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What is "the method"? How long has it been an influence in the theatre? How did it rise to prominence? How is it practiced in America? How has it been distorted? How do some of the leading directors and actors working in American theatre today practice it? These and other important and exciting questions are discussed and analyzed by some of the leading voices in the theatre:

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P. 95, 10th line from the end of the first column: The dramatist's name is spelled Drozdowski. In his capacity as Vice-Director of the Polish Cultural Institute of London I owe him enormous debts.

I want this to be a publication of record, and so I want it to be correct, at least in its after-life. Besides, I am too fond of Miss Jun and Mr. Drozdowski to permit one to be ignored and the other misspelled.

Henry Popkin
New York City

THE EDITOR:

The June TDR came yesterday. I'm sorry you never found pictures for my piece, but then I suppose you're sorry I never did. But that's not the point of this letter.

It's Andre Gregory's "comment." You certainly have a simplistic view of life if you accept that account as *the* account. Perhaps an incipient regional theatre movement has to have villains (Boards, an apathetic public, local critics) and heroes (committed directors), but I doubt really if much good comes from viewing the complicated world of regional theatre in blacks and whites. It was, after all, the burghers, not Gregory, who went into the slum and found the theatre (he came after it was chosen), although the particular burghers who found it were later moved out. I find the image somewhat ludicrous in any case—Gregory on the barricades of artistic freedom, asking us to look at his favorable review in *Time* magazine.

I was sorry to see Gregory go because he was lively and pugnacious (professionally: I do not know him personally) and his presence assured a certain amount of fireworks from South Street. I was even sorer to see George Sherman go (he had directed the best production to date: *The Last Analysis*) and David Hurst go (he was the best actor in the company), and presumably their going had a great deal more to do with Gregory than it did with the Board. Show folks (as the scripts to old cowboy movies used to call them) are notoriously impossible and I would not dare to guess who was right and who was wrong in the riffs downtown, but I do know that a Board is not the only disruptive element in a theatre. As for *Beclch* being the cause for AG's going, I would look closer. As

so often happens in regional theatres, it is more likely to be money rather than the program that sends a director flying. Money is tied up with programming, and with the whole concept of regional theatre, it is true, but the immediate cause of Gregory's going was a management crisis during which he took a really very weasly-wordy stand and had his bluff called. He does make it sound as though he came home, with *Beclch* in his arms, and the Board pointed into the snow, saying "never darken my door."

As for the three shockers. *Endgame*. I didn't like the production myself (which is not surprising since I had directed it a few years earlier at Penn and so I was hung up on my reading of the play), although Hurst's performance was a *tour de force*. Audiences did walk out on it. There was much whining about Philistine audiences, but the only thing that can be done about them is to keep giving them good productions of good plays until they come around or until they are replaced by new audiences. No one has ever won an audience by shouting *j'accuse*.

Poor Bitos. That famous booby was an indulgence of Gregory's, a chi-chi touch which had nothing to do with the play. The production was good and the audience response showed it. In fact, at the end of 1965-66, with *Bitos* and *Analysis*, it looked as though the company would settle into a good one doing good plays.

Beclch. I gather there was a deal of opposition to the play, but the play was done, presumably with Board approval. It was not a very good play, a would-be shocker that was garrulous and soft-centered. The production (except for a guest dance company) was also bad. It opened with photo-and-light gimmicks, very total theater-y, that reminded me of the kind of grass-hutty nightclub you used to get in Topeka and places like that (I've never been to Topeka but you know what I mean). I don't want to go into the production in detail (I understand you had accepted and then decided against a review from one of the students at Penn), but two points. One of the key scenes, a conversation in the bar between *Beclch* and the young man, was killed in Gregory's directing by being pushed to a little platform to make room for the dancers. The scene that might have been shocking—the eating of the raw flesh of a goat—was silly. The very stuffed-looking goat opened on the side like a lady's

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pocketbook and from it Sharon Gans very daintily took something that not at all resembled the raw bleeding flesh of it, as Arnold Weinstein might say. The people I know—my students, my colleagues—found the play ludicrous. An eminent poet, who came to see it on business (she's with some of the money-giving people), asked me at the first break: "Is it going to be this same

sado-masochistic crap all the way through?" I had read the script and so could answer yes.

Since Gregory was artistic director it was certainly, and justly, his job to do the plays he thought were worth doing. Still, I can't really take his view of things as the real one. The famous *Beclch* controversy (a good part of which was manufactured for publicity) looks this way to me. On one side, the conservative members of the board complaining and on the other, Gregory defending. The bone of contention, a mediocre play. What have we then but an avant-garde Philistine confronting traditional Philistines, and who is caught in the middle? Those people who want good theatre.

*Gerald Weales
Philadelphia*

THE EDITOR:

As co-director of The Chamber Theatre Co., San Francisco, I would like to inform you of an international theatre protest project which we are sponsoring along with many other groups and artists in the U.S. and abroad. All the sponsoring individuals and groups will probably endorse some form of the following proposal:

During one month theatre companies around the world will stage plays concerned with the war in Vietnam. There have been individual and sporadic attempts to deal with the war on the stage, but international effort is needed to 1) enrich the individual productions by aid and criticisms from artists with different cultural perspectives, 2) make a demonstration of international cooperation, 3) focus international attention on the ultimate dramatic statements. The project has two parts—the productions (presently slated for fall, 1967), and an international ex-

change of ideas, scripts, talent, photos, drawings, criticism, and debate in the months preceding the productions. This exchange runs through a central clearing house (presently The Chamber Theatre Co., San Francisco) into which all communication comes and is shunted out for translation and perusal by other artists and groups.

The ultimate responsibility for the form and content of each contribution remains with the participating theatre. No limitation is placed on who may join the project.

Those interested in participating should please contact me at 26 Panoramic Way, Berkeley, California.

*Seth Freeman
The Chamber Theatre Co.
San Francisco*

THE EDITOR:

Readers of my article in T36 may have been puzzled by its title, "Dionysus and the Cultured Policeman," since there is no reference to policemen, cultured or otherwise, anywhere in the text. The explanation is very simple. The first draft of this article quoted a passage from the Preface to the Second Edition of Jane Ellen Harrison's *Themis* (p. viii) in which the author tells of a student from a *Working Men's College who confided to her* that he had been a free-thinker ever since reading *The Golden Bough*. For reasons of space this sentence was cut from the final version of my article, but through an oversight the title remained as a vestigial reminder of it; for the free-thinking student was, of course, the "cultured policeman."

*Michael Anderson
University of Bristol*