Mickel, Dr. Jere

Interview by
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Teaching career: University of Chicago "Four Year College," Texas State College for Women, (University of Denver for Ph.D.), Canterbury College in Indiana, Junior College at Odessa, Texas, Daniel Baker, College, Millikin University (1952) 1

Speech Department at Millikin 4
under Professor L. C. McNabb: Town and Gown dramatic club, presentations at Albert Taylor Hall and elsewhere

Prominent Decatur residents in drama 11

Dr. Jere Mickel Interview

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This is Betty Turnell continuing the series on the oral history of Millikin University. Our guest today is Dr. Jere Mickel, who was Professor of speech and Chairman of the department for seventeen years at Millikin.

Q. Dr. Mickel, you had a lot of experiences during that time.

A. Yes. That position came to me at the beginning of middle age. I had done a lot of other things before that. I had started out to be an actor, but I came along about a year too late. Several things had happened to show business between 1929 and 1931. One of them was radio, another was talking pictures, and the third one, probably the most severe, was the depression. So after the job market ran out, I had to make a living, and I decided to do what all the rest of the family had always done - teach school. I first was sent to the State University of Montana, where I taught what was called then "Humanities." I think that's almost gone out. It was supposed to develop into a very expanding field after the war, but it never did. They have something like it here and there but it's not being done in the way the man I don't revere too much - Robert Maynard Hutchins - set out that it should be done. Then I had to take what I could get. That was only a two year job - during which I also taught Latin and Greek. That's the only time in my life I have ever taught my major subjects.

Q. Your major subject was the Classics?

A. Yes, my major subject was the Classics. I was working on my Ph.D, on a fellowship, at the University of Chicago. Well, I went back to high school because that was the job I could get but from there, the university, which had a very fine placement bureau, sent me to the university

itself, where I took part for six years in Mr. Hutchin's Experimental College, called the Four Year College. In that set-up, you were supposed to start college at the 11th grade and finish with an AB degree at the sophomore year. Well, of course, this did not go over at all! There seemed to be no future to it whatsoever. One was not anything He was just in limbo - not even a member of a department. You just taught general studies, as it were, on the arts side of the curriculum. While I was there, however, there was much agitation for the revival of dramatic activities. Since I had had this experience, I was chosen. Now the University of Chicago is a strange place. It probably has more money than any other school in the land except maybe Harvard or Yale, and yet its pay scale is pretty low - or was before the Foundation gave it a jerk - the Ford Foundation. Now anyone who knows anything about dramatics knows that it's a full-time job. Now they realize it at Millikin. They didn't when I came here.

Q. They thought it was something you did in your spare time?

A. They thought you did it in your leisure time and had fun doing it, along with the kids. Fiddlesticks! Well, I insisted on being paid at Chicago, and I got my way, which helped me a great deal. But I got disgusted with the place (University of Chicago) and started out on my own. I went to Texas State College for Women and was there a couple of years. They begged me to come, but they didn't like what I did. They just didn't like classical plays, like Iphigenia in Taurus or anything by Ben Jonson or Ibsen, even. So I went to the University of Denver and spent a year finishing my Ph.D in Theatre and English. The School of the Theatre was not quite strong enough in itself to grant a Ph.D without some other solider subject, so I took English instead of Speech. I had had very good

speech training, in fact, speech training that has stayed with me the rest of my life, at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago where I was a student and played leading parts "way back when." I have had in my life three major loves, and none of them has turned out to be worth the emotion and the trouble put into it. I've always loved the theatre and still do. At the present time I love it from the standpoint of being in the audience - and I'm a very good audience.

I have loved the church - the Episcopal Church, but I have withdrawn completely from the Diocese.

I have loved my home town, which is Peru, Nebraska, the seat of a small college, the oldest in Nebraska. But that town practically does not exist as a town.

So my love affairs in one sense are sensational!

I thought so much of the church that when I got my Ph.D instead of capitalizing on it, which I could have done and I had some good opportunities even though it was a poor time for teaching jobs, I went to Canterbury College in Indiana.

Q. That was an Episcopalian college?

A. Yes, it was an attempt to turn an old, private normal school, best characterized as a poor boys' school - Central Normal College into a Liberal Arts College. Someone had the bright idea of starting another Episcopal College. Now all of them except the one in New York have failed, St. Stephen's, now called Bard College. It has ceased to be a church college because church affiliation precludes having any help from the government whatsoever. So I went to Canterbury and wasted two and a half years although I never had a better time in my life and our little college sent at least 50 young men into the priesthood so we were not altogether useless. It failed because our leadership was very faulty.

