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SOPHIE TREADWELL: JOURNALISTIC PLAYWRIGHT

BY

GARY MARTIN PRUETT

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INTRODUCTION

Sophie Treadwell (1890-1970)[1] was an American writer whose career spanned some sixty-five years and attained varying degrees of success and recognition. During her childhood in rural California, Miss Treadwell showed an interest in writing and was fortunate to acquire an education which cultivated her literary interest. In college she wrote plays and worked as a journalist initiating the two occupations which would remain her life's work. The years immediately following college she was involved with semi-professional theatrical productions, studied with the actress Helena Modjeska, worked in journalism and married. She moved to New York City where her career was dominated for a time by journalism. She served as a foreign correspondent in Paris during the First World War, as a reporter of the Mexican revolution, and as a contributor to several newspapers, notably the New York Herald Tribune. In these years she did find time to write some plays but their production success was limited to a few non-professional showings.

A play entitled Gringo (1922) marked Miss Treadwell's Broadway debut. The play, set in Mexico, dealt with the struggles of capitalism versus socialism and love versus money. Though not an overwhelming success, Gringo marked the beginning of a period of twenty years during which Sophie Treadwell's plays were produced on the Broadway stage. O Nightingale (1925), Machinal (1928), Ladies Leave (1929), Lone Valley (1933), Plumes in the Dust (1936), and Hope for a Harvest (1941), all made New York showings, but of these Machinal was the only one to attain any significant and lasting recognition.[2]

Machinal concerned itself with a young girl trapped in a machine-like world. She was unable to cope with the pressures of routine daily work, her mother, her husband, or the birth of a child. In an attempt to escape her situation she took a lover and in him discovered the peace and freedom she had never known. Hoping to make freedom permanent, she killed her husband. She was apprehended, brought to trial, convicted and executed. Written in an expressionistic style, Machinal attracted favorable attention from critics and enjoyed a three month run. Moreover, it was revived several times: 1931 in London (then titled The Life Machine), 1932 in Russia, in many colleges and universities, and April 7, 1960, Gate Theatre, New York City.[3]

After Machinal's success Miss Treadwell traveled. She spent much time in Mexico, all of Europe, and maintained two homes in the United States. On one occasion she toured the Far East.

From the end of World War II until her death she continued to write primarily for radio and television. She enjoyed some success in these areas, but her greatest concern was to get another play produced. Her efforts produced meager results, but in 1967, the University of Arizona produced Now He Doesn't Want to Play, a situation comedy of poor structure. This was her last production as ill health forced her to minimize her writing activities.

In the life of Sophie Treadwell the overlapping of her two careers -- journalism and playwriting -- is interesting. It is not amazing that she continued the careers together for many years but that her methodology of writing as a journalist was manifested in her playwriting. In most of her major plays, her use of journalistic documentation -- the relating of data from situations she had researched or experienced as an individual or reporter to her plays -- signified the overlapping and integration of her careers. She placed onto the stage a journalistic truth, reporting to her audiences situations she knew to be occurring in the society of the day. With Machinal she

was successful, but other works proved to be dramatic failures.

Because the works of Sophie Treadwell can best be understood in the context of journalistic documentation, this thesis will explore her life and works from that viewpoint. Beginning with a discussion of journalistic documentation, the thesis will establish Sophie Treadwell as a strong believer in truth and honesty in her writing. This discussion will be followed by an examination of her life before her first Broadway production, with attention to the experiences which influenced her during that time. Her major writing period will be divided into two categories: major non journalistic plays and major journalistic plays. Because this second heading is more significant, Miss Treadwell's minor plays will be mentioned under this heading whether their basis is in journalistic documentation or not. Concluding this examination of her major writing period will be a brief account of her later life. Then, because of the special importance of Machinal, this play will be treated first as a theatrical production with examination of its episodial structure, use of titles, dialogue, and sound effects. Finally in order to more fully establish Sophie Treadwell's use of journalistic documentation, Machinal will be directly compared to the historical event from which it was taken, the Snyder-Gray murder trial.

CHAPTER ONE

SOPHIE TREADWELL AND JOURNALISTIC DOCUMENTATION

The basis of journalistic documentation is communication and the related truth which follows. Sophie Treadwell was an adamant believer that man should continually strive to improve his ability to communicate. After World War II she made a visit to Europe and was troubled by seeing the citizenry of nations striving for direction and leadership. She felt she heard all of post-war Europe say

> "Is this what it is to be a human being? Is this our civilization, our Western culture, our Christian religion? How to live in world like this? Is there no way out? No hope anywhere? I listened for an answer."[4]

The answer which came to her was not the leadership being offered by the United States, Russia, or the Pope, but the philosophy of Karl Jaspers whose writings she had studied for more than a decade. She observed:

> Then he [Jaspers] spoke of communication,--the communication

> of one human being with another. ---"What does not develope in communication is not yet. Truth begins with two. Seek constant communication. Risk it without reserve. To bring men to freedom means to bring them to communication --one with another. To the man who wants to be free one can speak about everything with complete freedom. Only out of complete openness does truth grow."[5]

This openness and search for truth was the guideline Miss Treadwell had worked under during her life as a writer. Beginning with her first published article she had expressed the truth. Written about her feelings and impressions upon arriving at college registration, the article was a simple outpouring of her thoughts about the "interesting people from so many farflung places."[6] To her it was a truthful representation and proved that one would be rewarded for the truth.

As a reporter in 1921, she sought out Pancho Villa in Mexico and interviewed him. Villa had been declared an enemy of the United States and one might expect an American reporter to reflect hostility toward the exiled leader. However, Miss Treadwell was not to be swayed to describe him as many thought he was, but she described him simply as she found him, a "lonely man, with a delightful, hearty, laugh, a voice oddly detached like Ethel Barrymore's -- only booming and powerful."[7]

She worked in Mexico several more times serving as a special correspondent. On an occasion in 1943, she expressed the following to her editor:

> Elections in Mexico are this July 4th. They are important and significant and I have made two short articles about them. One went yesterday; one goes today.
>
> I am trying in these "comments" to write honestly but with understanding,--trying always to make clear the reasons".
>
> The problem of writing anything at all of any value about Mexico at this time is a tough one. Maybe this approach is the right one,--honesty with understanding. But there is another way I can write and that is to ignore completely everything in any way "vital", and send articles about surface events and places,--scrupulously avoiding anything that lies beneath the surface. There are also many amusing things to write about, but this too, is dangerous. The Mexican is super-sensitive to anything he might be able to construe as having a touch of ridicule. I am sending you tomorrow a little story in this line for you to see.[8]

Although realizing she might face severe consequences, she consciously wrote her observations and perception of the truth.

Soon after, Miss Treadwell expressed her displeasure over distortions which did appear in newspapers.

> The machinery for deceiving people, or at least for preventing them from getting an accurate view of the real struggle going on in the world, has never, it would seem, reached the perfection of the present day.
>
> Nowadays, the vast majority of human beings in all countries are at the mercy of the newspapers for information about the world. And the newspapers mislead them atrociously. "Journalism," writes G.K. Chesterton, "is a false picture of the world, thrown upon a lighted screen in a darkened room so that the real world is not seen and the unreal world seen . . . . We live under secret government, conducted by a secret process called Publicity." For the newspapers are more and more at the beck and call of the financial forces which control the machinery of publicity.[9]

Another example of Miss Treadwell's belief in adhering to truth and honesty are expressed in a letter she wrote to her manager in February, 1958. The letter is a reply to being informed that a theatrical group was performing Machinal without having obtained the rights or paying the royalties.

> I do not feel that money is the thing at issue here. Nor that any small sum these people might offer--or be made-- to pay me could make good the indignity --the lack of respect-- they have shown me--and the theatre. . . . But afterall the theatre is not entirely a place of the double cross. There are rules of fairness set down-- worked out over the years by decent people--and followed by them.[10]

This strong affinity for truth and honesty throughout Miss Treadwell's life was reflected in her playwriting. In a lecture entitled "Writing a Play" she stated:

> The playwright may think first of a background, a slice of life, as they say. This is very often true of the journalist type of mind--people who look about them and see life going on in little groups, in little units. "I will write a play about ladies of the evening," says Mr. Gropper. Or I may say to myself, "I'll write a play about rum runners."[11]

By taking "life going on in little groups, in little units," as the source for plays, Sophie Treadwell remained within the realm of what she knew to be true. A play written from this basis was a representation of an event or truth that had occurred in life, and therefore it possessed certain values which she felt the audience should be exposed to. Knowing a social value was represented, the play to Sophie Treadwell was justifiable because it communicated information necessary for the survival of man.

EARLY LIFE AND PERSONAL INFLUENCES

Sophie Treadwell was of Spanish and English ancestry. Her great grandmother Vivian Evara (1810-1878) was Spanish, lived in Mexico and had married an Englishman in 1834.

Her daughter Susan Walker (d. 1860) married William Treadwell (1807-1857) an English painter, and in 1851, they migrated to California where Alfred Benjamin Treadwell, Miss Treadwell's father, was born on November 28, 1856. Unfortunately both his parents died before he was five. At the age of eight and under the direction of a priest, Alfred was taken to Mexico where he acquired a strong education primarily in languages. As a young man he worked as an editor, publisher, and teacher in the San Francisco and Stockton, California areas. He began to study law and in 1882, received admittance to the bar. He enjoyed a law partnership and was elected to a term as state senator. In June, 1889, he was appointed to the position of prosecutor for the city of Stockton.[12]

Miss Treadwell's mother, Nettie Fairchild (b. 1861), a native of Stockton, was the daughter of William H. Fairchild (1820-1882) who, born in Peru, had moved to California in 1846. He married Avera Grey (b. 1837) a native of Scotland.[13]

Sophie Treadwell's parents were established residents of Stockton, California when she was born there on October 3, 1890. She grew up in the Stockton area and was witness to the turn of the century life of a pioneering California.[14] The hardiness and courage of the settlers and the lush surrounding farm country formed impressions on the young girl that would later be evident in her writings. While

little is known about her early education, Sophie Treadwell did write her first play, of sorts, for her classmates as a child of eight. She attended a San Francisco convent called "The Madames" and later graduated from a French girls' school.[15]

A few weeks before her sixteenth birthday, Sophie Treadwell entered the University of California at Berkeley. At her freshman registration, excited by the people and activities, she wrote an account of the day. For fun she forwarded a copy of this account of the San Francisco Examiner and soon received a return letter which offered her ten dollars for the story and the opportunity to work as that paper's campus correspondent. She accepted and began her professional writing career.

At the university Miss Treadwell participated in dramatic productions "notably in the dedicatory drama of the Greek theatre."[16] She studied acting, was active in dramatic clubs and sororities on campus, and wrote a number of plays, four of which survive: La Grand Prix (ca. 1905), Constance Darrow (ca. 1908), The Right Man (1908), and a one-act, A Man's Own (ca. 1908). Although of questionable literary value, three of these plays strongly reflect the surroundings of the author. For example, La Grand Prix used characters employed by a newspaper and exposed some

of the choas of that profession. Constance Darrow was concerned with social problems which face a college girl, and The Right Man, the most advanced of these plays, was a comic love story involving college students and the problems they face after graduation.

The opening setting of The Right Man was the Alpha Zeta Sorority house at Berkeley in May, 1905. A freshman girl, Susan, complained of the discrimination against her because of her class. She stated that she desired to be like Phoebe, a wealthy senior. However, Phoebe cautioned that her own position was not so admirable because she was an orphan. Phoebe had developed certain independent qualities but desired for Ned, another senior, to marry her as she feared facing the world alone. Ned was apprehensive about such a marriage.

In Act II after graduation, Phoebe proved to be a diligent worker at a temporary community hospital for poor Latin speaking persons. She was sympathetic to their plight, inspired by their courage, and realized that she too could tolerate life's consequences. Ned was then willing to marry.

The Right Man, though lengthy with either under developed or over developed subplots, reflected a maturity in plot and character development which Miss Treadwell's other early plays lacked.[17]

A Man's Own appears to have been quickly composed with little concern for self-dignity. It is the weakest of Miss Treadwell's plays. A young female department store employee was discovered by her boss searching his office. When questioned about her presence she replied that her purpose was to take $100.00 for back pay she felt was due her. She described her home situation to be less than satisfactory because her father abandoned her and her mother many years ago and they needed more money. From other clues dropped during their conversation the boss discovered her to be the daughter he once left. Following a quick embrace the father granted her a raise and she resumed work.[18]

After her graduation, Sophie Treadwell's interest in theatre, especially in performing, continued as she worked in stock companies and vaudeville shows along the west coast.[19] These theatrical activities brought her to the attention of the actress Mme. Helena Modjeska, the Countess Bozenta. Mme. Modjeska, who during her active career had appeared widely in Europe and in America, had retired to a ranch outside Los Angeles and attracted many students and professional artists there to study. Miss Treadwell considered her the finest actress she had ever seen and was elated when invited to become a student of the older actress.

The students who came to Modjeska's ranch were afforded the opportunity to question, study, and develop. They also met important theatrical persons of the day who were invited to the ranch.

