

Three-time Tony award winner, "Children of a Lesser God," will be presented by Otterbein College Theatre May 24-28 and May 31-June 4 at the Campus Center theatre, 100 W. Home St. The love story that focuses on the romance and marriage of a young deaf woman and a (hearing) teacher she meets at a school for the deaf will feature, from left, Tim Ryan Deak of Brunswick, Lori Schubeler of West Chester and Zele Avradopoulos of Columbus. The opening night performance will begin at 7:30 p.m., Sunday matinees at 2 p.m., and all other performances at 8 p.m. Advance tickets are available by calling the Cowan Hall box office, 898-1109.

## Theatre to give three-time Tony winner

A three-time Tony award winner, "Children of a Lesser God," will be pre-

sented by the Otterbein College Theatre, May 24-28 and May 31-June 4, at the

Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St.

"Children. . ." is a love story that focuses on the romance and marriage of a young deaf woman and a (hearing) teacher she meets at a school for the deaf.

Sarah works as a custodian at the school. The teacher senses her depth and is excited by the prospect of helping Sarah expand her horizons. He makes slow, but steady, progress with her stubborn and spirited attitudes and a love match is born.

A beautiful beginning for the pair is followed by the frustrations of dealing with life's realities.

**THE LEAD ROLES** will be played by Timothy Ryan Deak of Brunswick, O., and Zele Avradopoulos of Columbus.

Other cast members are Cathy Lee Collins at Mt. Clemens, Mich.; Stoney Westmoreland of Kingsport, Tenn.; Lori Schubeler of West Chester, O.; Matt Bartholomew of Westerville; and Cheryl Gaysunas of Columbus.

Production designers include theatre faculty members Michael Border, lighting, and Katie Robbins, costumes. Senior Chris Clapp of Allegany, N.Y., is set designer.

Tickets will be available from the Cowan Hall box office, 898-1109, beginning May 15.



# Otterbein alumna to direct 'Lesser God'

May 1989  
Public Opinion

A 1970 Otterbein alumna will return to her alma mater to direct the Otterbein College production of "Children of a Lesser God" to be presented May 24-28 and May 31-June 4. Teri Hiatt Devlin, professional director / actor / singer/dancer, will direct the drama surrounding a young deaf woman's relationship with a (hearing) teacher she meets at a school for the hearing impaired.

The play deals with the emotions involved in the couple's romance, marriage and turbulent relationship. A Broadway hit and winner of three Tony Awards, "Children..." was dubbed "a play you will never forget" by the New York Post.

"What's really interesting about this play," Devlin

says, "is that it is a well-written, exciting piece of drama about relationships—about people not being able to communicate with each other as strongly as they'd like to.

"It is not only about a man and a woman, but transcends to all levels of relationships—mother-daughter, etc., in its message about human communication."

**AS FOR THE** central characters, Devlin says "It's a very strong play about two people just trying to understand each other and get together.

"I told the cast that as a relationship progresses, we become close and really want to know the other person—maybe even have the urge to become that other person. But there's

always that 'inner core' we sort of miss.

"This play poses the question, 'Once we discover that unavoidable problem, that connection that can never be quite complete, how do we work it out?' It's really a beautiful, beautiful love story."

The Otterbein Department of Theatre and Dance believes the production is important for its student academically.

Within the liberal arts framework, students are involved with producing plays that study different aspects of humankind. They are encouraged to move away from themselves and experience the world of the character.

Although "Children..." is predominately a play about relationships and written for a hearing audience, it brings students to the examination of a world with which they are unfamiliar—that of the hearing impaired—and serves as a significant learning experience.

Devlin has taken graduate studies in directing at The Ohio State University and has completed additional studies in acting, directing, voice, dance and theatre administration in New York.

She has appeared in nu-

merous industrial shows and national commercials, served as resident artist with the New York Repertory Company and been a guest artist with the New York and touring companies of American Dance Machine.

Currently, she is drama director at the Leo Yassenoff Jewish Center in Columbus.

All performances will be in the Campus Center Theatre. Advance tickets will be available from the Cowan Hall box office, 898-1109, beginning Monday, May 15.

## Otterbein, Sertoma praised for role in presenting play

Otterbein College should be complimented for asking their students to perform *Children of a Lesser God*. The drama requires the students to learn what it means to be deaf or hard of hearing. The college should also be praised for asking several deaf people to be consultants. The students in the drama department play elderly people, crippled people, homeless people, blind people and all other sorts of individuals, for which they are required to research the character. It is a tremendous awareness for them to learn about the hidden handicap of deafness.