After that I did a little wandering. I had to make a living. I even taught for a semester in an 80 student high school in the wilds of Nebraska.

Q. You went back to your home state.

A. Yes - that was a mistake. Then I went out to Odessa, Texas, where there's nothing but sand and a few sand burrs - it's oil shale country - probably prospering right now from this crises. It was changing from a desert, lonely town at that time to an up and coming city. The Junior College, however, never did amount to anything. Then I went over to another Episcopal school because I was asked. The Bishop at Dallas had taken over an old Presbyterian school which was going on the rocks called Daniel Baker College. The new president, a priest, called it the Episcopal College of the Southwest, retaining the old name, however. But that only lasted a year.

But fortunately, fate smiled on me and brought me here in 1953 in February. I think I owe that to Mrs. Edith McNabb as much as anybody because she was very much taken with my credentials and experience and potential ability. Now when I came here the school had reached the lowest enrollment it had ever had. Just at that time in 1952 and 53 the Korean war vets had run out. Millikin had been bigger than it ever had been before or since during the G.I. influx. You couldn't even get into the place. I think they were hardly prepared for it because they weren't equipped in many ways, especially as they are equipped now with the buildings and facilities they needed. Well, there were 850 students that semester.

Q. And lots of young men?

A. They had gone. The Korean war was over. That's why jobs were so scarce. When I came, the speech department had been only recently organized. The Speech Department had been a part of the English Department, as were all

Speech Departments originally. There were very few. When I took my degree, I think there were only three places where I could have got a degree in theatre at the time - Yale, Case Western, and Denver. That's about the size of it, and when I got a good fellowship out there, I took it.

Usually there were two plays given during the year plus a set of one act plays.

Q. Now, this is at Millikin after you came here?

A. Yes. But there were no plays scheduled till the end of the semester because this was the golden anniversary. Is that what 50 years is called?

Q. I believe so.

A. The golden anniversary of Millikin. It was started about 1903. The first play that had ever been given at Millikin was The Rivals. It was repeated in the late 30's at some sort of anniversary. Now they wanted to repeat it again.

Q. Did you direct it?

A. Well, this is an interesting story. In the first place, I had very few students who were interested in dramatics at all, and the only way they got the drama going about 1929 and kept it going in the 30's under Prof. McNabb wc to use townspeople. That's why it was called Town and Gown although it was never properly organized as a dramatic club. So I didn't know who I was going to have. I had a very good leading lady and a very good leading man. I didn't know what I would do for Mrs. Malaprop, and I didn't know what on earth I would do for Sir Anthony. These are very important parts. But things do happen - or you hope they'll happen. That spring I was asked tc make the scenery for the opera, which was the first act of Madame Butterfly and then Pucinni's Gianni Schecchi. That made a very nice program. That was Mr. Norville's first presentation. Since he professed so much

professional experience and since I had done the scenery for him, I thoughtI would ask him to do Sir Anthony. Well, Mr. Norville was a little too professional for me. In other words, there is a kind of hauteur among music people. Anyway, about a week before the production he copped out. So I thought, "Well, I can play Sir Anthony," whereupon I played Sir Anthony. I learned the part in three days. I hadn't played a part for a long time. The last part I had played was in Denver - a part for which I was not fitted at all. I was cast in it simply because my hair was turning gray, and I looked a little bit fatherly, but the head of the department said most of the time I looked and acted like something out of Noel Coward, and that wasn't very complimentary in terms of a part in Ah! Wilderness.

Well, anyhow, we pulled The Rivals off to a great success, but to my great surprise the two performances - one in the afternoon and one in the evening - drew a combined audience of eighty-one people. So there was the first problem - where was the audience? You can hardly blame my predecessor. I think he had come there as an older man also. He had done a fine job in his earlier days, but he got tired. He stayed as long as he could because MU had no retirement plan at the time.

Q. Who was your predecessor?

A. L. C. McNabb - Mrs. McNabb's husband. Finally it was time for him to retire. They had no retirement program. They had a piddling little retirement "pension" - I suppose you'd call it in which you got a dollar a month for every year you had taught. That's all they had.