> . . .she Modjeska would invite the people with influence in artistic circles, together with the talented unknowns. In this way the young people would be given the right contacts. As for the students of acting, Helena would take them into her own beautiful home, discarding all formalities, and smoking her inevitable cigarettes, Helena would direct these young enthusiasts in the roles of Shakespeare, Goethe, Schiller, Moliere, and other classics, and later in the roles of Ibsen.[20]

Because Mme. Modjeska had an unsatisfied desire to be a playwright, she was very open to the writings of new playwrights and encouraged among her students and followers, writing and experimentation with new literary forms.[21] However, most of the writing Sophie Treadwell did during this time was not in the form of plays but in a collaborative effort compiling Mme. Modjeska's memoirs. Miss Treadwell remained in this capacity until the death of Mme. Modjeska in 1909.[22]

Miss Treadwell under the auspices of Mme. Modjeska and in an open creative atmosphere, was taught the discipline of the theatre and allowed to explore with encouragement,

different approaches in theatrical expression. This influence and inspiration caused Miss Treadwell to gain an understanding and appreciation of the legitimate theatre.[23] Through Mme. Modjeska, Sophie Treadwell came into an environment of encouragement toward future theatrical ventures.[24, 25]

Following the death of Mme. Modjeska, Miss Treadwell secured employment as a reporter for the San Francisco Bulletin and resumed active playwriting. Written during these years -- 1909 to 1914 -- but without surviving dates, were The Settlement (also titled Limelight), Mrs. Wayne (later titled The Eye of the Beholder), Sympathy, To Him Who Waits, and probably La Cachucha, Guess Again, and John Doane. All of these except the first were one acts. Significant among this group was Sympathy, Miss Treadwell's first play to be produced. The production took place at Fisher's Theatre in San Francisco; the date is unknown.[26]

In Sympathy, Jean Traig was a young woman invited to a man's house for dinner. She had declined several previous invitations for fear of damaging her reputation. She was extremely nervous about being alone with the man. While being shown about the room, Jean became frightened, pulled a gun and wounded the man. She was sorry for her action and started to call for a doctor. For fear of damage to

his reputation the man insisted that his wound was minor and convinced Jean to leave. Once she had left, a servant entered. After being told that the man was injured while cleaning a pistol, the servant called the doctor.

The importance of this work was twofold. First, Sympathy revolved around the fear by the man and woman of their reputations being damaged, and can be interpreted as an early attack by Miss Treadwell on social practices. It was a social custom, not to be alone with a member of the opposite sex unless you were married, which caused their fear and resulted in the shooting. Second, a note written in Miss Treadwell's hand, attached to the unpublished manuscript of Sympathy states, "after my serial in Bulletin 'Jean Traig.'"[27] Such a note implies that the basis for the play was an event she had written about as a reporter, especially when the name of the article and the character's name are identical. As stated, the use of journalistic experiences was to become a common characteristic in the playwriting of Sophie Treadwell.

In 1914, Miss Treadwell moved to New York City where her playwriting activities were curtailed as a reporting assignment soon sent her to Europe. There during the First World War she covered the activities of the allied generals in Paris. She was one of the first women reporters to experience war on foreign soil.[28]

Returning from Europe in late 1917 or early 1918, Miss Treadwell again worked at playwriting. She composed Madame Bluff (1918), The Answer (1918), Trance (1918), His Luck (ca. 1918), and Claws (1918).[29]

Trance strongly reflected the influence of World War I and the basic plot of her 1908 play A Man's Own. Set in England in the salon of a fortune teller, Madame de Vere, a young soldier arrived to ask the Madame to assist him in locating his mother. He said that she left the United States when he was a child and was now somewhere in London. He told that his family was upset at her leaving and wrote that he, the son, had died. The soldier felt that was the reason his mother had not returned, and if she knew the truth she would welcome him. Although no reunion occurred, inference was that the Madame was the soldier's mother.

Claws was a twisted love situation involving actors and actresses. An actor in his early 30's is loved by an older actress. However he was in love with her daughter and left with her to marry. Claws was produced on December 31, 1918, with Miss Treadwell playing the mother.[30]

While she had been employed by the San Francisco Bulletin, Sophie Treadwell had met William O. McGeehan, also a reporter whom she had married in 1910. He was an

asset to her writing career because of his insistence upon truth and accuracy in his journalistic reporting.

A native of San Francisco, Mr. McGeehan had begun working for the San Francisco Call in 1900. The competitive atmosphere created by young reporters working for one of the four big newspapers of San Francisco offered excellent journalistic training. Mr. McGeehan was quick to advance and was soon appointed city editor for the Call and later the managing editor for the San Francisco Post. However not completely content in this position, Mr. McGeehan decided with his wife to further pursue their careers in New York City.[31]

Like Miss Treadwell, Mr. McGeehan began his New York career slowly.[32] He first took a position writing a small sports column for the Evening Journal but soon came to the sports staff of the New York Herald Tribune. Possessing an extensive knowledge of sports and writing from a very orginal outlook, McGeehan soon became the sports editor for the Tribune. For approximately a decade during this editorship, McGeehan penned a frank and honest column entitled "Down the Line" which was widely read and respected for its "tempered authorative opinion with irony."[33] His writings also displayed a concern over the relationship of money and professional sports, a topic Miss Treadwell would use as a

play source. McGeehan felt that corruption caused by mismanagement of the money would lead to a downfall in professional athletics. In numerous articles throughout his career, McGeehan bravely exposed financial facts and figures about sports, feeling that the public had a right to know about rigged events or fraudulent managerial maneuvers.

In the years following his retirement, Mr. McGeehan became known as a raconteur and world traveler, often with his wife at his side. In November of 1933, Mr. McGeehan died of a heart ailment.[34]

The twenty-three years of marriage to W. O. McGeehan resulted in important contributions to Sophie Treadwell's writing career. The individualistic style and unfaltering, non-partisan viewpoint of her husband stood as an example for other journalists. McGeehan's reputation for pointing out corruption and his courage to speak his mind judiciously were attributes admired by his contemporaries and followers. McGeehan was furthermore very understanding in regard to his wife's career and he allowed their marriage to maintain flexibility. If travel or seclusion was required for a writing assignment or creativity, the couple permitted themselves to be separated. This independence allowed Miss Treadwell to work concurrently as a journalist and as a playwright and maintain a marriage.

MAJOR WRITING PERIOD

The major plays of Sophie Treadwell, those produced on Broadway stages, may be divided into two basic classifications: 1) those plays whose subjects are basically fictional, reflecting the interests of the playwright and are not immediately related to a historical event, and 2) those plays whose subjects directly related to historical events, socially accepted practices, or documented lives -- plays which reflect the training and concerns Sophie Treadwell secured as a journalist.

Ladies Leave (1929) and Lone Valley (1933) belong to the first category. Ladies Leave centered around a wife who leaves her unconcerned husband. Lone Valley showed the problems faced by a woman trying to change her lifestyle and become respectable, only to be forced to revert to her former ways. These two major non journalistic plays were not particularly effective in performance or as literature.

The second category is more important. Among these are Gringo (1922), O Nightingale (1925), Machinal (1928), Plumes in the Dust (1936), and Hope for a Harvest (1941). Gringo deals with characters, situations, and locations which Miss Treadwell encountered as a reporter covering the Mexican revolution. The revolution provided for the

playwright the background of differing ideologies and physical conflict which made an effective transference to the stage. O Nightingale exposed some unflattering practices of management in New York theatres, practices which Miss Treadwell was aware of because of her involvement in theatrical productions. Machinal, Miss Treadwell's most successful play, was a direct representation of the events disclosed in the murder trial of Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray in 1927. Plumes in the Dust was based on the extensive reading and research of Miss Treadwell into the life and works of Edgar Allen Poe. As a devoted student and admirer of Poe's, Miss Treadwell undertook to present this as a historically accurate, documentable play. Hope for a Harvest records the playwright's discovery of the sad condition of the farmlands and the farm people in her native California in the years preceding the Second World War.

Miss Treadwell wrote a number of plays in addition to those major plays mentioned above. These minor plays did not make Broadway performances and some were never produced. However, because most of these plays are more journalistic than fictional in substance, they will be mentioned or discussed in chronological order with the major journalistic plays.

Major Non Journalistic Plays

Ladies Leave and Lone Valley were the two Sophie Treadwell plays which received Broadway productions but were not journalistic in nature.

Ladies Leave, first produced at the Charles Hopkins Theatre on October 1, 1929, exposed problems faced by young middle class housewives. Zizi Powers had no real life of her own but was dominated by her husband. Zizi had had an affair with Philip Havens, a young associate of her husband's. Philip wanted to marry her but Zizi disagreed because it would hurt Burman's, her husband, pride. Dr. Arpad Jeffer, a specialist in analyzing the problems of women in love, encouraged Zizi to continue her romance if she found happiness. But Zizi saw that Philip will in time have the same attitude toward women as Burman. The doctor proved to be the cure for her problems and she left the country with him. Burman was rather undisturbed by the entire situation. He stated that eating alone was going to be the worst feature of Zizi's leaving.[35]

What might have appeared to be an interesting and comic chain of events was unsuccessful because it simply lacked underlying forces. The characters were not well defined and Ladies Leave was said to have moved rapidly with too many high and low moments.[36]

There are certain similarities between Ladies Leave and Machinal in that both involved a woman controlled by her husband and both women have lovers. However, by having Zizi leave with another man and attempting to make the entire situation comical, Miss Treadwell stepped outside the frame of reference she used for Machinal and was not able to give the play sufficient substantial qualities. Ladies Leave ran less than two weeks.[37]

Lone Valley in March, 1933, had similiar results. It was concerned with a young scarlet woman of the streets, Mary, who tried to escape her sinful life by fleeing to an isolated valley in the west. Mary was quickly identified as one determined to lead a wholesome life. She desired to grow tomatoes and onions and restore her inherited farm to its orginal productive condition.

She met Joe, a young man eager to help her. He was a man of mixed emotions and quickly fell in love with Mary. Upon the discovery of her past life by the rather contrived untimely appearance of one of her former patrons, Joe felt they must be married so he could take her away and keep her on the path of righteousness. This belief was strengthened after they slept together and Joe felt their relation had freed him.

> . . . --You know --women and love and all that --I couldn't get it out of my mind --
>
> (Hesitates - then)
>
> I went to a house once, - last year, - you know - one of those houses -- I tried to -- that maybe that would free me but I couldn't stand it -- I ran out of the place. God it was awful!
>
> (Pause-)
>
> I know I shouldn't talk about things like that to you, but I want you to know all about me --
>
> (Looks at her)
>
> You've set me free - Mary; - free -
>
> (Suddenly -- quickly)
>
> I used to hear people say that -- in church -- about God, and I never could get it 'til tonight, -- what they meant. They's say God had set them free -- washed them clean -- made them new -- and it was all just so much jibberish to me -- 'til --- you -- Mary -- you --- I guess that's love, isn't it?
>
> (Pause)
>
> You never loved anybody but me before - like this - did you, Mary?[38]

Mary was flattered by Joe's feelings but she realized their continued relationship would hinder Joe from reaching his educational goals. When a lecherous deputy sheriff threatened to expose her past to the community, she decided to return to her former life.

The short run of this play was partially attributed to its extremely poor ending. On discovering Mary had left, Joe quickly decided he could not allow this. He ran after

her with the closing line, "Well if she's good enough for God, she's good enough for me!" The line "fell rather flat, with almost the air of an afterthought."[39]

The play lacked the necessary continuity to bring the ideas expressed to a feeling of completion. As one critic pointed out:

> Much of the dialogue was sensitively phrased and with a refreshing thoughtfulness, but there were also bits of cloudy symbolism and overstressed sentiment.[40]

Major Journalistic Plays and Biography

The important works of Sophie Treadwell were of a journalistic nature and can be said to have begun with Gringo which followed an interview with the Mexican revolutionary, Pancho Villa. The New York Herald Tribune asked Miss Treadwell to cover the last days of the revolution of Venustiano Carranza in Mexico. Having enjoyed the war correspondence of World War I, she gladly went. She immediately sought an interview with Pancho Villa, the outlaw, who in retaliation for the United States' change of allegiance from himself to Carranza, had raided a town in New Mexico. The emotions of the American public were very mixed toward this man, and many journalists had tried to cover his story. The United States had ordered General John Pershing to seek out the bandit but all of Pershing's

efforts to locate Villa were in vain. Determined to be the first reporter to interview Villa, Miss Treadwell set out by mule pack through the wilds of northern Mexico. When she was finally able to locate him, she was well received. Villa attempted to provide as many comforts as possible in his wilderness home, going to the extent of sacrificing his bed to her. Instead of finding Villa to be a tyrant or scoundrelly person, Miss Treadwell found him friendly and providing, characteristics which were unknown to most Americans.[41] Following this interview she was sympathetic to Villa as she expressed in Gringo. The various factions which sought to have a hand in the politics of Mexico are represented by the characters in Gringo.

The entire play was set at the entrance to a gold mine and the characters attempted to control that mine. The mine was owned by Don Juan Chivro, an American, who for years had worked the mine in hopes of making a rich strike. A rich looking piece of ore just brought to the surface promised Don Juan a bright future, but labor problems interferred with that future. Don Juan's exploitation of local peons for cheap labor caused them to be discontent.

