

Dorm rooms test 'three's a crowd' theory

The Department of Housing gave 24 freshmen in Patterson Hall the opportunity to live in rooms designed for three people. One freshman shares her experiences about living with two roommates instead of just one.

EMILY TYNER Staff Writer

Just a few weeks ago, most students made the transition to USC and juggled the duties of moving in with the task of meeting a new roommate.

Although the challenge was proceeded by both anxiety and excitement, most discovered it would not be too difficult to live with a roommate. But what about two roommates? Housing gave this option to 24 freshmen in Patterson Hall.

I live in one of the eight triple rooms, and am often asked about the experience.

In the beginning, I developed the "Oh, no, there is one more person to get along with" syndrome and applied the "three's a crowd" theory to the situation. After a month, though, I believe it could not have worked out better.

First, our room is huge compared to other rooms within the residence halls. Almost two regular-size Patterson rooms could fit inside a triple if our private bathroom is added. That is the most attractive feature. I do not have to leave my room in the middle of the night to get a drink of water, and I spared five dollars on a pair of flip flops for the hall showers. We also have a bathtub. A full size refrigerator is wedged between my roommate Jessica's bureau and the bathroom doorway. Because it came with the room, we saved money.

All these features aside, there are other benefits of sharing a room with two people. There are four ears instead of two to listen to me rave about a high exam score or whine about the elevators. I have the advantage of comparing hometown stories with Jessica (we both come from small towns) and also learning about "the places to go" from Columbia-native Kathy.

Also, if one roommate is out, the other is usually in the room to talk about classes, homework or "Days of Our Lives."



JULIE WILSON The Gamecock

The three person rooms in Patterson Hall are larger than other rooms. Other differences between two person rooms and three person rooms are more room for clutter and more room for different interests. Three person rooms also come furnished with a refrigerator.

However, a few characteristics make this situation fairly difficult. My roommates and I have a lot more space to keep neat, and that has forced me, one fond of creative clutter, to tidy up after myself. In addition, the bathroom is our responsibility. There are no custodians to ensure sanitation; we have to clean out the tub, scrub the sink and mop the floor. Also, because we have different interests, there is more of an opportunity for conflict. Jessica may want to listen to White Zombie, Kathy could choose Celine Dion, and I may vote for Alanis Morissette. Kathy may want to watch "Party of Five" on television, but Jessica may choose another show. Fortunately, though, these are not problems. We are very honest with each other and communicate during conflicts.

Other aspects that make this situation unique include phone time and the amount of visitors. We all use the same phone and battle the cordless' static to

answer constant beeps and scribble countless messages. It can be a hassle to keep up with who called who, but we have brightly colored message pads to make the process more fun.

We all live not more than 1 hour and 15 minutes from Columbia. Therefore, visitors do not have to travel far to visit. This, coupled with three people, results in more guests than normal. We agreed that as long as visitors respect all roommates' belongings and study time, they are welcome.

Finally, the "three's a crowd" question is not a problem. We eat, shop and walk to classes together occasionally, and no one is left out. If I am going out with friends, I usually invite both my roommates.

I enjoy my living situation, but I realize it will not always be perfect. I accept that reality. Living with two roommates is a different experience, but so far, it has worked out nicely.



JULIE WILSON The Gamecock

One perk of the three-person rooms is a large closet, which the three girls share.

'Oliver!' successful, despite house problems

JILL MCCALLUM Staff Writer

"Please, sir, may I have some more," I was left asking after seeing the production of "Oliver," the musical at the Town Theatre.

The play itself is artistically wonderful. However, factors such as theater size and acoustics at the Town Theatre leave room for improvement.

Written by Lionel Bart, the musical is a happier version of Charles Dickens' novel, "Oliver Twist."

The story begins at the London orphanage in the late 19th century where Oliver, played by fourth-grader Mark Hendley, lives with other poor orphans under the care of the greedy Mr. Bumble. Bumble sells Oliver to an undertaker where he is unhappy, and he soon runs away to live with a band of smudgy-faced boy thieves led by the comical Fagin. Fagin is played by internationally-recognized David Johnstone.

Oliver is then caught pick-pocketing and is taken into the home of the loving Mr. Brownlow, who believes that Oliver may be his long-lost grandson. Soon, however, he is kidnapped by Fagin's gang, and the struggle begins for Oliver's life, as the evil Bill Sykes and his lover Nancy, both cohorts of Fagin. They are brutally murdered and the greedy Fagin is left penniless. The story ends as Oliver is adopted by Mr. Brownlow and lives happily ever after.