Q. That seems incredible!

A. It seems incredible now and for wonderful people like Dr. McNabb, Miss Davida McCaslin and Dr. Flora Ross. I'm just lucky in that all this time I had been paying on Social Security.

Mrs. McNabb played Mrs. Malaprop. She was really terrific - if you could only have heard her!

That was the problem with the production of Twelfth Night last night. I didn't hear a word that Maria said!

Q. Now, that's the television production last night, but what about the play you directed?

A. I should get to that. So - I had no students. I had two majors - girls. Mrs. McNabb had decided, and I think she was a very brave and courageous soul and has been justified, went to television and produced what we call a "telecourse." Well, she was given a lot of criticism and derision for doing this, but the U. of I. right now is doing exactly the same thing with these Shakespearean plays. She ought to feel justified.

I did have one or two very eager people. This was a kind of combination of town theatre and school theatre, which was very nice for me. I liked it because you can put older people in older parts, as it ought to be.

The Little Theatre or Guild was very strong in the town, but I had managed to get on their side, and we always got along very well.

Q. Where were these plays given?

A. The only hall possessed by the university at that time is what is known as Albert Taylor Hall. It held 750 people. It had a balcony and was being rehabilitated and was only barely ready for use in 1953, when we gave The Rivals. We had to give the opera and later some of the fine arts things in the Masonic Temple, because Albert Taylor Hall wasn't big enough.

But a 750 person hall will not hold even half of 81! It was most discouraging, but there were always people who were interested. But "A.T." or Taylor Hall has marvelous acoustics.

Q. It was named after the first president?

A. Yes - President Taylor.

Well, it has marvelous acoustics - or had.

Q. What happened to it?

A. Somebody put up a bunch of curtains. It had marvelous acoustics, but it has no stage. The stage has a total depth of 13 feet and no chance of a loft to fly scenery and there were all kinds of partitions at the side that limited the space.

In 1964, when we remodeled it again, we took out all those things. We even took out the dressing rooms. We left one on the other side for the occasions when we had a star. He could have some privacy there.

One woman said, "I don't see how you do what you do with that stage." Well, I used every device you could think of - a set of curtains had been bought and curtains are an answer to something like that, but these curtains were semi-circular and were not usable for making a room. I got rid of them as soon as I could. The same outfit was trying to sell the same set of those curtains to Stephen Decatur High School. I was called in, thank goodness, and I told them off. They never sold the curtains! Later on we at MU made some black curtains, whichis about the only color they could be, out of flannel, and used those. We used backdrops for certain effects, as Goodman and many others do today. It was very effective, I thought, even though some critics didn't agree.

Anyway, that was always a big problem. I had no help. I directed the play, I made all the scenery, with the help of the students. The play may have suffered a bit because I was bit by a bug named David Belasco when I was a small child and nothing would please me better than to put on the Girl of the Golden West with the first act consisting only of a sunrise in the Sierras! It was a spectacular effect. How he did it I don't know.

We didn't have spotlights and effects like that in those days.

Anyway, I set for myself some objectives: in the first place, to increase the audience by giving good shows; to try to give a touch of professionalism to the shows. There was very little encouragement, really for theatre. Dean C. L. Miller thought it was very fine training, but that opinion would allow us to only go so far. Up the road here at Bloomington the man had a real school of the theatre. It was very successful. They have a wonderful theatre there now, and we still haven't done anything at Millikin. It's a shame.

And then, to get new plays. Hindrances? Ignorance. This is the Bible belt. In Mt. Zion we have four fundamentalist Baptist churches besides two or three others of the same kind, but they don't call themselves Baptists. And also lack of interest - and prejudice. You say a naughty word - oh boy, you're out! So even for such a classic as Winterset, I got criticized. I didn't think anything about it. I wasn't used to that attitude.

I fought that attitude all my professional life here until we finally did Blues for Mr. Charlie, which is a Black play. It has white people in it, but it's a black play. Well, we got the Dean of Chapels, the professo of religion behind us and he went to Dr. McKay, who was in my estimation a perfect example of a little prig, and got permission for us to do it. He said I would not ask him. I had had enough. Mr. Bodamer is still up there. He was behind me, and he did it for us. The president said, "You can do it if you will do it free as a gift to the community." Well, we had three packed houses!