This situation was abruptly interrupted by the arrival of Tito, a bandit, who had killed a Mexican general and opened the way for revolution. Tito needed money and

men. Knowing that Don Juan was fond of his wife Concha, he "sold" her. Although Don Juan could not afford to pay Tito's price, his passion overrode his better judgement and he borrowed the money from Leonard Light.

Leonard, an American socialist draft evader, was associated with the mine. Though he disagreed with Don Juan's labor practices, he needed money to leave the mine and return to the United States to advance his political ideas. He loaned Don Juan Tito's asking price, requiring the full amount and half interest in the mine for payment. Myra, Leonard's wife, did not like her husband's idea of requiring Don Juan to give half interest in the mine. She saw this as a "get rich quick" scheme and felt that it would only create trouble. She encouraged him to make a true partnership with Chivro so everyone would profit.

Another American, Steve Trent arrived at the mine to assay the ore. Myra was attrached by his honesty and sincerity.

As Don Juan discovered a quanity of ore, Tito returned and robbed him of the ore, the remaining men and Concha. With no money or men left, Don Juan decided to leave the mine. Myra, still beset by Leonard's loan, left with Steve. Leonard remained alone with a mine he could not work by himself.

In Gringo, values different from those of Don Juan and Leonard were placed before them. They were forced to choose between what they believed and what they thought they believed. Don Juan who had worked for wealth gave way to passion and Leonard who believed in socialist idealism submitted to the possibility of wealth. Both men lost all. It was Tito who knew what he believed in and calculated each move to better his cause.[42]

Such indecision by Leonard and Don Juan compared to the American position in Mexico's internal affairs in the early twentieth century. Don Juan and Leonard provoked disturbances in the lives of their wives and the mine workers. Nebulous policies such as supplying munitions, prohibiting shipments of German goods, and changing allegiances from Villa to Carranza, caused the American government to provoke much disturbance in Mexico.

Through activities associated with the production of Gringo Miss Treadwell became acquainted with managerial aspects of the theatre. She saw that managers do not necessarily view the theatre for its artistic qualities but for its monetary potential. Because of an abundance of performers, theatre management in the early 1920s was able to exploit those whose desires and ambitions overpowered their judgement. Sophie Treadwell saw young women being victimized and meeting great disappointments.

Lonely Lee, first produced in September, 1923, in Atlantic City, New Jersey, was Miss Treadwell's attempt to expose these theatrical problems. The play dealt with the difficulties faced by young women in New York City who sought fame and fortune on the vaudeville stage. The sensitivity of the subject matter was substantiated because despite favorable out-of-town reviews, two years passed before a New York production could be financed. In April, 1925, Lonely Lee opened in New York with the title O Nightingale . Miss Treadwell with the assistance of another woman, Mary Kirkpatrick, produced it.[43]

O Nightingale pictured a young woman, Lonely Lee, in New York City. She had no reason to doubt that her professional success as she was the best actress as an amateur in her Kansas high school. However, job competition had been fierce and Lee was soon in desperate financial trouble. Hoping to quickly find work as a dancer, she studied ballet in a semi private class. During a lesson she fainted. The teacher, a rather temperamental lady, left in frustration. When Lonely regained consciousness she told a friend, Dot, that she had not eaten lunch because she had waited all afternoon to see a producer who did not so much as acknowledge he had an appointment with her. They both realized Lonely's destitute situation and Dot advised her.

Dot
Man. You got to get a man, kid.
You can't make a move without one.

Lonely
Why can't I?

Dot
Because they rule the roost.

Lonely
But I don't want one.

Dot
That don't cut any ice! The thing
is to have him want you! Enough to
get you your chance, anyway. Then
of course, it's up to you. The best
man on earth can't make something out
of a hunk of solid bone -- though,
come to think of it, it has been
done, at that!

Lonely
But why does a good man WANT to make
something out of --- a bone?

Dot
God knows! But they do. Like to
prove they can pick 'em, I guess ----

Lonely
Well, if any man picked me, I'd justify
him. He'd never regret it. I'd make
good for him. I would. I'd ----

Dot
Now you're talking. Say, Harry knows
a lot of good guys. If you want, I'll --

Lonely
(Instinctively withdrawing)
No -- I want to make good by myself!

Dot
You'll never do it.[44]

Lonely however was determined to succeed alone. She secured employment as a maid and made friends with her employer's acquaintance, Le Marquis De Severac, an aging gentleman charmed by the presence of a young lady. She discovered that this gentleman was a friend of Lawrence Gormont, a famous theatrical agent and asked the Marquis to invite Mr. Gormont to dinner. The Marquis agreed but for the purpose of advancing his relationship with Lonely rather than advancing her career. Although Lonely made careful and extensive plans for the meeting, the evening was a disaster as Lonely proved too naive and rural to influence the agent. After the dinner Lonely turned to the Marquis for comfort, but he did not understand the abandonment she felt and hurried home to his wife. Realizing how she had used the Marquis to succeed in her career, Lonely felt disappointed in herself. Thus, Lonely was faced with the ultimate embarrasement, returning home to Kansas as a failure.

Following the close of O Nightingale, Sophie Treadwell wrote a minor twisted situation comedy called You Can't Have Everything[45] which reflected no journalistic quality. In this play the main character, Zelda, a young wife, has artistic talent but obtained no recognition from her husband. Zelda confided in a neighbor, Lou, and they discovered they had a common problem. At a party the two ladies participated

in a conversation where they learned that in the Honduras only one spouse need apply to acquire a divorce. Together they decide that this is the solution to their common problem, to divorce their husbands and find a life of their own. During their absence, Zelda's husband Nick continued his life pretending to be unaffected by his uncertain marital future. Upon Zelda's return, she said she had not only obtained a divorce but also sold some drawings for a handsome price. This theme -- a wife taking action against her husband -- was common in the plays of Miss Treadwell. Nick then realized his neglect and his wife's talent and felt sorry about the divorce. However Zelda learned that her divorce occurred during a change of government in the Honduras and that consequently her divorce was void. Nick was accordingly relieved to know that the marriage was still valid.

In 1928, Miss Treadwell's Machinal, her best written and most successful play, opened August 7, at the Plymouth Theatre and continued for ninety-three Broadway performances, three times longer than any other of her works. The New York performances of the play were followed by a successful run in London under the title The Life Machine and later in Moscow where the play ran for more than a year.[46] In addition, Machinal has seen numerous productions since including a 1960 Off-Broadway revival.[47]

Although Miss Treadwell denied the connection, Machinal can be shown to closely follow the 1927 New York court case of Judd Gray and Ruth Snyder. Snyder and Gray were lovers who together, in order for Ruth to be free of her marriage, plotted and then killed her husband Albert. Unusual events surrounded the murder and the amount of publicity that the trial attracted caused much public interest. The public closely followed the trial's daily testimonies as the details of the murder were disclosed. The young woman in Machinal was easily identified as a Ruth Snyder character, and the plot developed very closely to Mrs. Snyder's life.[48]

The success afforded Miss Treadwell after Machinal was overwhelming and the next few years would be the most pleasant of her life. She had become independently successful as a writer and wanted to enjoy this success. She continued to write but travel consumed much of her time. Aside from being in London and Russia for consulting on those productions of Machinal, she spent parts of the years 1929 through 1931 on automobile trips in Europe, the United States, and Mexico. In an article entitled "The Log of a Chrysler," she gave a rough account of the trip from the car's viewpoint. Particular attention was paid to driving regulations and road conditions. The year 1930 was spent in exhaustive travel. She covered

France, North Africa, Italy, Austria, Germany, and England in a period of five months and traveled a total of 10,000 miles, little of which was on enjoyable road surfaces. In the spring of 1931, her Chrysler took her through Albania, Greece, Rumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and along the Rhine. The last half of that year was spent in Mexico and along the Pan American Highway.[49]

Between her travels in 1930, she wrote Million Dollar Gate which delt with boxing promoters who, afraid of losing gate receipts because of radio and inevitable television broadcasting, began rigging fights. The promoters, managers, and the referee were aware of the situation, and the honest fighter was the one who suffered most when the rigged fights were discovered.[50] This play may be seen as an attempt by Miss Treadwell to expose corruption in professional boxing. She had some knowledge of the sport because as a reporter she had covered a match between Georges Carpentier and Jack Dempsey.[51] William O. McGeehan's writing on fraud in sports may also have been encouragement for her to write Million Dollar Gate. Probably because of the subject matter, the play did not receive a major production.

The Island, also written in 1931, was not significant nor produced. However Andrew Wells' Lady (1931) was a

significant minor play. Though not known to be of a journalistic orgin, this play displayed a woman as dishonest and immoral, a portrayal rare in the writings of Sophie Treadwell. Andrew Wells was a manly, hard working, honest, man who had a mistress. In an effort to blackmail him, Rico, a hot tempered racketeer murdered the mistress in order to expose Wells' affair. The mistress's husband was arrested for the crime and Wells, who witnessed the murder, felt he should speak the truth. His wife discouraged this action because it would ruin her social status. Wells valued the truth above his wife's social position and exposed everything.[52]

In the summer of 1932, Sophie Treadwell moved to Nyack, N.Y., where she wrote The Last Are First later to be titled Promised Land, the story of a family in Russia who tried to improve their way of life.[53]

For Saxaphone, written in 1934, was an imaginative and creative work. Though it received favorable response from leaders in the artistic community, the play did not receive material support for production. For Saxaphone could be classified as more of a dance with poetry than a play. The basic theme of the play was again the problems of marriage. However, this marriage was so unsuccessful that the wife committed suicide. The action of For Saxaphone

flowed smoothly from the "Engagement" through the "Honeymoon" in the first act and from "Married" through "Flight's End" in the second act. Characters moved on and off stage with movement and action more closely associated with a changing tide than with normal movement. The group of guests at the engagement and wedding parties were directed to be moved in choreographed unison and not individually. The dialogue was not conversational but short sentences of only one key word. The dialogue was almost continuously rhymed.[54]

Miss Treadwell was anxious to get For Saxaphone produced but had difficulty finding a producer. She contacted such notables as Robert Edmond Jones and Donald Oenslager, soliciting reaction to the script. Mr. Jones replied in a letter dated February 10, 1937:

> It seems to me the only play I have read since Green Pastures that has real theatrical vitality and authority. I sincerely believe that I should be connected with the production of this play. . . .[55]

Mr. Oenslager's reaction was equally favorable but the support of these two men did not result in a production of For Saxaphone.

It was 1936 before Sophie Treadwell had another substantial production that was of journalistic nature.

Plumes in the Dust, a sketch of the life of Edgar Allen Poe was the final product of a play simply titled Poe which she had written in 1919. During its evolution, the play had been titled not only Poe, but Nepenthe, Edgar Allen Poe and Plumes in the Dust.[56] She had also written Many Mansions which in her words was "an attempt to put the life of Edgar Allen Poe into a modern setting."[57] One reason for the seventeen year delay between the first script and the 1936 production centered around legal complications involving John Barrymore and his wife.

Miss Treadwell had written Poe with the intention of having Mr. Barrymore perform the leading role. In January, 1921, she presented him a script for perusal. In October, 1924, the script had not been returned and she took suit against him for $2500, an estimated value of the manuscript. He returned the script and notified her that he would be unable to use the play because his wife, under the pen name of Michael Strange, had also written a play dealing with Mr. Poe's life. Miss Treadwell was furious and after hearing Mr. Barrymore read portions of his wife's writing, Miss Treadwell:

> . . .became and still is convinced that the play stated to have been written by the defendant's wife [Michael Strange] was taken from

> deponent's play and was, to all intents and purposes, not an original play, but a copy and imitation of deponent's play.[58]

Mrs. Barrymore was outraged at such accusations and filed for a $200,000 libel and slander suit against Miss Treadwell.

> . . .she [Sophie Treadwell] welcomed the suit and hoped that it would be brought into court "for the sake of all playwrights and authors."[59]

The results of this episode were negative to both parties. All charges were eventually dropped, neither play was produced for a decade and Mr. Barrymore refused to do either work if they were produced.

Besides believing that plagiarism was a cardinal sin for a writer, Miss Treadwell was intensely concerned over Poe because of the amount of time she had devoted to research. As was true of her other major journalistic plays, Sophie Treadwell was attempting to reveal the truth about Poe, and her research was far more than superficial. Her investigation of the poet's life took three years with numerous months spent in the cities where Poe and lived and worked. The purpose of her play and the extensiveness of her research were expressed in a letter of November 25, 1924.

> I have not, as is usual in so-called historical plays, taken one more or less true incident and woven fancy around it.

> I have tried,---it is necessary---
> to recreate the life that surrounded
> him,- the social and domestic
> influences that walled him in.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> . . .Acts I and II present the young Poe
> as no biographer has so far been able
> to do.
>
> Every fact, every situation, every
> character, and practically every
> line said by Poe, himself, is
> absolutely authentic, but so far,
> known only to a handful of Poe
> authorities, . . .
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Every line said by Poe in this hour of
> death, comes from Poe, himself, I did
> not dare intrude.[60]

In 1936, when the Barrymores problems had long passed, the proof of Miss Treadwell's research could be seen. Plumes in the Dust traced Poe's life from the time of his forced departure from his foster-father's Richmond home in 1826, to his death in a Baltimore hospital in 1849. The main characters in Poe's life are accurately presented as well as members of Poe's literary circle.

