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Fine action, acting in 'Caesar'

■ The University Theatre offers a modern version of a Shakespearean tragedy

By Sara Jarrett
Oregon Daily Emerald

If the opening-night performance dictates the level of a play's success, "Julius Caesar" should reach the top in no time. University Theatre director and Professor Robert Barton's latest offering to the Robinson Theatre is a refreshingly modernized version of William Shakespeare's late 16th-century tragedy.

It's a play about overthrowing dictatorship for the general good of a country's people. The subject is timeless, and Barton's adaptation proves it is placeless as well.

One could imagine it happening in any country in the world right now. There are a few instances when the word "Rome" is actually spoken, alluding to a specific place, but in the words of Barton himself, "Rome, in this case, should probably be in quotation marks."

The title character, played by Alexander Stanley, only appears in three scenes and is murdered in

the middle of the performance during Act III. Though the play is technically about Julius Caesar's life, his assassination and the people he ruled, it's really the show of Brutus, the main conspirator and Caesar's murderer.

Luke Hamilton successfully embodies the role of Brutus. Hamilton's passion permeates his performance and adds an intensity to the landscape of the show that would be lacking without his obvious dedication to the craft. At times though, Hamilton's investment seems a little intense and restrictive, giving Brutus too linear a persona.

Quinn Mattfeld, who plays Cassa, another conspirator against Caesar, impressively displays an ability to find ease in his performance while maintaining the believability of his character. Bekki Barnhart offers another display of texture-rich acting in the role of Portia, Brutus' wife. The energy she projects remains on stage long after she exited. Danielle Ozymandias also has an extremely strong stage presence. She deserves respect and praise for masterfully pulling off a female Marc Antony. Noticeable in nearly all cast

members is choppy, drawn-out execution of the lines in times of great importance. This was seemingly done to iterate the impact of what they are saying, but when each character uses the same technique, it tends to take away from the well-crafted personalities. Barton's focus on diction and voice inflection, however, is evident all-around. The show's level of listening ease is extremely satisfying.

With three single death scenes and two main battles, "Julius Caesar" offers an adequate amount of action. Both are extremely well choreographed and executed, providing a visual release from Jerry Williams' overall minimalist set design concept. The scenes are so well-placed and designed, it's a shame they weren't longer. The bright orange background lights, fog billowing from behind huge boulders and the piercing sound of guns certainly provide the necessary whirlwind, destructive effect.

Overall, the Robinson Theatre is off to another impressive season of finely tuned performances. "Julius Caesar" will be shown Nov. 11, 12, 13, 19 and 20 at 8:00 p.m. and on Nov. 14 at 2 p.m.

Kip Kinkel

Continued from Page 1
 "emerging adults."

In answering a question from defense attorney Mark Sabbitt, the psychologist said he believed unequivocally that the auditory hallucinations and paranoid personality disorder Kinkel suffered were directly the cause for the crimes he committed.

"It took over his ego and he became a very dangerous individual," Sack said.

The doctor further testified that Kinkel's mental illness would not, in his opinion, hinder him from re-entering society in the distant future because such strides are being made in anti-psychotic medications.

"His illness is a treatable condition," Sack said. "I can't claim it's curable, but it's certainly treatable."

With a regimen of medications, education about his illness and the emotional support of a counselor, Sack testified that Kinkel could foreseeably be released from incarceration without causing further harm.

"I'd be happy to have him as my next door neighbor," he said. "I don't think he would be a danger to society."

Y2K: EWEB

Continued from Page 1
 we're ready and that it turns out to be a non-event."

The first step taken by the team was to inventory all of EWEB's computer systems to prioritize the critical and date-sensitive systems. Critical systems are those that are essential to supplying water, electricity and steam to EWEB customers. Date-sensitive systems are those that have specific functions relating to date and time.

Once the full inventory was

completed in 1998, the team undertook a series of tests to make sure the systems were ready. In 1999, the team concentrated on company-wide drills as utility services nationwide participated in a series of Y2K preparedness tests on April 9, 1999 and again on Sept. 9, 1999.

"The national tests were a chance for us to work on reliability issues," Mitchell said. "We wanted to test our ability to keep the operation going in the event of an outage."

Power utility companies na-

Michael Michel, Kinkel's freshman football coach and keyboarding teacher at Thurston High School, said he was a good student and they had a satisfactory student-teacher relationship.

He said Kinkel never lost control or acted inappropriately during football games or practice.

Oleta Fountain, Kinkel's second grade teacher, echoed Michel's testimony and said Kinkel was an average student who worked hard.

"He was a normal second grade guy," Fountain said.

Kinkel's third grade teacher, Collette Trotter, put Kinkel in special education and said he made "somewhat of an improvement." But Kinkel could often not recognize spelling words he has previously tested on, she said.

Because of this frustration, school counselor Patricia Reinker evaluated Kinkel through a series of tests in the second grade. She did a neurological screening test, on which Kinkel scored average in 14 of the 15 sub-tests.

The hearing will resume Tuesday, Nov. 9, with additional witnesses appearing for the defense.

Emerald reporter Felicity Ayles contributed to this report.

tionwide, including the ones on which Eugene relies for power, are Y2K ready.

"More than 99 percent of all the critical elements of the U.S. and Canadian electricity supply systems are ready for Y2K," North American Electric Utility Council President Mischehl R. Gent said in a statement released in August. "If New Year's Day 2000 was tomorrow, we believe the lights would remain on in North America."

Mitchell is confident that Northwest dams are ready for the switch.

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