

TUFTS LUCK

It was tough luck for Tufts University that a responsible Unitarian minister blew the whistle on the school's presentation of the play, "Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?" The minister, Reverend Scotty McClennan, contacted the Catholic League in July once he learned that the play was scheduled for performance in August. The league jumped on this immediately by purchasing a copy of the script from a New York publishing house.

There are many parts of the play that are offensive. While it does not contain the vile sexual statements that have often colored other anti-Catholic plays, it does mock the Sacrament of Reconciliation and it promotes a negative stereotype of nuns and priests. That is why we wrote to the Dean of Students, Bobbie Knable, stating that if the play had been "racist or anti-Semitic," we have no doubt how it would have been received by school officials.

In August, Reverend McClennan told us that the school was concerned that the play would be seen during Freshman Orientation and consequently decided to move it until September 2. While that was preferable (it is not likely that many would attend a school play the day after Labor Day), it still wasn't satisfactory.

This time we wrote directly to the president of Tufts, John DiBiaggio; we asked him to cancel the play. We argued that by deciding to reschedule the performance, "This suggests a tacit understanding on the part of school officials that there is something egregiously offensive about this play."

Even if the play is performed, we feel that an important message was sent. And we're delighted that we have such a good friend in Reverend McClennan.