Some critics felt Poe was especially difficult to portray because of the "secretive and shy" nature of the creative artist.[61] Critics were quick to point out the failures in this account.

> . . .This particular study of Poe was melodramatic rather than dramatic, confusing rather than revelatory. Artistic creation is too subtle and evanescent to be capable of convincing dramatization.[62]
>
> . . .But with all sincere respect for the talents that have been generously bestowed upon a dirge to a great poet's memory, this column suspects that the life of Poe is a chilly subject for stage discussion.
>
> . . It is difficult to write a stage life of Poe without appearing to be his defenders and drenching him in a perfumed bath of sympathy, although Poe needs no defense now.[63]

The conclusion that Poe's life was too "chilly" a subject for the stage in 1936, was probably made by one too close to the local temperance union. Indeed, Poe presented himself as a most interesting subject for discussion and Miss Treadwell presented an affective portrait of the poet.

Using three acts, each containing two scenes, Miss Treadwell incorporated six segments for Poe's life. Each of these was a tight dramatic unit. Except for the units in the second act, there was little time or place relationship between these scenes as the audience was given a chronological progression of years with the consequent digression of Poe.

Poe was portrayed as a man of strong belief in himself and in his writing ability. As he was in literary

history he refused to believe he was wrong in either actions or writings. He was determined to live his life his way. Instead of conforming to the wishes of those about him, he rebelled or withdrew. Throughout Plumes in the Dust he was at war with himself and those about him.

Miss Treadwell revealed Poe's unfortunate ineptitude for maintaining financial or critical support for his literary success. On one occasion he was told that he had won both the prizes for a prose and a poetry contest. When the rule that one person could not win two prizes was explained, he expressed desire for the smaller poetry prize.

> But sir, I am a poet! -- naturally
> I want recognition for what I am
> giving my life to -- not for
> something I do just in the hope
> for earning some money --[64]

There were only eleven performances of Plumes in the Dust. Miss Treadwell felt it to be a stronger play than its run indicated and was convinced it fell victim to critics. Nevertheless, Plumes in the Dust concluded a long ordeal with a factual play about Edgar Allen Poe.

Miss Treadwell spent the next three months on a trip of the Far East. She visited Bombay, Delhi, Mt. Abu, Lucknow, Peking, other cities in China, and ended her tour in Japan.[65]

Following this trip Miss Treadwell took up residence on her family's ranch which had been left to her in California. Here she planned to lead a rather secluded peaceful life writing short stories and scenarios.[66] However her homecoming was not as pleasant as one would wish. The San Joaquin Valley had undergone great changes since Miss Treadwell's departure many years before. The poor economic situation of the thirties had left the American farmer in very poor condition even in a land as lush as this section of California. Furthermore the influx of immigrants who wished employment in the farm lands had caused much bad feeling and ignited ethnic prejudice. In her 1941 production of Hope for a Harvest, she reported the conditions that she found in her home community.

When Miss Treadwell arrived in California she found that a large number of Italian and Japanese immigrants and Okies were willing to work for lower wages and under worse conditions than the American farm workers. Having no place to live, immigrants were easily controlled by the large farm holders who provided primitive housing for them. The small farmer found it difficult to remain in business. Not only could he not compete with the large farm holders who could under sell him, but the troubles created by the newly organized farm unions, plus the usual disappointment caused by weather and land conditions, made life miserable for him.

The play's main character was Carlotta. There were direct parallels between her and Miss Treadwell. Carlotta recently had been in Europe and returned home to find the family farm no longer productive and lying unused. The peaches rotted in the orchards and the farm was unplowed. Under the supervision of Carlotta's cousin, Elliott, the source of income for the family had changed from agriculture to operating a gasoline station for the tourists who traveled along the nearby highway. Though somewhat saddened by finding the farm in its deplorable condition, Carlotta remained optimistic. She spoke of post war Europe, of what a desperate struggle life was then. The reorganizing and rebuilding which took place there was inspiration and proof to her that the ranch could be restored. With the proper attitude, hard work, and a profitable land transaction, Carlotta and the other members of her family were able to build a brighter future for themselves. By showing Elliott that the foreign neighbors, the Italians, who wished to purchase a portion of their land, are not degenerates, Carlotta secured a happy future for her niece Tony who wishes to marry Victor, the son of the Italian family. The play ended happily with the marriage of Elliott and Carlotta.

Like Carlotta, Miss Treadwell had seen the conditions in Europe during World War I and later in the early 1930's,

and had witnessed that the united efforts of people could recover from great tragedy. Miss Treadwell had lost her husband during this time and had suffered many disappointments with her writing career. In the following dialogue it was difficult to separate the character from the playwright.

> Elliott--You need a rest.
> Lotta--That's what I came here to find, Elliott. I thought I could rest here--maybe sleep. I haven't been able to sleep for--oh, I don't know--it seems to me years.
> Elliott--you mean the bombing--the--
> Lotta--Everything--the war and --oh, before that--when Ted died--and afterwards--you don't know what it's like, Elliott, to lie awake nights--wide awake--and -- yet tired--it just exhausts you--eats up all your strength--your strength to deal with life. You begin to break down inside--and then all the fears come, and--
> Elliott--Fears, Lotta? What fears?
> Lotta--Oh, the fear of Being alone--of getting old--getting old alone. Of being poor--destitute, maybe--and--oh, I know how terribly neurotic all this must sound to you Elliott. You're such a normal, matter-of-fact person--
> Elliott--Are you sure this all isn't just the war, Lot?
> Lotta--No! The war just made it worse! I'd been through it all before. I know what it meant. I just couldn't stand it any more! It was like living through some frightful insanity again. Even before I was bombed out I knew I had to get back to this place--there'll be peace there, I thought. Peace. There I won't be alone--can

> rest--there I can work again--there
> I can Hope again--hope for a harvest
> and have a home.[67]

Miss Treadwell was pleased with the production of Hope for a Harvest. It helped to reestablish her as a productive playwright. The original production sustained a run of thirty-eight performances. Unfortunately, three weeks after opening, the United States entered the Second World War. A play asking support and understanding for the Italian and Japanese immigrants would scarcely be appreciated.

LATER LIFE

After the beginning of World War II and the abrupt closing of Hope for a Harvest, Sophie Treadwell did not become discouraged. She compiled a script for Highway, a play which would evolve into a script for the "U.S. Steel Hour."

In 1943, she moved to Mexico to work as a special correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune. Her assignment was to report on the political situation of that country. Her ability to function as a reporter was intact because she secured "an interview with General Cardenas who had [sic] rigorously denied himself to all journalists for months!"[68]

Her writing in the last half of the 1940's consisted of short stories and a few rather insignificant plays: A String of Perals, The Last Border, and Woman With Lilies.

The most memorable event for Sophie Treadwell in this period was the adoption of a son, William. He was a child of only a few years old and had been orphaned by his surviving parent. Although Miss Treadwell was approaching the age of 60, her humanitarian feelings overcame any handicap her age might hold. She expressed in correspondence to friends that she was glad to get William and enjoyed her role as mother.[69]

The decade of the 1950's contained both success and failure for Sophie Treadwell. She desperately wanted another major production.

> I haven't been able to do much work of my own -- these last 3 yrs. . . . But now I am beginning (I've heard it said of prize fighters that they never come back. Does that go for playwrights?)[70]

She wrote new scripts and revised old ones. Judgement in the Morning, The Siren, and Garry (eventually a television play) were some of the scripts written.[71] However this seemed to be a period in Miss Treadwell's life when she was behind the times. She submitted a revision of Million

Dollar Gate for television production but it was rejected because a program on larceny in prize fighting had recently been aired. The Siren was rejected because its topic of a traitorous atomic scientist and communists had been overexposed. There was discussion about producing Machinal as a musical, but this too did not materialize. These rejections disappointed Miss Treadwell.[72]

However there were successful moments. Hope for a Harvest received a television production in November, 1953. Machinal was being performed in a number of colleges. Other scripts were successful in radio and television and Miss Treadwell published a novel entitled One Fierce Hour and Sweet (1959). Travel was still of interest as Miss Treadwell spent much time in France, Spain, and Vienna.[73]

In the early 1960's, Sophie Treadwell wrote a manuscript for a novel entitled By Line. Completed and retitled The Great Name Story in 1965, this unpublished work is likely to be Miss Treadwell's autobiography. However, it was written in novel form with a boy as the main character. Although some of the major events in the boy's life correspond to events in Miss Treadwell's, proof that this writing is autobiographical would be speculation.[74]

For reasons of health, Miss Treadwell curtailed her traveling and returned to the United States in 1966. She retired to a rather elegant Catalina Foothills Estate home

named "La Forteleza" outside Tucson, Arizona and continued writing.

In July, 1967, Now He Doesn't Want to Play appeared at the University Theatre, Tucson, Arizona, The plot centered around a divorced man whose wife had followed him to Mexico in hopes of getting him back. She failed to understand that he, as an artist, wanted to be unrestricted in order to create freely. A young native girl served him for companionship and that and solitude was all he wanted. He fled his ex-wife by leaving for Spain. She then decided not to pursue him and returned to her city job.[75]

This was Miss Treadwell's final production and unfortunately it was not well received. One critic commented:

> Sophie Treadwell is no newcomer to the theatre. In the '20s she had several successes on Broadway. But her style seems quaintly dated amidst today's tensions and the type of writing to which we are now becoming accustomed. In a theatrical world of Albees, Pinters and Osbornes, we are being atuned to sterner stuff.[76]

She continued to write but would finish no more manuscripts. Her health grew progressively worse. She died February 20, 1970, in Tucson.[77] [78]

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER ONE

[1]For a more complete chronology, see Appendix One.

[2]For more information concerning Miss Treadwell's major productions, see Appendix Two.

[3]Walter Rigdon , ed., The Biographical Encyclopedia and Who's Who of the American Theatre (New York: James H. Heineman, Inc., 1965).

[4]Sophie Treadwell, Untitled and undated article. First line, "I have just come home from almost two years in Europe." University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[5]Ibid. p.5.

[6]Dan Pavillard, "A New Treadwell," The Arizona Citizen, July, 1967.

[7]"Creator of 'Machinal' Returns To Broadway With Guild Play." New York Herald Tribune, November 23, 1941.

[8]Letter, Sophie Treadwell to George A. Cornish, June 17, 1943, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[9]Ibid. p. 2.

[10]Letter, Sophie Treadwell to Mrs. Berman, February, 1959, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[11]Sophie Treadwell, "Writing a Play," (Undated lecture), pp. 4-5.

[12]Sophie Treadwell, (Undated Genealogy), University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Myron Matlaw, Modern World Drama (New York: E.P. Dutton and Co. Inc., 1972), p. 771.

[15]Pavillard, July, 1967. [16]Ibid.

[17]Sophie Treadwell, The Right Man, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[18]Sophie Treadwell, A Man's Own, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[19]Burns Mantle (ed.), The Best Plays of 1941-42 and the Year Book of the Drama in America (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1942), p. 390.

[20]Antoni Gronowicz, Modjeska: Her Life and Loves (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, Inc., 1956), p. 253.

[21]Ibid. p. 164.

[22]Matlaw, p. 771.

[23]Gronowicz, p. 253.

[24]Ibid. p. 198.

[25]For more complete information on Mme. Modjeska, see Appendix Three.

[26]These plays were grouped together by Miss Treadwell under the note, "Very early plays most written before I went to N.Y." University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[27]Sophie Treadwell, Plays: Early (1905-1918), University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[28]Pavillard, July, 1967.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Obituary, "W.O. McGeehan," New York Times, November 30, 1933.

[32]Although married for 23 years, Miss Treadwell did not use the name McGeehan.

[33]Obituary, "W.O. McGeehan," New York Times, November 30, 1933.

[34]Ibid.

[35]Sophie Treadwell, Ladies Leave, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[36]Review of Sophie Treadwell, Ladies Leave, New York Times, October 2, 1929, sec. 28, p. 3.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Sophie Treadwell, Lone Valley, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[39]Rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Lone Valley, New York Herald Tribune, March 19, 1933.

[40]Ibid.

[41]"Creator of 'Machinal' Returns to Broadway With Guild Play" New York Herald Tribune, November 23, 1941.

[42]John Corbin, "The Play," New York Times, December 15, 1922, p. 26.

[43]New York Times, April 16, 1925, p. 25.

[44]Sophie Treadwell, O Nightingale, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[45]Sophie Treadwell, You Can't Have Everything, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[46]John Gassner (ed.), Twenty-Five Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre (Early Series; New York: Crown Publishers, 1949), p. 494.

[47]Ridgon,

[48]Burns Mantle (ed.), The Best Plays of 1928-29 and the Year Book of the Drama in America (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1929), p. 350.