Q. Well, that increased your audience!

A. This was 1967 and the big thing - their first Black Emphasis Week. As the interest in Civil Rights grew, you had to go for it or against it. I was very much for it I am very proud to say that in the first production of The Rivals we had a black man, and in the last big production I did, Julius Caesar, we hired a black man from New York, Herb David, to play Marc Anthony, and the black kids, plus all the high school brats from town that we could get our hands on, played the democrats. The white people played Brutus and the republicans. The action gets pretty thick! I know my son, who was doing lighting for me at the time, called down to me on the inter-com. After the murder scene, here came these black men in big boots - we had them in military costumes and pretty much modern dress - and tough looking as the streets of Chicago. They stomped in. They knew how to fake it, and my son said, "You'd better stop them! That white kid's going to get killed!"

Afterwards he thought it was a big joke.

Q. It was good theatre!

A. It was very good theatre. One of the Sisters at St. Teresa's brought her people to it, and she was really terrified. It was really scary, and it made people think. A recent critic in Chicago said that anything that has to have a page of notations is not a very good production - he was talking about a recent production of An Enemy of the People, and I think he's crazy. If I hadn't put that bit of ancient history in there -

Q. They wouldn't have had the background for it.

A. Nobody has the background for it any more. They used to have it, but they don't anymore.

Now, I would say that we didn't progress at first very much for a couple of years. Then I revived in my mind the idea of doing a play cast with the youngsters but with a Broadway professional. I finally after much

persuasion got Clarence Derwent, a very experienced English actor, who was president of Equity at the time. He was the one person who was willing to come out and do it. He liked very much what we did.

Q. What did you do?

A. Measure for Measure. You know, I'm a radical at heart. My grandpa was a Populist, and it's in the blood. My idea was "Let's do something different. Let's not do the same old things."

After taking a course in Shakespeare from the then head of the English department, one student said, "Well, Mrs. Maxwell just castrates Shakespeare."

I don't know what experience the library has had with people objecting to books, but the feelings are there. Some people are too smart to let it happen.

I don't know what the students at Millikin are like now, but sometimes I have felt during my time this was nothing but a cow college. Well, that's just not true. We've had a strange mixture. We have always had some very brilliant and talented students and then we would have some of the worst clods.

Q. Isn't that usual?

A. But not so obvious. Among the student body, there was no real interest in drama. The Fine Arts series is still going on. Mrs. Maxwell, the head of the English department, gave that the initial push, but who comes to it? It's the townspeople. The same way with drama.

Now I think there are several people from the town who were extremely helpful to me. If I hadn't had them, I don't think I'd have had anything. A fellow by the name of Bill Miller. Now, there are several Bill Millers around here, and I think there is more than one William F. Miller but this man was a very talented actor, crazy about the theatre but who

had got sidetracked into radio for the simple reason that a lot of people did. He would rather have done theatre, but there weren't any jobs. He had first worked with the Little Theatre Guild, but they got to be a rather obnoxious outfit, and he eventually disappeared completely. He took his group and formed his own group. He called them Pandora Players. The explanation of the name has never been made. He helped me out a great deal. Of course, I worked for the Pandora Players myself.

Then there was also Jim Seaney, who was an announcer over at WDZ. There was a woman in town named Mrs. Norma Magnuson who was a teacher of drama at Stephen Decatur and later at MacArthur. Then one of the prize persons, the one who played Malvolio and made him screamingly funny. You know, I've discovered this. You can train people for comedy - you can tell them what to do, but if they're not funny, it's not funny, and John can be hilariously funny. He's still alive - he's an old man now - he's given up to old age, something I will never do. His name, John McDonald should be written in capital letters for the work he did at MU.

And then a fellow from WSOY named Hap Jensen. His name was Harold J. Jensen. At the present time he is the high mucky muck on Channel 2 news in New York City. But I've never heard a word from him since he left Decatur. He learned English diction, called RP or Received Pronunciation from me and got a radio job in Boston for being able to handle it.

And then a lady by the name of Shirley Cedarquist, who lived here for a while.

Now those people were very helpful; for instance, Mrs. Magnuson played a number of leading parts. We produced quite a few graduate students. From that little department I have down a list of five Ph.D's. The last two I'm not too sure about. I didn't have time to check, but I think they are:

The first is Louis Catron of Springfield who has been for the last several years head of the Drama department at William and Mary College in Virginia.