The Sertoma Club of Westerville should be praised for its great interest in helping the deaf community by providing free tickets to elderly residents of Columbus Colony, students at the Comprehensive Program for the Deaf and the Ohio School for the Deaf, and to members of Holy Cross Lutheran Church of the Deaf, so that many deaf people can enjoy the rich culture of a theatrical performance. The community should be proud of Otterbein for taking up such a challenging play and of the Sertoma Club for the tremendous job its members are doing to support projects for the deaf that would go unfunded.

The Rev. Donald E. Leber  
Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
of the Deaf  
Columbus

MAY 1989





# "Children" presented at OC

A three-time Tony award winner, "Children of a Lesser God," will be presented by Otterbein College Theatre May 24-28 and May 31-June 4 at the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St., Westerville. According to the New York Post, "Children ..." is a play you will never forget." Newsweek called it "A compassionate and moving play, written with high intelligence and deep feeling."

"Children..." is an emotionally charged love story that focuses on the romance and marriage of a young deaf woman and a (hearing) teacher she meets at a school for the deaf. Sarah works as a janitor at the school, and the teacher senses her depth and is excited by the prospect of helping Sarah

expand her horizons. He makes slow, but steady, progress with her stubborn and spirited attitudes and a love match is born. A beautiful beginning for the pair is followed by the frustrations of dealing with life's realities.

The lead roles will be played by Timothy Ryan Deak of Brunswick, Ohio, and Zele Avradopoulos of Columbus. Other cast members are Cathy Lee

Collins of Mt. Clemens, Mich.; Stoney Westmoreland of Kingsport, Tenn.; Lori Schubeler of West Chester, Ohio; Matt Bartholomew of Westerville; and Cheryl Gaysunas of Columbus.

Production designers include theatre faculty members Michael Border, lighting, and Katie Robbins, costumes. Senior Chris Clapp of Allegany, N. Y., is set designer.

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# Protesters unfair

In case you weren't around Cowan Hall when the picketing occurred last week, here's a little rundown.

The local district of the Ohio Association of the Deaf (OAD) is protesting the Otterbein theatre department's production of "Children of a Lesser God." Because this play is about recognizing the difficulties of being hearing-impaired, one might expect the local deaf community to support the play.

The group is protesting because Otterbein is using hearing actors in roles designed for hearing-impaired performers. The author of the play, Mark Medoff, requested that a deaf actress be cast in the lead role for all professional performances.

OAD district representative Martha Sherridan said in a prepared statement: "We believe the use of hearing actors in any staging of this play perpetuates a cycle of oppression. [It] renders the play a farce and its message ineffective."

On the surface, these complaints have merit: where deaf actors can be employed, they should. No director should take the author's mandate lightly.

However, in spite of Otterbein's intentions and efforts to create a professional theatre atmosphere, there can be no denying that the program is for students.

Medoff specified that student productions are exempted from the deaf-actress requirement. When Upper Arlington High School and the Fort Hayes Career Center produced the play, no picketers paraded on the steps of those schools. Why should Otterbein, a school hardly larger than Upper Arlington, be expected to come up with hearing-impaired performers?

The department must draw from its pool of students. If none is hearing-impaired, the show must go on. The play is a great opportunity for students to become more versatile actresses and actors. Theatregoers will grow in their understanding of some problems of the deaf.

The protesters complain that Otterbein is unsympathetic to the deaf; *they* seem unsympathetic to our needs and limits.

Marion Star

MAY-25-39

# 39 Otterbein presents 'Children'

WESTERVILLE — A three-time Tony award winner, *Children of a Lesser God*, will be presented by Otterbein college Theatre Wednesday through Sunday and May 31 through June 4 at the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St., Westerville.

*Children...* is an emotionally charged love story that focuses on the romance and marriage of a young deaf woman and a hearing teacher she meets at a school for the deaf. Sarah works as a janitor ~~at the school, and the~~ teacher senses her depth and is excited by the prospect of helping Sarah expand her horizons.

He makes slow, but steady, progress with her stubborn and spirited attitudes and a love match is born. A beautiful beginning for the pair is followed by the frustrations of dealing with life's realities.

The lead roles will be played by Timothy Ryan Deak of Brunswick, and Zele Avradopoulos of Columbus. Other cast members are Cathy Lee Collins of Mount Clemens, Mich.; Stoney Westmoreland of Kingsport, Tenn.; Lori Schubeler of West Chester; Matt Bartholomew of Westerville; and Cheryl Gaysunas of Columbus.

Production designers include theatre faculty members Michael Border, lighting, and Katie Robbins, Costumes. Senior Chris Clapp, Allegany, N.Y., is set designer.

Tickets are available from the Cowan Hall box office, 614-898-1109.