[49]Sophie Treadwell, "Log of a Chrysler," (Undated manuscript), University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[50]Sophie Treadwell, Million Dollar Gate, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[51]"Creator of 'Machinal' Returns To Broadway With Guild Play," New York Herald Tribune, November 23, 1941.

[52]Sophie Treadwell, Andrew Wells' Lady, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[53]Sophie Treadwell, Promised Land, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[54]Sophie Treadwell, For Saxaphone, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[55]Letter, Robert Edmond Jones to Sophie Treadwell, February 10, 1937, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[56]Sophie Treadwell, Plays: Edgar Allen Poe (1919-1936) University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[57]Note written by Sophie Treadwell on manuscript of Many Mansions, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[58]"Barrymore Sued for Poe Play; Sophie Treadwell Alleges That Wife's Production is a Copy," New York Times, October 16, 1924.

[59]"Mrs. Barrymore Sues Author, Charging Libel," Evening Union, Springfield, Mass., October 28, 1924.

[60]Letter, Sophie Treadwell to Mr. Hampden, November 25, 1924, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers. See Appendix Four.

[61]Brooks Atkinson, "The Play," Rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Plumes in the Dust, The New York Times, November 8, 1936.

[62]Joseph Mersand, The American Drama Since 1930 (New York: The Modern Chapbooks, 1949), p. 117.

[63]Iver Brown, "The Life Machine," Rev. of Sophie Treadwell, The Life Machine, London Observer, July, 1931.

[64]Sophie Treadwell, Plumes in the Dust I. ii. 48.

[65]Sophie Treadwell, Articles, Trips, Misc., University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[66]Pavillard, July, 1967.

[67]Sophie Treadwell, Hope for a Harvest (New York: Samuel French, 1943), pp. 48-49.

[68]Letter, Sophie Treadwell to Mr. George A. Cornish, June 17, 1943, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[69]While in Europe, Sophie Treadwell enjoyed the services of a maid and chauffeur, who had a small son. Upon the untimely death of the maid, the chauffeur deserted the son and Miss Treadwell. Feeling that the child should be provided with a good home she legally adopted him and reared him as her own, giving him the name of William Treadwell. (Statement by Dr. Albert Gegenheimer, telephone interview, July 2, 1974.)

[70]Letter, Sophie Treadwell to Mr. Howell, February 6, 1953, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[71]Phyllis Ball, (ed.), Sophie Treadwell Papers Inventory: University of Arizona, Special Collections, p. 7.

[72]Ibid.

[73]Pavillard, July, 1967.

[74]Phyllis Ball, private interview, University of Arizona, Special Collections, July 10, 1975.

[75]Sophie Treadwell, Now He Doesn't Want To Play, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

[76]Micheline Keating, "'He Doesn't Want To Play' Ought Not To." Rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Now He Doesn't Want To Play, Tucson Daily Citizen, July 26, 1967.

[77]Obituary of Sophie Treadwell, Tucson Daily Citizen, February 23, 1970.

[78]Seeing no use in an elaborate funeral, Miss Treadwell requested a small private service and remembrances only in the form of contributions to the University of Arizona Drama Department. She willed her son the bulk of her holdings in New York state and her Arizona estate to the Catholic Archdiocese of Tucson to be used as a school for Indians. (Statement by Dr. Albert Gegenheimer, telephone interview, July 2, 1974.)

CHAPTER TWO

MACHINAL AS DRAMA

Machinal is without question Sophie Treadwell's best work. The three month Broadway run, the play's London and Russian performances, the 1960 Off-Broadway revival, and many individual productions indicate that it contained significant dramatic qualities. Although no specific formula for Machinal's success can be listed, Miss Treadwell used four basic components which distinguish it from her other writings. The play's unique divisions, its dialogue including general names for characters, sound effects and strict adherence to a historical event combined to create a viable script.

The plot followed the activities of a young, single woman, named Young Woman, who was employed in an office and supported herself and her mother. Frightened by the uncertainties of life, she married her employer to insure financial security. Unsympathetic understanding from her husband and a feeling of entrapment soon turned her against marriage. Seeking an outlet for her frustrations she was

introduced to another man who displayed the compassion she sought. During a conversation with him, she listened to how he once killed capturers to gain freedom. Applying his story to her situation, the Young Woman murdered her husband. She was tried and on information from her lover, convicted. Prior to her execution she realized her mistake and warned her daughter not to follow her example.

The physical structure of Machinal was divided into nine episodes instead of being constructed in traditional division of acts. Each episode was a separate dramatic unit in that each equally advanced the plot and references from one episode to another were not made. Years of time were spanned with episodes without damaging the believability of the relationship of the events which occurred in the episodes. The Young Woman was permitted to be seen in nine situations equally important in her narrative.

Episodes also permitted the introduction of locations as all nine took place in a different setting. By moving the action from location to location, the setting supplemented the action. A limited number of settings might have forced action to be played in surroundings not conducive to that action.

Because the individuals who shaped the destiny of the Young Woman were important, numerous characters needed

to be brought into being. With the exception of two scenes, each episode introduced new characters. However, episodes eliminated getting characters on and off stage. The opening or closing of an episode served as the entrance or exit of most characters.

The overall effect of the episodes was that each punctuated the progression of the Young Woman as she moved from one experience to another. Such a physical punctuation presented to the audience a calculated portrayal of the action and provided them opportunity to absorb the detail of each event.

Machinal possessed a universal quality because the characters were referred to by generalized titles instead of specific names. The titles of the office personnel in Episode One classified them as The Adding Clerk, Filing Clerk, Stenographer, and Telephone Girl. These characters represented no particular person with an individual personality, but displayed stereotyped characteristics commonly associated with their profession as a whole. The Adding Clerk monotonously worked with numbers, the Filing Clerk with files. Neither revealed a personality or sincere personal interest in the in office activities outside of performing their job. They did warn the Young Woman of the antics of Mr. Jones but this was gossip and not sincere advice or counciltation.

The Young Woman's mother, referred to simply as Mother, typlified the unsuccessful wife whose marriage was a failure and who had erased thoughts of love from her mind. The Mother was fearful of change, especially of the chance that her daughter would marry and move out. Realizing that her situation could become more severe, she preferred to live in the status quo rather than to risk defeat which might result from trying to advance her position.

An interesting and important exception to the use of titles in Machinal occurred when the Young Woman stood trial in Episode Eight and was referred to as Helen Jones. Once on trial she no longer represented young women, but was being forced to stand trial alone and answer alone for her crime.

Two types of dialogue were used in Machinal: 1) that in which language was reduced to a simple, somewhat rapid fire, telegraphic style, and 2) that which resembled a more standard, everyday conversation. The relationship of the situation toward the Young Woman was reflected by the type of dialogue used.

In the abbreviated dialogue, sentences were replaced by essential words which condensed the speech to its most immediate elements. The purpose of Episode One was to establish the Young Woman's employment as confining, repetitious, and to show her as more conscious and desirious

than fellow employees of the world outside the office. By the office workers using abbreviated dialogue, the methodical actions of their work was quickly disclosed and the mechanical atmosphere of the Young Woman's employment was set.

> ADDING CLERK (in the monotonous voice of his monotonous thoughts: at his adding machine). 2490, 28, 76, 123, 36842, 1, ¼, 37, 804, 23½ 982.
>
> FILING CLERK (in the same way-- at his filing desk). Accounts--A. Bonds--B. Contracts--C. Data--D. Earnings--E.
>
> STENOGRAPHER (in the same way-- Left). Dear Sir--in re--your letter-- recent date--will state--.
>
> TELEPHONE GIRL. Hello--Hello-George H. Jones Company good morning--hello hello--George H. Jones Company good morning--hello.
>
> FILING CLERK. Market--M. Notes--N. Output--O. Profits--P.--! (Suddenly.) What's the matter with Q?
>
> TELEPHONE GIRL. Matter with it--Mr. J.--Mr. K. wants you-- What you mean matter? Matter with what?[1]

Abbreviated dialogue also conveyed this mechanical atmosphere in Episode Four and Seven. Set in the maternity ward and in the Young Woman's home with her husband, these scenes like the first, showed the Young Woman in a situation over which she had little control. Her soliloquy at the end of Episode Four revealed her frustration as she realized she

had reached the point where she must take action against her oppressors. With chopped sentences and repetitious speech her thoughts were revealed.

> YOUNG WOMAN (alone). Let me alone--
> let me alone--let me alone--I've submitted
> to enough--I won't submit to any more--
> crawl off--crawl off in the dark--
> Vixen crawled under the bed--way back
> in the corner under the bed--they
> were all drowned--puppies don't go
> to heaven--heaven--golden stairs--
> long stairs--long--too long--long
> golden stairs--climb those golden
> stairs--stairs--stairs--climb--tired
> --too tired--dead--stairs--long
> stairs--all the dead going up--
> going up to be in heaven--heaven--
> golden stairs--all the children
> coming down--coming down to be born--
> dead going up--children coming down--
> going up--coming down to be born--. . .[2]

The abbreviated dialogue in the conversation in Episode Seven permitted the audience to see that the Young Woman and her husband existed in two different worlds. While reading newspapers they spoke the titles of the separate articles each was reading. His related to business; hers related to other women who had left or killed their husbands to gain their freedom.

> HUSBAND. Record production.
> YOUNG WOMAN. Girl turns on gas.
> HUSBAND. Sale hits a million--
> YOUNG WOMAN. Woman leaves all for
> love--
> HUSBAND. Market trend steady--
> YOUNG WOMAN. Young wife disappears--[3]

The abbreviated dialogue was contrasted with the more complete dialogue of other episodes, especially Episodes Five and Six which took place in environments friendly to the Young Woman. Both times she was with her lover, first in the cafe where they met and second, in the Man's apartment.

The conversational dialogue from the three cafe tables in Episode Five was pleasant and warm. Of the tables, one was occupied by a man and woman who discussed leaving together. At the second was a man and a boy. The man introduced the boy to wine and later they left for the man's apartment under the pretense of going to look at poetry books. The third table was occupied by two men waiting for the Young Woman and her friend, the Telephone Girl. Although the activities in this scene might have been socially questionable on moral grounds, the atmosphere was friendly. The Young Woman and Man conversed in complete though short sentences.

> 1st MAN. Don't you like me?
> YOUNG WOMAN. Yes.
> 1st MAN. Then what's the matter?
> YOUNG WOMAN. Do--you--like me?
> 1st MAN. like yuh? You don't know the half of it--listen--you know what you seem like to me?
> YOUNG WOMAN. What?
> 1st MAN. An angel. Just like an angel.
> YOUNG WOMAN. I do?
> 1st MAN. That's what I said! Let's go![4]

The dialogue of Episode Six was more complete, gentle, and full of compassion. The Man and Young Woman discussed anything they wished.

> MAN. You're awful still, honey. What you thinking about?
> WOMAN. About sea shells. (the sound of her voice is beautiful.)
> MAN. Sheshells? Gee! I can't say it!
> WOMAN. When I was little my grandmother used to have a big pink sea shell on the mantle behind the stove. When we'd go to visit her they'd let me hold it, and listen. That's what I was thinking about now.
> MAN. Yeah?
> WOMAN. You can hear the sea in 'em, you know.
> MAN. Yeah, I know.
> WOMAN. I wonder why that is?
> MAN. Search me. (Pause.)
> WOMAN. You going?
> (He had moved.)
> MAN. No. I just want a cigarett.
> WOMAN. (glad, relieved), Oh.
> MAN. Want one?
> WOMAN. No. (Taking the match.) Let me light it for you.
> MAN. You got mighty pretty hands, honey. (The Match is out.) This little pig went to market. This little pig stayed home. This little pig went--
> WOMAN (laughs). Biddle diddle dee. (laughs again.)5

Thus, with two types of dialogue the relationship of the Young Woman to her immediate environment was presented. The settings in which she was manipulated and misunderstood,

in particular the scenes in the office and with her husband, contained a mechanical dialogue which had no compassion. The scenes in which she was understood contained dialogue of a more poetic nature. From such dialogues an audience got an aural representation of the struggle between the Young Woman and her particular environment.

Because of the play's division by episodes and the use of types of dialogue, the play's structure required a connecting element. Sounds skillfully provided that element and bridged the gaps between episodes giving Machinal physical unity.

Episodes One and Two were connected with the sound of office machines fading into the sound of a radio. This not only filled the void while set pieces were changed but connected two somewhat unrelated scenes with relating material. Both sounds were common to the Young Woman. She worked in the monotonous sound of the office and lived with the sound of a radio emanating from some neighboring apartment. Because the Young Woman was the central figure of both scenes, the sound served as a common connector and transitional element.

Machinal was also supplemented by offstage conversations and city noises. Voices reinforced the onstage conversation by adding an offstage vignette. In Episode

Two a conversation about the Young Woman being in love and the possibility of marriage was interrupted by voices and sounds from neighbors.

> (Offstage BOY'S VOICE--whistles--
> GIRL'S voice answers.)
> BOY'S VOICE. Come on out.
> GIRL'S VOICE. Can't.
> BOY'S VOICE. Nobody'll see you.
> GIRL'S VOICE. I can't
> BOY'S VOICE. It's dark now--come on.
> GIRL'S VOICE. Well--just for a minute.
> BOY'S VOICE. Meet you round the corner.[6]

This little injection reminded the audience of how pleasant and playful young love can be and represented how the Young Woman pictured her romance--an almost childlike escape from surrounding conditions.

