious beliefs are scorned one by one by Dr. Livingstone.

In Pielmeier's spellbinding play, the three women convene on a stark stage and slowly peel away the layers of protective subterfuge and explore the truth.

Agnes of God will be directed by Suzanne Blackburn, assistant professor of acting and directing at The Ohio State University. Formerly with the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, Ms. Blackburn has directed more than 80 plays, and is an experienced actress and director in both educational and professional theatre.

Tickets for *Agnes of God* will be available from May 23 at the Cowan Hall box office (890-3028) 1-4:30 p.m. weekdays.

'Agnes of God' to close theatre season

"Agnes of God" will close the regular theatre season at Otterbein College.

John Pielmeier's suspenseful, three-act drama, will be staged in the Campus Center Arena Theater for two consecutive weekends. Evening performances are set for 8:15 p.m. May 31, June 1, and June 5-8, and a 2:30 p.m. matinee will be offered Sunday, June 2.

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Warning: The Surgeon General has determined that acting can be hazardous to your health. If you don't believe it, ask Otterbein College junior Jodie Silk of Dublin.

You can't blame Silk if she wakes up with scratchy throat this morning. Silk, a confirmed non-smoker, has puffed away on nearly two packs of cigarettes this weekend to play a chain-smoking psychiatrist in the Otterbein production of *Agnes of God*.

Silk says the role requires her to smoke about 13 butts every night. "I told the prop people to find the lightest cigarettes they could," she said. Thankfully, Silk is able to catch her breath in the second act when the doctor quits smoking.

— Dennis Fiely



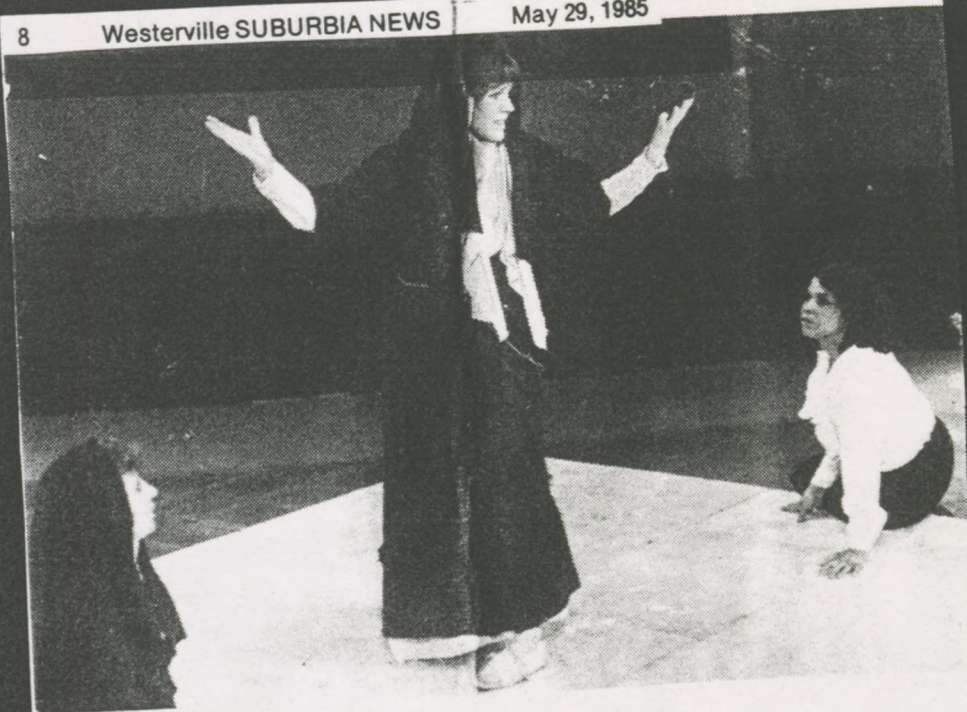
Saint or murderer?

Charlotte Dougherty plays Agnes, a young nun who is charged with the murder of her newborn child but seems to have no memory of the incident. The drama is "Agnes of God," John Pielmeier's Broadway hit that is now being staged by Otterbein College. Performances are 8:15 p.m. May 31-June 1 and June 5-8 and 2:30 p.m. June 2 in Campus Center Arena Theatre. Tickets are available at Cowan Hall box office.



Psycho-drama at college

Agnes (Charlotte Dougherty, right), charged with the murder of her newborn child in her convent room, cowers under the harsh questioning of court-appointed psychiatrist Dr. Livingstone (Jodie Silk). Dr. Livingstone is charged with determining whether the young novice can stand trial in John Pielmeier's "Agnes of God," being produced by Otterbein College Theatre May 31-June 1, and June 5-8 in the air-conditioned Campus Center Arena Theatre at 8:15 p.m., with a matinee on June 2 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are available from the Cowan Hall box office, 1-4:30 p.m.



'Agnes of God' at Otterbein

Half-mad novice Agnes (Charlotte Dougherty, center) charged with the murder of her newborn child in her convent room, pivots between the consoling advice of Mother Miriam Ruth (Laura Stitt, left) and the prodding questions of psychiatrist Dr. Livingstone (Jodie Silk), in John Pielmeir's *Agnes of God* to be produced by Otterbein College Theatre Friday and Saturday and June 5-8 at 8:15 p.m. and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. in the Campus Center Arena Theatre. Tickets are available at the Cowan Hall box office (890-3028) 1-4:30 p.m. weekdays.