There is Edwin Leach, who couldn't act his way out of a wet paper bag but who for some reason chose speech as his major. We had very little to offer him because his interest is speech correction. He is at present the head of the Speech Pathology Department of the College of Medicine at the University of Nebraska.

And then there is James Meikle, who is thoroughly dramatics and who is at the College of the Ozarks. I saw him last fall at our little reunion up there, and he is white-headed more than I am. I didn't recognize him! He is a relatively young man.

Then there's an Arab by the name of Jamil Toubeh. The last I heard of him he was doing audio difficulties and speech at Texas Tech University at Lubbock.

Then there is Norman Boyer, who doesn't exactly belong to me. He played parts as long as we had them. He went to the University of Denver. He has a Ph.D., I know, and he's teaching somewhere. The first four are stricly speech or drama. The last one may have gone into history, because that was his major anyhow.

Then there were some other very outstanding students who should be mentioned, and I'll just briefly give their names - Bill Barry, Ron Mitchell - once upon a time not too long ago he and some other students called me long distance at Christmas. They were working in Washington. I don't know if they were working in government or what they were doing, but it was very nice of them.

Dave Stark, a young man by the name of Dave Seligman. He was my lighting expert. Then there is Nancy Marie Bower. She's married, and I can't remember her last name to save my neck. And lawyer John T. Taylor, Skinny's son. We called him Jack.

Then Frank D. Beaman, whose nickname "Dode" stuck with him. He's head of the radio department of WBBM in Chicago.

And Robert D. Grohne. He is at the Cement Works out here.

And a fellow by the name of Larry Lant, who came to us from that collegiate disaster, Parsons College, at Fairfield, Iowa. Also Jackie Bean, Larry Henry, Marilyn LaMarsh, Jean Burkhaltor, Nancy Lang and Mary Jo Steinback.

I should also mention three or four other townspeople. There is Al Dobbins, who played all sorts of parts - a very handsome, heavy black man, who looked like a football player. Whenever I had a suitable part I gave it to him. The one place I wanted him so bad it hurt was as De Lawd in Green Pastures, but his hours of work had changed. He worked at Staley's and had a family, and he was very skittish. He was one of the few who survived that strike out there a while back.

Then there was Mr. Jack Sangster, who played the father in Romeo and Juliet - perfectly.

I should mention Orv Graham. I don't know why I left him out. He's still out at WSOY. A perfect Tybalt. Then there was Harry McClintock, whom we knew as Harry Michaels, from WDZ, and his wife Kay. Also Peter Priar, a voice student who has gone into opera.

Now for lighting, we had someone who amounted to a genius - a fellow from down here at Virden, I believe. I can't remember all those funny towns south of Springfield - Terry Boston. At one time I was beside myself. I couldn't get adequate help for Romeo and Juliet - and it had to lighted right - so I went to Hank Gill and asked him for $25 to have Terry come over - and he pulled us right out of it.

There was a young man who wasn't a Millikin student, but he turned out to be a very great high school dramatics person - James Wilhelm.

Then there was Dr. Vety's son, who was suddenly killed while in the Air Force - his plane just disappeared.

Then there were two names I remember who went professional. One of them is John Jay Smith who most of his life since he left Millikin has been with the New York City Opera Company.

Peter Freyer is trying his wings on opera now.

Marilyn LaMarsh, as often happens with these so-called professional people, played rings around Bill Hayes' Romeo. It was just outstanding, but she got married.

Two plays we presented for almost the first time - a play by James Leo Herlihy whom you may remember as the author of Midnight Cowboy and several other movies like that. It was called Moon in Capricorn. Then there was a series of one-act plays called On Cobweb Twine - about New Orleans, by a woman by the name of Anna Maria Barlow. We gave Lou Catron's (our own student) Lincoln in Springfield and reproduced the front room exactly of the Lincoln home.

Q. You mean it was written by a student here?

A. Yes - he's the one who is head of drama at William and Mary.

Q. Oh, yes!

A. We reproduced the front room of the Lincoln home in Springfield exactly. So we could do realistic things if we had to.

And then we did Barry Stavis Banners of Steel, which is on John Brown and it was later done as Harper's Ferry at the very famous Guthrie Theatre.

Q. Minneapolis?

A. Yes. Herlihy's Blue Denim was a Broadway success. Then a play came along, which I've never read and really don't know anything about, which he wrote. He had Talulah Bankhead and Joan Blondell. It was called Crazy October. It was thoroughly panned. It was a little bit before its time. From that time on, Jim has ceased to write plays. He writes novels instead.