When the Young Woman reminded her mother that she was once married, the offstage voices of a couple having a dispute was heard

> WOMAN'S VOICE. Where you going?
> MAN'S VOICE. Out.
> WOMAN'S VOICE. You were out last night.
> MAN'S VOICE. Was I?
> WOMAN'S VOICE. You're always going out.
> MAN'S VOICE. Am I?
> WOMAN'S VOICE. Where you going?
> MAN'S VOICE. Out.[7]

Like the earlier lover's voices served to show how the Young Woman felt about her love affair, this offstage

argument presented a possible reinactment of the conditions between the Mother and the Young Woman's father. The Mother was reminded of her unpleasant marriage and the Young Woman confronted the possibility that marriage could be a dismal experience. Offstage conversations allowed thoughts of the Young Woman and her Mother to be heard and a better understanding that they live in different worlds was given.

The maternity ward in Episode Four used sound effects in a symbolistic fashion. Periodically during the scene the sound of a rivet machine rattled outside. The Young Woman indicated that the noise disturbed her. A nurse replied:

> Oh that can't be helped. Hospital's got to have a new wing. We're the biggest Maternity Hospital in the world. . . .[8]

The rivet machine indicated that more births were taking place and more women would find themselves in the same hopeless situation as the Young Woman. Such a thought extremely depressed the Young Woman. She did not wish to nurse her baby, possibly hoping it would die and not have to endure the cruelties of the world. However the Young Woman's cries were in vain.

> DOCTOR. Put the child to breast. (Young Woman--"No--no!"--Riveting machine.) No? Don't you want to nurse your baby? (Young Woman signs "No".)[9]

Although the Young Woman protested, the sounds of the rivet machine overpowered her cries and emphasized that she had no control over her situation.

The use of the elements of episodes, titles, variance in dialogue, and sound effects, created the essence of the Young Woman's situation. Traditional stage language and structure were altered to communicate Miss Treadwell's idea that a certain universality existed in Machinal. The idea that what occurred on stage was not the specific situation of an individual, but the product of a society which failed to realize individual requirements, was conveyed. This effectiveness of Machinal was heightened by the realization that the play was in alignment with a historical event.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER TWO

[1]Sophie Treadwell, *Machinal* in *Twenty-Five Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre*, ed. by John Gassner (New York: Crown Publishers, 1949), I, p. 497.

[2]*Ibid*., IV, p. 508.

[3]*Ibid*., VII, p. 517.

[4]*Ibid*., V, p. 513.

[5]*Ibid*., VI, P. 514.

[6]*Ibid*., II, p. 502.

[7]*Ibid*.

[8]*Ibid*., IV, p. 507.

[9]*Ibid*., IV, p. 508.

CHAPTER THREE

MACHINAL AS HISTORICAL FACT

Sophie Treadwell relied on historical events for the source material of some of her writings. No finer example of this is found than Machinal which was a direct dramatization of an event, New York City's Snyder-Gray Murder Case of 1927. In an interview after Machinal had opened, Miss Treadwell denied any connection between her play and this murder. She claimed that any similarities between the two were either coincidental or speculative. However, when Machinal and the Snyder-Gray case are compared, her denial proves false as the incidents which occur in both are closely related.[1]

It shall be the purpose of this chapter to show that relationship. The procedure will begin by giving a brief account of the Snyder-Gray case, followed by an episode by episode comparison of the play with the historical event.

On the morning of March 28, 1927, in Queens, N.Y., neighbors discovered that Mr. Albert Snyder had been murdered. When the police arrived they found the Snyder

home in complete disarray and Mr. Snyder's body face down in his bed, hands tied, rope around his neck and severe damage to his skull. Mr. Snyder's wife Ruth, said that a man had entered their house, knocked her unconscious and she could remember nothing more. When police found no wound from being struck on Ruth's head, they became suspicious. Further investigation discovered no evidence of forced entry, a totally non-professional method of murder and on searching of the house, only some valuables missing, a blood stained pillow slip in the clothes basket and a blood stained sash weight in a basement tool chest. Even with such evidence, Mrs. Snyder continued to say that she had been knocked out and knew nothing. A stick pin with the initials J.G. was found at the foot of Snyder's bed. When an address book containing the name Judd Gray and a canceled check to him was found, police had evidence of an accomplice and the case was all but solved. Police told Ruth that Gray had confessed, although he had not at the time, and Ruth changed her story and gave a confession. The confession lead to the discovery that Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray had been lovers for 18 months and were responsible for Mr. Snyder's murder. Gray was soon arrested and a signed confession secured from him. Snyder and Gray were tried and convicted and both were executed on January 12, 1928.

The events surrounding the murder and the disclosures of the trial proved to make sensational headlines for the New York newspapers. While awaiting execution both Snyder and Gray told their life stories which captured the attention of the public.

One reason attributing to the sensationalism of this case was that those involved were ordinary, rather plain individuals.

> The liquidation of Albert Snyder by his wife and her myopic cavalier could have occurred next door--next door to anyone. It partook of the quintessence of the commonplace. The pattern was threadbare in Eden; the principals emerge as types rather than individuals.[2]

It was then for Miss Treadwell to take the events of the Snyder-Gray case, present them on stage, and have a drama which would strike the vicarious consciousness of many individuals.

To show the clear relationship between the reality of the Snyder-Gray case and Miss Treadwell's journalistic playwriting, the progression of the events in the play and in the account of the historical event will be juxtaposed. The parallel progression of Ruth Snyder and the Young Woman in Machinal will be shown to move from a homelife with the mother figure, through an unsatisfying marriage, to a

relationship with a lover, to murder, trial, and execution. The realization that the narrative of the play parallelled the chain of events and situations in Ruth Snyder's life will be complete.

The format for this juxtaposition will be an episode by episode account of Machinal. The left column will contain information from the play; the comparable historical information will be in the right column.

Episode One: To Business

Machinal began by introducing the Young Woman and establishing the conditions and position of her employment. She was a typist for the George H. Jones Company and like others in the office, she had a desk, typewriter and was surrounded by basic office paraphernalia. Behind her desk was the entrance to the office of Mr. Jones.[3]

Ruth May Brown, later Mrs. Ruth Snyder, was first employed by the New York State Telephone Company as a night relief operator. Because of low pay and odd hours she decided to better her chances of employment and attended business school. Upon completion she worked as a bookeeper, a switchboard operator, salesgirl in a millinery shop and typist. In 1914, while substituting at the switchboard of

In Machinal there were implications that Jones was rather promiscuous and had his eyes on the Young Woman. His wanting to see her in his office brought raised brows and off color remarks from

her employer, she by accident became involved in a conversation with a Mr. Albert Schneider (later changed to Snyder) who was an art editor for Motor Boating Magizine. Enchanted with Ruth's voice he felt his firm could offer her a better job were she in search of one. Feeling this would be an advancement, Ruth took his offer and was hired as a copyist and script reader. The position of her desk was in a large outer office, her back to the glass partition which housed Snyder's office.[4]

Mr. Snyder had a "reputation as something of a rip." Reportedly Ruth was warned that if she were to go out with him she would come back different. Ruth Brown Snyder later gave the following statement

the office staff, as if it were not the first time they had seen a fellow employee in the Young Woman's situation. The Young Woman implied that she spent evenings caring for her mother and did not date. Confused by what might happen, the Young Woman was reluctant to enter Mr. Jones's office.[6]

concerning early encounters with Albert Snyder.

> I must confess that his attitude was not highly respectful. He had no idea or intention of marrying me at the time. But he was keen on an 'affair.' At this he was no novice . . . . When he got it into his head that I was a self-respecting girl, his manner toward me turned very pleasant.[5]

Thus, the working situations of both the Young Woman and Ruth Snyder were similiar as were the manner in which their relationship with their future husbands began.

Episode Two: At Home

The home life of the Young Woman was shown in Episode Two. The scene was the kitchen of what could have been any of ten thousand modest apartments in New York City.

Ruth Brown until the time of her marriage had always resided in a four room flat on 125th Street in New York City. Her father had been a sailor but took up carpentry after migrating to New York. He was said to have been

The Young Woman was trying to talk seriously to her mother about subjects of love and marriage. The mother, seemed purposefully preoccupied with routine housekeeping tasks. This preoccupation allowed the Mother to hide from the subject of marriage, a subject she could not relate to her daughter. The Young Woman thought she was in love but did not know what course to follow to assure herself of this love. Her mother remarked, "In love! is that beginning again! I thought you were over that!"[7]

overworked, unhappy and frustrated and barely brought home enough for the family to live. Her mother, Josephine, was a "bustling efficient, rather drab little woman, sometimes foolish and always garrulous." During the trial of her daughter she became known "as the prototype of the Grandmother, with her seamed work-worn face and wispy gray hair, her thick, rimless spectacles behind which kindly eyes peered eternally in bewilderment and resignation."[8]

Ruth Brown was a sickly child. As a youth she had

to undergo internal surgery, suffered a severe sunstroke, and because of an improperly performed appendectomy, she retained a lifelong internal disorder of unknown consequences.

In her early home life there was

> . . .drudgery for all in that cramped household, and Ruth did not take to it kindly. Neither then nor later could she adjust herself entirely to obscurity and penury. As an infant she hankered after a flaxen haired doll. . . . Womanhood found her desiring countless flipperies that she was seldom to achieve.[9]

Although Ruth had to begin work to help support her family, her non-working hours were tranquil. Some free time was taken with regular church work, but mostly out of habit instead of piety. In an autobiography

The Young Woman became confused tense, and uncertain about herself. She needed conciliation but did not find any as her mother was not sympathic to her.

written shortly before her execution, she noted:

> My folks did not urge religion on me. . . . I prayed each night in bed, a short and not very inspired little speech to God who I didn't in my inner heart believe existed. But I went through the motions in case I was wrong.[10]

The church was a partial outlet for Ruth's youthful desires. She particularly enjoyed a girls' group which sponsored regular dancing parties. Ruth enjoyed these functions and became the best social dancer in her neighborhood. Soon however this was no longer meaningful and she became enveloped with fantasy and reading, primarily cheap novels.[11]

The Mother had restricted the Young Woman from leading an active social life. The Young Woman states, "I've hardly known anybody--you'd never let me

go with anybody and--" Such isolation had caused her to fear uncertainties such as love, people in the subway, and she had doubts about her own sanity. She pitied herself and her situation and was seeking change.[12]

Thus, we see that like the Young Woman, Ruth Brown as a youth lived in a rather non meaningful home environment. She longed for outside relationships which would supply a cohesiveness to her existence.

There were only two slight differentations in the home lives of the Young Woman and Ruth Brown but neither were at all clear or had any major influence on Machinal. First, Ruth Brown had a brother two years her junior. A brother of the Young Woman was not mentioned in Machinal. Second, the play did not make clear the whereabouts of the Young Woman's father. He was spoken of in a question which was directed to the time when he and the Mother were married. However, the Young Woman's obligation to support her mother indicated the father's absence. In the case of Mr. Brown, he did not die until 1924, five years after Ruth's marriage.

He was "quietly devoted to his family, but he found neither the leisure nor the temperament for such extravagant displays of fondness as Ruth's nature craved."[13] Nevertheless, Miss Treadwell used no father in Machinal.

Episode Three: Honeymoon

The mention of the board-walk and nearby ocean indicated the location of the hotel in this episode to be Atlantic City, New Jersey. The Husband and the Young Woman were in an awkward situation. The Young Woman was looking for an escape. She looked out the window, people were dancing, and she wanted to join them. She wanted to visit the ocean. She refused to so much as wash her hands for fear that an entrance into the bathroom would imply she was eager for bed. Her husband managed to outlast her attempts

to delay the inevitable, and when left no alternative, she changed into her night clothes but then in the total privacy of the bath.

> (She wears a little white gown that hangs very straight. She is very still, but her eyes are wide with a curious, helpless animal terror.)[14]

This terror was released when the Husband approached her she began crying for her mother.

> Husband. I thought you were glad to get away from her.
> Young Woman. I want her now--I want somebody.
> Husband. You got me, haven't you?
> Young Woman. Somebody-Somebody?[15]

The wedding night of the Snyders' was a catastrophe. After the marriage in the Brown's home, Ruth became "too ill for an immediate consummation of the marriage." The cause of the illness was unknown but she remained in her mother's house for one more night. The following day Albert Snyder picked her up and took her to their apartment.[16]

Aside from an unusual wedding night, Episode Three shows that both Mr. Jones and Mr. Snyder had no sensitivity with their wives' sexual timidness.

George H. Jones showed no aesthestic appreciation for his wedding night but instead placed a monetary value on sex.

> Husband. Twelve bucks a day. They know how to soak you in these pleasure resorts. Twelve bucks (Music) Well--we'll get our money's worth.[17]

The Young Woman was viewed by him as an object and not a partner on equal terms. He referred to her in the belittling terms of "girlie" and "little girl," and somewhat as if a child were playing a game, he referred to her skirt and asked, "Say, what you got under there?" When conversation became awkward he rather rudely attempted to brighten the situation by beginning to

In court testimony Judd Gray recalled a conversation with Ruth Snyder in which she expressed her feelings toward her husband's ability and appreciation of love making.