The play is a wonderful portrayal of the classic novel, overflowing with timeless tunes such as "Food, Glorious Food," a cute song and dance performed by the boys in the orphanage, "Consider Yourself," perhaps the best number in the play, energetically sung by the entire cast, and "Reviewing the Situation," a dark, but enchanting number performed by the talented singer Fagin. Although a little confusing, the plot of this irresistible musical is marvelous.

The acting and entire design of the play, however, leave some room for improvement. Many of the actors fake bad British accents and sound as if they are half-British and half-Southern. In many cases, the child actors are

better than the adults, especially in the musical numbers and solos. But Hendley (Oliver), while a good actor, does not sing his parts very well, because Oliver's solos do not seem to fit Hendley's vocal range.

The one exception to the mediocre acting is David Johnstone, who plays Fagin. Johnstone marvelously portrays Dickens' evil Fagin as a lovable, comical teacher of thieves. He has an exceptional voice and a lot of experience, performing throughout Columbia. He has earned the status of an H1 Visa as a performer of exceptional ability and international recognition. Johnstone certainly is a welcomed addition to the cast of "Oliver!"

The set design was very small and simple, but neat, representative of poor 19th century London. The small musical accompaniment consisted of two musicians playing a keyboard, drums and bass guitar. The music really did not add to the play, although it would have been wonderful if there was a larger orchestra section. The music was probably the most missed aspect of the play.

The small Town Theatre, although warm and home-like, does not house this play very well. "Oliver!" seems more appropriate for a larger stage, cast and audience. A large, national theatre would probably suit the play much better because of the large production numbers it requires.

I would recommend this play to anyone, although it is not made for children because of the excessive violence and references to drinking. It is a wonderful play—endearing, funny and performed by some magnificent actors. The energy and tuneful melodies throughout the play are truly fantastic, but to enjoy the performance, one must not see it too critically.

"Oliver!" will be running through Oct. 5 at the Town Theatre on Sumter Street near the Horseshoe. Performances are Wednesday through Saturday at 8 p.m., and on Sunday Sept. 29 at 3 p.m. Ticket prices are as follows: adults, \$11; senior/college/military, \$11 and youth (under 18), \$9. Those interested can call the box office at 799-2510 for tickets and more information.

Sheffield's futuristic sequel worthy of attention

The Ganymede Club By Charles Sheffield



Hit the Books Michael Urban

Charles Sheffield sets his tale, "The Ganymede Club," in the universe of his previous novel "Cold as Ice" to bring us a complex mystery set, as the novel implies, on the

Jovian moon of Ganymede in the year 2072. "Cold as Ice" does not need to be read to fully enjoy this novel.

Each novel has a different set of characters and vastly different storylines, and technically, "Cold as Ice" occurs 20 years after this novel. They both occur in a universe where the inner solar system was devastated by a great war which made half of the Earth uninhabitable and nearly wiped out all the colony worlds. This caused the Jovian system to become the hotbed of human civilization.

The "good" guys are round and interesting while the "bad" guys are two-dimensional and basically uninteresting.

Though the postwar idea is overused, this novel does show originality by not dwelling on it and by only using it as a background to support the storyline.

The first three chapters of the novel seem completely unrelated, but these three prewar episodes are essential in understanding the whole of the storyline. Here we meet all of the main characters, though it may not seem that way.

Sheffield masterfully intertwines these three short events to create a captivating mystery. The mystery is about a psychologist and her patient who have been marked for death.

The evil characters make up an elusive club called The Ganymede Club. It is this club that wants the psychologist and her patient dead. The first three chapters are crucial to the background

and answer the questions "who" and "why".

The characters as a whole are sort of lopsided. The "good" guys are round and interesting while the "bad" guys are two-dimensional and basically uninteresting. They are just stereotypical, evil eccentric. This tiny fact does not hurt the novel, though.

The psychologist, a haldane in the novel, her patient, her brother and his computer geek friend are all likable and easy to relate to. Only the main character,

the psychologist, undergoes sufficient character development. The others remain relatively static, if you discount the patient's unique predicament.

Overall, the novel is an interesting read. The story is involving and addictive. You will love this novel if you like mysteries and/or science fiction. Some have said Sheffield has the potential of becoming the next Asimov or Clarke. If you like this book, I suggest you also read "Cold as Ice." It's not as creative as this book but is still very good.

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