The persons from Broadway who came here to play with the students - quite frankly I did this as a box office gimmick / but I continued it because it was a very educational thing.

Q. The students learned from it?

A. Learned! But they were very competitive. That kind of beat me. The last dress rehearsal of Romeo and Juliet I said to someone whom Bill Hayes had dragged in because he was afraid I wasn't director enough to do it, I said, "What's the matter with that first scene? I can' see what I can do with it." "Well," he can't "it looks like a bunch of college kids having a sword fight."

I told them that. It changed immediately! Immediately! Well, we had Mr. Darwint in Measure for Measure. We had Julie Hayden playing Olivia in Twelfth Night. Of course, she was an old lady then, but she still looked beautiful. Bill Hayes in Romeo and Juliet. Although my mother said he was the most wonderful Romeo she had ever seen, I found him somewhat lacking because he didn't have the "soul" for it. We had Donald Buka in Hamlet, which nearly drove everybody crazy. Then I tried to

The Little Clay Cart, which is a Hindu play I had done very successfully at the University of Nebraska, but I was over influenced by someone in the East - a professor by the name of Henry W. Wells, and used the wrong translation. I don't care if it is a better translation - it isn't a better play than the old one by Arthur Ryder, the Harvard translation. This is by the goof over at the U. of I., the classics professor who was such a John Bircher. No wonder it isn't any good! And I wanted - this is typical of the dirty tricks people will play - I wanted a certain Hindu actor. I went to New York - I interviewed him, I was ready to sign him, and Wells said something very snide against him, and I was afraid. We had to be very careful. So I took this Negro from Chicago, who couldn't act his way out of a paper bag. And he was pretty much of a flop even though he was an Equity actor. I don't know what happened to him - he didn't have any futute.

Then I was going to have Helen Marie Taylor, who was a very beautiful older woman - you know, they can be very beautiful and just right for a part. I wanted very much to do something besides Shakespeare. But she got herself pregnant I think and couldn't.

And one person I didn't mention among the students didn't act very much but was of the greatest help to me in publicity, business management, and so on was John Day. Between the two of us we got a little bit excited and picked someone out of the book. She wasn't any good for Lady Windermere. When she got a bad write-up in the paper, she had the effrontery to go down to the paper and complain about it. They gave me the dickens meanwhile. I think I got mostly good ones, but if I got a bad one, I would never say anything about it. Then we had Raymond Bieri,

whom you will see once in a while out in California with TV and with Bill Ball's Theatre at the American Conservatory, in Macbeth, which was very good. The only trouble was he had to bring his wife along, and I didn't tumble but his wife was an alcoholic. She wanted to be in the show, so we let her be one of the witches, and I looked up the second night, and I saw this barefoot woman slipping off the platform and I ran back stage. It took us a half hour to get that drunken woman off the stage. These are the kinds of things you have to put up with. You might just as well expect it. We finally got her downstairs and put away.

Then John Call, who is one of the funniest comedians - he's dead now, played in Midsummer Night's Dream. We sold out and we'd still be playing it and have people coming to see it if we could - they loved it.

Then Herb Davis in Julius Caesar.

I myself did some acting. I told you I played Sir Anthony Absolute. I got tremendous puffs for acting in The Wayward Saint, which is one of those Irish plays. I did the Clarence Darrow part in Inherit the Wind. I would say the biggest houses were The Wayward Saint, The Importance of Being Ernest - those kids were taught to speak stage English. It was taught to me, and it improved my American English no end. I mentioned Ernest, The Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night as very successful, and the last play Hedda Gabler. That to me was a great triumph because shots and suicides, killings, and murders are very difficult to get the audience to take seriously on the stage. My assistant and I were sitting in the back of the auditorium holding our respective breaths, when Judge Brack said "People don't do things like that." Nancy Lang managed that part so that she was utterly sympathetic. She was perfectly beautiful, and when she shot herself, there was dead silence. Ibsen is not careful in what he makes his actors say sometimes. "People don't do things like

that." American audiences ordinarily would howl - but not so.

Q. A great tribute.

A. We were just hugging each other back there. So that's at least the story of my life.

Let me say I regret that Nancy Lang prefers the luxuries of life that come from working in a bank, the City Bank in New York City to rigors of the theater.