> She said she had never really known what sexual pleasures were with her husband. . . She told me that when he came over into bed with her that to her it was so disgusting and degrading that she felt like killing him.[18]

spout a bawdy joke. To avoid hearing it the Young Woman convinced him he had told it before. His conversation became confused and illogical, and he finally told her to simply "get ready."

Episode Four: Maternal

The Young Woman realized her mistake of marrying. Her husband caused her to bring a baby girl into the world, who might come into the same situation. The Young Woman showed frustration by rejecting her husband's visits. She did not want to feed the baby, possibly hoping it would die and not have to suffer. The Young Woman now repulsed, resolved to herself that she would no longer submit to the advances of her husband. [19]

The birth of Ruth Snyder's daughter Lorraine, produced friction between the Snyders. Albert Snyder had opposed his wife becoming pregnant and was furious when she did. When the child was born he was further displeased with Ruth for not having produced a boy. Lorraine was a sick infant and the medical bills caused more tensions between Albert and Ruth. Finally after a year or so he did reconcile himself and begin to show fondness for his daughter. [20]

Whether in Machinal or in the history of Ruth Snyder, the birth of a child caused a disturbance and disagreement.

Episode Five: Prohibited

Seeking an outlet from her marital problems, the Young Woman with a girl friend ventured to a restaurant where two men, one already known to her friend, were waiting. Their conversation was lively and enjoyable. The Young Woman and her new male friend were soon left alone. She discovered him interesting and possessing pleasant characteristics.[21]

In the early summer of 1925, Ruth Snyder and a friend, Mrs. Kaufman, took a shopping trip into Manhattan. For lunch they visited Henry's restaurant where Mrs. Kaufman recognized a friend, Mr. Folsom. The three chatted over lunch and then departed. In a few days Folsom invited Ruth and her friend to lunch. When they arrived, Mr. Folsom was with Mr. Gray who was introduced to Ruth. Folsom and Mrs. Kaufman soon excused themselves and departed. Ruth and Judd Gray talked for three hours; each found the other to be a sympathic listener as they both had marital problems. They ended their talk

and went separate ways. Two months later Mr. Gray contacted Ruth and made a dinner date. This began their affair.[22]

Episode Six: Intimate

This scene's comforting atmosphere opened the Young Woman to conversation and pleasant images of her youth. The bitterness toward her husband disappeared.

> Woman. I tell you I hadn't thought of singing since I was a little bit of a girl.[23]

The Man was complementary. He paid attention to her hands and voice. In Episode Two the Young Woman had mentioned her youthful, beautiful hands to

The Snyder-Gray relation ship continued for eighteen months. During the many hours. together they discussed among other things, their unhappy home lives. Ruth spoke of how her husband ignored her, did not seek to satisify her needs, and of how displeased she was with her marriage.

her mother and concluded that they were one of her more beautiful assets. Her mother had discarded such an idea but now that the Man admired them she felt reassured that her youthful ideas of love may have been correct and the world can be different from the conditions of her marriage.

The Man appreciated and understood beauties which the Young Woman found pleasant and reassuring. He paid a music grinder to stay close to the apartment; he purchased flowers for his window which comforted the Young Woman with warmth she had not known. She found a meaning for existence with her lover.[24]

Ruth took fire from Gray's adoration. She, too, had felt the pall of slavery, and it thrilled and intoxicated her. She gloried in this new power that, for the first time in her life, gave her absolute control over another human life. It exalted her to be looked upon as a queen, a goddess. . . .[25]

During conversation the Man mentioned having to go to Mexico and the possibility of Young Woman accompanying him. Believing that she would never get to Mexico, she asked him what it was like.

> Man. I can't live anywhere else--for long
> Woman. Why not?
> Man. Oh--you're free down there! Your're free![26]

On occasions Ruth Snyder accompanied Judd Gray on business trips.

The ideas of travel and freedom were as appealing to the Young Woman as they were to Ruth Snyder.

Episode Seven: Domestic

A depiction of an evening in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jones, this episode showed the negligence of the Husband toward his wife. Both were reading a newspaper, the Husband was concerned with business sections and the

Young Woman read of other women leaving or murdering their husbands.

> Husband. Record production.
> Young Woman. Girl turns on gas.
> Husband. Sale hits a million--
> Young Woman. Woman leaves all for love--
> Husband. Market trend steady--
> Young Woman. Young wife disappears--[28]

A phone call interrupted and revealed that a business deal was completed. The excited Husband did not understand his wife's lack of excitement. He wished to discuss his accomplishment. The Young Woman was reluctant but satisfied his ego by supplying the most cliche questions to which he eagerly responded.

> Young Woman. Did you put it over?
> Husband. Sure I put it over.
> Young Woman. Did you swing it?

Husband. Sure I swung it.
Young Woman. Did they come through?
Husband. Sure they came through.
Young Woman. Did they sign?
Husband. I'll say they signed.[28]

The business deal concerned the purchase of a house, but having been totally excluded in the business affairs of the family, the Young Woman had no prior knowledge of their impending move.

Albert Snyder bought a house in the Queens section of New York City. Ruth was not at all excited as she realized that the house would create more problems in respect to her loss of identity.

> They came to Queens, that dead-level Cannan of the white-collar worker, where addresses run dizzily into five digits and uniform clapboard houses jammed cheek by jowl, row upon row and block after block, stretch into limitless monotony; where a radio enlivens every other home and existence is placid, routine, inexpensive. . . .[29]

The Husband mentioned that the Mother (the Young Woman's mother) was in his office to get her allowance. He continued, "What would she do without me?"

After the purchase of the house, Mrs. Brown, at Albert's invitation moved in with the Snyders. Whether or not Albert gave any allowance to Ruth's mother is not known. This further reduced any personal identity which Ruth might have had.

The conversation continued with the Husband commenting on an article in the paper concerning a revolution below the Rio Grande. This reminded the Young Woman of the story her lover told of his involvement in a Mexican revolution. She asked her husband:

> Young Woman. Any one hurt?
> Husband. No.
> Young Woman. Any prisoners?
> Husband. No.
> Young Woman. All free?
> Husband. All free.

The Young Woman could not help
but make the comparison between
herself and the prisoners.

The events of the actual murder appeared on first examination to be most contradictory with the play. The murder of the Husband was done by the Young Woman acting alone; the murder of Albert Snyder was accomplished by Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray acting together. However, when closely examined we find that the differences were not great in context of condensation for dramatic expediency.

> Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray spent many hours discussing how they could destroy Mr. Snyder. Gray initally opposed such notions, but with Ruth's insistence he began to support the idea. On Saturday evening March 27, 1927, with the Snyders attending a party and Mrs. Brown away for the evening, Ruth left the back door unlocked for Gray's easy entry. He entered, went up stairs and upon the Snyders'

return, hid and waited for Mr. Snyder to go to bed. When Albert Snyder was assumed asleep, Ruth and Judd crept into his room and Gray struck him twice over the head with a sash weight. The blows were weak and only stunned Mr. Snyder. Realizing he was being attacked, Albert Snyder struggled with Gray during which time Ruth retrieved the weight and struck her husband rendering him unconscious. Ruth and Judd then tied his hands, placed a rope tightly around his neck, and stuffed his mouth and nostrils with chloroform soaked cotton. They dissarranged the house to make it appear burglarized and then relaxed with drinks and waited for Snyder to die. Once assured he was dead, Gray tied and gagged Ruth as burglers would have done, then left town.[30]

With stage techniques of sound effects, the voice of her lover, romantic music and voices repeating "Free--free...Stones," the Young Woman was reminded of the pleasant encounter she had with her friend and decided she must be free. She left her chair to gather a weapon with which to kill her husband. The effects and techniques became more pronounced as she struck him.[31]

Episode Eight: The Law

By the time of the trial six weeks after the crime, Ruth Snyder had become a person of questionable mental recall. She was confused and uncertain about what had happened and exactly what her role had been. From time to time during the trial she contradicted herself and the contradictions paralleled those of Helen Jones on the witness stand. Helen's initial account of what happened to her husband was that two men entered their house and after knocking her unconscious, killed her husband. Ruth Snyder's initial story to police was identical except she spoke of only one man. She held to this story until sufficient evidence to the contrary was presented. Helen Jones did the same. She first explained that two men committed the crime but later changed her story and confessed.

The affidavit introduced in the trial scene of Machinal can be equally compared to the confession of Judd Gray. The testimony of Helen Jones was opposed and destroyed by her friend's affidavit, just as Judd Gray's confession showed gaps in Ruth Snyder's testimony. Thus, the affidavit became a second account of the crime and took the physical place of the Man.[32] [33]

Episode Nine: A Machine

A priest gave spiritual comfort to Helen Jones. The voice of another prisoner was heard and she begged the jailor to allow the singing to continue.

> Young Woman. He helps me.
> Priest. Don't I help you, daughter?
> Young Woman. I understand him. He is condemned. I understand him.[34]

At last Helen had something in common with someone else and could relate to them. But, this moment of identity was brief as barbers entered to shave part of her hair in preparation for electrocution. Again against her will she was forced to submit to greater powers.

Helen went to her execution instructing her mother to tell her daughter to live.

Ruth Snyder's prison habits fluxuated between self identity and obscurity. She became concerned with her personal appearance, wrote poetry and an autobiography; she was talkative and friendly. At other times she was paralyzed with terror and agony.[35]

> Young Woman. Wait! Mother my child; my little strange child! I never knew her! She'll never know me! Let her live, Mother. Let her live!
> Priest. Come daughter.
> Young Woman. Wait! Wait! Tell her-- (the jailor takes the mother away.)
> Guard. It's time.
> Young Woman. Wait! Wait! Tell her! Wait! Just a minute more! There's so much I want to tell her--Wait--[36]

Ruth Snyder regretted that prison officials would not let her see Lorraine. She said she felt she could give her courage to make the best of her life.[37]

Although both the Young Woman and Ruth Snyder realized their life was not salvageable, each felt their experiences could direct their respective daughter's life on a more productive course.

This comparison clearly shows that no basic differences between Machinal and the story of Ruth Snyder, her husband's murder, her trial and execution exists. In Machinal, Miss Treadwell used the real life situation of the 1927 trial with scrutiny and detail, to document her writing.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER THREE

[1]Burns Mantle (ed.), The Best Plays of 1928-29 and the Year book of the Drama in America (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1929), p. 350.

[2]John Kobler, The Trial of Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1938), p. 1.

[3]Sophie Treadwell, Machinal in Twenty-Five Best Plays of the Modern American Theatre, ed. by John Gassner (New York: Crown Publishers, 1949), I, p. 497.

[4]Kobler, pp. 4-7.

[5]Ibid. p. 8.

[6]Machinal, I, p. 500.

[7]Ibid. II, p. 502.

[8]Kobler, p. 3.

[9]Ibid.

[10]Ruth Snyder, "My Own True Story--So Help Me God! Pamphlet. excert in Kobler, p. 4.

[11]Kobler, pp. 4-5.

[12]Machinal, II, p. 503.

[13]Kobler, p. 3.

[14]Machinal, III, p. 506.

[15]Ibid. p. 507.

[16]Kobler, p. 8.

[17]Machinal, III, p. 505.

[18]Testimony of Henry Judd Gray in People vs. Ruth Snyder and Henry Judd Gray, published in Kobler, p. 263.

[19]Machinal, IV, p. 507.

[20]Kobler, p. 9.

[21]Machinal, V, p. 510.

[22]Kobler, p. 12.

[23]Machinal, VI, PP. 514-15.

[24]Machinal, VI, pp. 514-17.

[25]Kobler, p. 18.

[26]Machinal, VI, p. 515.

[27]Machinal, VII, p. 517.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Kobler, p. 9.

[30]Kobler, pp. 33-39.

[31] *Machinal*, VII, p. 519.

[32] *Machinal*, IIX, pp. 519-26.

[33] Kobler, pp. 24-56.

[34] *Machinal*, IX, p. 527.

[35] Kobler, pp. 57-67.

[36] *Machinal*, IX, p. 528.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

CHRONOLOGY OF SOPHIE TREADWELL

1890	Born October 3, in Stockton, California.
1905	Entered University of California at Berkeley.
	Campus correspondent for San Francisco Bulletin.
	Wrote "first play" entitled Le Grand Prix.
1908	Wrote A Man's Own, a one act play, The Right Man, and Constance Darrow.
1908-09	Worked and studied with Mme. Helena Modjeska.
1910	Married William O. McGeehan.
1911	Continued to write for the San Francisco Bulletin.
	Wrote The Settlement (also titled Limelight).
1914	Moved to New York City.
1914-18	War correspondent for San Francisco Bulletin.
1918	Wrote Madame Bluff, The Answer, Claws, and the one acts Trance and His Luck.
1919	Published scenarios including Bill and a Hatbox.
1920	Covered flight of Venustiano Carranza in Mexico.
1921	Interviewed Pancho Villa.
	Wrote Rights, later titled The King Passes and Mary Beaton (1938), and Love and Principle (1941).
	Wrote Old Rose, second version of Claws.
1922	Wrote Gringo and Laughter.
	December, Gringo produced.