**'Children of a Lesser God,' shown in the Campus Center Theatre, will run through Sunday. (Above) James Leeds, played by Tim Deak, and Sarah Norma, Zele Avradopoulos, enjoy one of their few quiet moments together.**

**(Right) Sarah attempts to convince James that she does not want to learn to speak.**

**Photos by Hillary Kline**





# WEEKEND PLAN

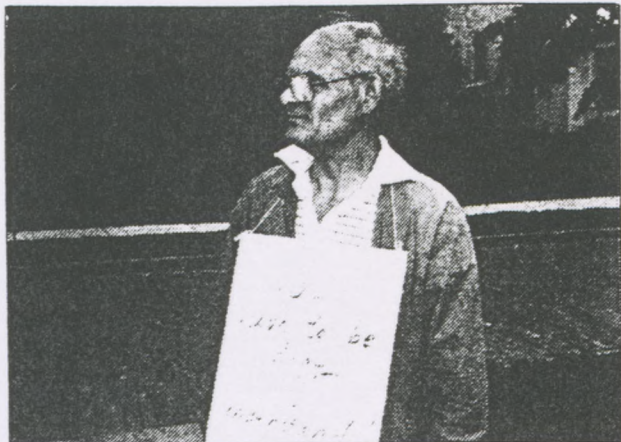


Dispatch photo

Zele Avradopolous, left, and Tim Deak star in the Otterbein College produc-

tion of *Children of a Lesser God*. See theater listings.





# Making themselves heard

*Westerville News*

5-31-89

Members of the Ohio Association for the Deaf were on hand last Wednesday to protest Otterbein College's decision to produce the play *Children of a Lesser God* without deaf actors. In the photograph at left, Martha Sheridan and Ron Emrich pass out pamphlets protesting the production. At right, Robert Braid holds his picket sign reading, "You have to be deaf to understand." Related stories on pages 9 and 10.



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JUN-1 -89

**CURTAIN CALLS**

Here is a guide to central Ohio theater shows, based on recent Dispatch reviews. For performance times and dates, see theater listings in Weekend Planner.

***Children of a Lesser God* —**

A fluent production of Mark Medoff's beautifully written drama about love, trust, the fear of getting hurt and the courage required to overcome that fear — in short, the human predicament. Not enough good things can be said about Tim Deak's robust performance as James Leeds, the teacher who breaks through deaf student Sarah Norman's angry defenses. Although Zele Avradopolous' Sarah makes the most of her playful and tender scenes, her performance falls short of the soulfulness that should fill Sarah's most poignant silences. Overall, however, Teri Devlin directs a

generally strong student cast with delicacy. Otterbein College. (Reviewed by Michael Grossberg.)

***The Sound of Music* —**

Rodgers and Hammerstein wrote the kind of old-fashioned musicals that you hum on the way home. This sugary but solid community theater production makes it easy to hum along. Just a few of my favorite things: the scene-stealing von Trapp family children (especially Allison Loeffert's darling little Gretl), a fine 15-member orchestra, Catherine Randazzo's outstanding Mother Abbess, Frank Tabitta's proud but vulnerable Captain von Trapp and, of course, Gina Todd's thrilling Maria herself. Aside from murky lighting, some slow pacing and other minor flaws, this is a genuine crowd-pleaser. **Gallery Players.** (M.G.)



P.O. 6-8-89

## Sertoma holds special night at OC production

The Westerville Sertoma Club sponsored a special night at the recent Otterbein College Theatre production of "Children of a Lesser God".

On May 31, Sertoma brought in three sign language interpreters, Don Leber, Jodi McGee and Meg Tucker, for Sertoma's 150 guests from the Co-

lumbus Colony on Sunbury Road, the Columbus Speech and Hearing Clinic, and the Ohio State School for the Deaf.

The event was part of Sertoma's continued support of the hearing impaired in the Westerville area.





Swayze

## 'Road House' bounces from bad to worse

● *Road House*, starring Patrick Swayze as a bouncer hired to clean up a rough nightclub, is funny. Unfortunately, the film isn't supposed to be a comedy. **6D**

● The Ohio Association of the Deaf, District 3 (Columbus) plans to boycott and picket Otterbein College's *Children of a Lesser God* because hearing actors have been cast in the roles of deaf characters. **7D**

● Gilda Radner, who died Saturday, was a bright, inventive comedian who will be remembered fondly for the light she brought into our lives, says *Dispatch* television critic Julia Keller. **7D**



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389

A three-time Tony award winner, *Children of a Lesser God*, will be presented by Otterbein College Theatre Wednesday through Sunday at the Campus Center Theatre, 100 W. Home St. in Westerville. Tickets will be available from the Cowan Hall box office beginning Monday. For more information, call 898-1109.

C.D. - 6/24/89

THIS, 000-1411.



Theater

**OTTERBEIN COLLEGE** production of *Children of a Lesser God* can be seen today through Sunday and May 31 through June 4 at the Campus Center Theatre. For details, call 898-1109.



Miscellaneous