1923 November in Atlantic City, N.J., Lonely Lee opened.

1924 Produced Love Lady, a version of Old Rose.

Sued John Barrymore and his wife.

1925 April, O Nightingale opened.

Wrote You Can't Have Everything and Many Mansions.

1926-33 Wrote Lone Valley. Versions were titled Inheritance, Better to Marry, Deliverance, Wild Honey, Set Free, and Bound.

1927 Snyder-Gray murder trial.

1928 September, Machinal produced.

1929 October, Ladies Leave produced.

Worked on manuscripts for United Artists including New York Nights.

1929-31 Took motor trips through United States, Europe, Mexico.

1930 Wrote Million Dollar Gate and The Island.

1931 The Life Machine (Machinal) played in England.

Wrote Andrew Well's Lady.

1932 Made home in Nyack, New York.

1933 March, Lone Valley opened.

Wrote The Last are First later titled Promised Land.

November, William O. McGeehan died.

1934 Wrote For Saxaphone.

1936 November, Plumes in the Dust opened. This was the final version of a play about Edgar Allen Poe. Earlier versions were Poe, Nepenthe, and Edgar Allen Poe.

Wrote Three.

1937	Took trip to Far East.
1930's	Spent time in California writing stories and scenarios.
1941	November, Hope for a Harvest opened.
1942	Wrote Highway which eventually was a television script.
1943	Wrote articles in Mexico for New York Herald Tribune.
1943-44	Wrote A String of Pearls.
1945	Adopted a son, William Treadwell.
1947	Wrote The Last Border.
1948	Began Woman With Lilies.
	Wrote story titled "Heaven on Earth."
1949	Wrote articles in Mexico for New York Herald Tribune.
1952	Wrote Judgment in the Morning.
1953	Wrote The Siren.
1954	Wrote Garry which eventually was a television script.
	Wrote Siempre, a version of Woman With Lilies.
1958	Lived in Spain.
1959	Published One Fierce Hour and Sweet, a novel.
1960's	Wrote The Great Name Story, a novel completed about 1965.
1960	April, Machinal revived Off-Broadway.
1967	July, Version of Woman With Lilies titled Now He Doesn't Want to Play was produced at the University of Arizona.

1967 December, final version of Woman With Lilies completed.

1970 February 20, died in Tucson, Arizona.

APPENDIX TWO

INFORMATION ON MAJOR PRODUCTIONS OF SOPHIE TREADWELL'S PLAYS

A. Gringo A Play in Three Acts*

Produced at the Comedy Theatre, 1922, 29 performances

CAST

Leonard Light	Richard Barbe
Bessie Chivers	Edna Hibbard
Paco	Leonard Doyle
Myra Light	Edna Walton
Don Juan Chivers	Frederick Perry
Tito, el Tuerto	Jose Ruben
Concha	Olin Field
Stephen Trent	Arthur Albertson

B. O Nightingale A Comedy in Three Acts**

Produced at the 49th Street Theatre, 1925

Produced by Sophie Treadwell and Mary Kirkpatrick

CAST

Richard Warrington	Lyonell Watts
Mme. Vera Istomina	Constance Eliot (S.T.)
Dot Norton	Suzanne Willa
Appolonia Lee	Martha-Bryan Allen
Le Marquis de Severac	Ernest Lawford
A Waiter	Marcel Lemans
Lawrence Gormont	Fred Irving Lewis
Flora St. John	Harda Daube

*John Corbin, "The Play," rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Gringo, New York Times, December 15 1922, p. 26:3.

**Review of Sophie Treadwell, O Nightingale, New York Times, April 16, 1925, p. 25:2.

C. Machinal A Play in Two Acts

Produced at the Plymouth Theatre, September, 1928.

Produced by Arthur Hopkins 93 performances

CAST (partial listing)

Young Woman	Zita Johann
The Mother	Jean Adair
A Husband	George Stillwell
A Man	Clark Gable
Telephone Operator	Millicent Green
Prosecutor	James MacDonald
Defense Attorney	John Connery

D. Ladies Leave A Comedy in Three Acts

Produced at the Charles Hopkins Theatre, October, 1929.

Produced by Charles Hopkins 15 performances

CAST

Hanna	Lucille Ferry
Dr. Appad Jeffer	Charles Trowbridge
J. Burman Powers	Walter Connelly
Zizi Powers	Blyth Daly
Philip Havens	Henry Hull
Irma Barry White	Catherine Doucet
Masseur	William Stern
Jessie	Vera Mellish
Hilda	Katharine Lyons
Barbara	Athene Taylor

*Brooks Atkinson, rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Machinal. New York Times, September 8, 1928, 10:30.

**Review of Sophie Treadwell, Ladies Leave. New York Times, October 2, 1929, p. 28.

E. Lone Valley A Play in Three Acts.*

Produced at the Plymouth Theatre, March, 1933.

Staged by Sophie Treadwell 3 performances

CAST

Joe	Alan Baxter
Lottie	Mab Maynard
Lasly	Ian Wolfe
Grainger	Charles Kennedy
Mary	Marguerite Borough
Ella	Virginia Tracy
Lyman	Oliver Barbour

F. Plumes in the Dust A Play in Three Acts.**

Produced at the 46th Street Theatre, November, 1936.

Presented by Arthur Hopkins

CAST (partial listing)

Mrs. Frances Allan	Fredrica Siemons
Miranda	Laura Bowman
Lizzie	Artie Belle McGinty
John Allan	Charles Kennedy
Rosalie Poe	Barbara Fulton
Edgar Allan Poe	Henry Hull
John P. Kennedy	Earl Fleischman

*Percy Hammond, "The Theaters," rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Lone Valley, New York Herald Tribune, March 11, 1933.

**Brooks Atkinson, rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Plumes in the Dust, New York Times, November 7, 1936, p. 14.

G. Hope for a Harvest A Comedy in Three Acts.*

Presented at the Guild Theatre, November 1941.

Porduced by the Theatre Guild. 38 performances

CAST

Mrs. Matida Martin	Helen Carew
Antoinette Martin	Judy Parrish
Elliott Martin	Fredric March
Carlotta Thatcher	Florence Eldridge
Nelson Powell	John Marny
Victor De Lucchi	Arthur Franz
Billy Barnes	Shelley Hull
Bertha Barnes	Edith King
Joe De Lucchi	Alan Reed
A Woman	Doro Merande

*Brooks Atkinson, rev. of Sophie Treadwell, Hope for a Harvest, New York Times, November 27, 1941, p. 28.

APPENDIX THREE

THE INFLUENCE OF Mme. HELENA MODJESKA

The following quotations are taken from the article "Success on the Stage" by Mme. Helena Modjeska as the article appeared in the December, 1882, edition of the North American Review. The quotations are chosen to show the sophisticated view that Mme. Modjeska held toward her art.

"I think that success, in the usual meaning of the word, ought not to be the chief ambition of the dramatic candidate. His aim should be higher: his great object should be to be true to his art, whether such fidelity be rewarded by appreciation from the public or not. "Fais se que dois, advienne que pourra," must be his motto. Success is not always the best evidence of artistic merit. . . .Above everything, an artist ought never to sacrifice his own artistic convictions to the momentary tastes of the public; such a sacrifice, although followed by a short-lived success, will lower him as an artist, and kill in him whatever there may be of natural ability.

"The next essential is the constant study and work required to cultivate and impreve the natural gifts. I never have seen genius succeed without labor, and I suppose that it is the inseparable quality of genius that it will never neglect activity in the special branch of science or art toward which it is inclined. Was it not Goethe who said that genius was always accompanied by an extraordinary ability to work, and that its peculiar character partly consisted of an instinctive knowledge how to work. But the happy possessor of genius has, intuitively a deeper insight into the mysteries of art, which enables him to learn quickly, and which shows him the most direct path to follow. Besides study and observation being congenial him, his task appears easy, and his efforts are not strained. . . .

"The right frame of mind, I imagine, for one who enters upon a dramatic career, must not consist so much in a feeling of confidence in his own powers as in a sincere devotion to his art, a firm belief in its high mission, while in his heart must burn that sacred flame which gives him the courage and energy to overcome all obstacles and undergo all privations. . . .

"There is no greater mistake to suppose that mere professional training is the only necessary education. The general cultivation of the mind, the development of all intellectual faculties, the knowledge how to think, are more essential to the actor than mere professional instruction. In no case should he neglect the other branches of art; all of them being so nearly akin, he cannot attain to a fine artistic taste, if he is entirely unacquainted with music, the plastic arts, and poetry. . ..."*

*Mme. Helena Modjeska, "Success on the Stage," North American Review (December, 1882), cited by Jameson Torr Altemus, Helena Modjeska, (New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1971), pp. 207-17.

APPENDIX FOUR

RESEARCH ON EDGAR ALLEN POE

The following is a letter Miss Treadwell wrote to Mr. Walter Hampden on November 25, 1924, in which she discussed Poe (later Plumes in the Dust) and most importantly the a mount of research and objectives she had for the play.

Sophie Treadwell
136 West 12th Street
New York City

November 25, 1924

Dear Mr. Hampden:-

I am sending you a play about Poe.

The underlying theme of the play is, the poet and his environment. To show this, I have attempted to recreate the entire life of on poet,- Edgar Allen Poe. I have not, as is usual in so-called historical plays, taken one more or less true incident and woven fancy around it.

I have tried,---it is necessary--- to recreate the life that surrounded him,- the social and domestic influences that walled him in. I have tried to show the impossibility of his finding any contact with them, or any escape from them.

I have chosen four years in his life that seemed to me natural climaxes, and I have tried to bridge the gaps in time by a natural recital in the action of the intervening events. In other words, I have tried to create the whole life of a man,- a poet,- in "a theatrical entertainment of two hours".

I know it sounds ominous at first, but not when you think of the material I had to work with, and that material,- rather a Master Dramatist put into the play of poor Poe.

It took me three years work to get it out,--months or research in Washington, in Baltimore, in Richmond, and in New York.

In Richmond I had the good fortune to meet Mr. Whitty, who has devoted forty years to investigating Poe's life,-especially, his youth in Richmond and Baltimore. Through the enthusiasm and kindness of Mr. Whitty, I was put in possession of amazing new material,-old documents, old letters, old stories, handed down (but verified by other references) with the result that Acts I and II present the young Poe as no biographer has so far been able to do.

Every fact, every situation, every character, and practically every line said by Poe, himself, is absolutely authentic, but so far, known only to a handful of Poe authorities,-- Mr. Whitty of Richmond, Dr. Killes Campbell of the University of Texas, Miss Mary Phillips of Boston, myself, and possibly a few others, and not yet ever made known to the public.

An old negro woman in this act, together with an English woman in the third act, are the only people in the whole play who did not actually exist just as they are portrayed. Even the two negro servants in the Allen household are real, but the action that in Act I is put into one afternoon, took in fact, several months. Yet, it all happened just as the play presents it.

In Act II there is compressed a greater passage of time. Poe received the Baltimore Saturday Visiter Prize under these exact circumstances,--(for this material I am indebted to Dr. Jones of Johns Hopkins University)--when he was twenty-four. This turned him from poetry and wandering to office work and the attempted support of his aunt and his cousin Virginia, but he did not actually marry Virginia until he was twenty-seven, (and she not quite fourteen).

The material in Act III is better known because easily available to anyone of merely mild research tendencies. Those literati wrote reams about themselves and each other. The facts that made the situations are all to be found in the biographies and letters and notes scattered here and there in the literature of the period.

For the last scene,- Poe's death,- I had, first, the few but graphic historical accounts that are now extant, and a visit to the old Washington Medical College in Baltimore for the location of the room and its appearance. But for the actual recreation of the scene, I had the invaluable help of the late Dr. Ernest Southard, who, until his death, held the Chair of Psychology at Harvard and was head of the Psychological Hospital in Boston.

Dr. Southard worked out with me, from my notes and his experiences, the physical facts of death from delerium tremens as they would probably manifest themselves in a case with Poe's emotional and nervous history. I had too, many illuminating suggestions from Dr. Southard in the whole psychological interpretation of Poe,-- but this was only the stand,- the prop,-the foundation.

For the real scene, I went to Poe himself,- to those stories he wrote in times of depression after drunkenness,- to the half insane letters to Mrs. Clemm, when, several times before, he so narrowly escaped his ultimate fate. Every line said by Poe in this hour of his death, comes from Poe, himself, I did not dare intrude.

Yours with sincere regard.*

*Letter, Sophie Treadwell to Mr. Hampden, November 25, 1924, University of Arizona, Special Collections, Treadwell Papers.

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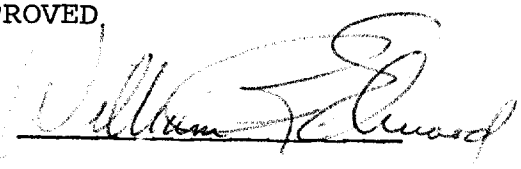

William R. Elwood
Associate Professor
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