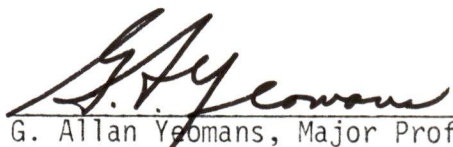
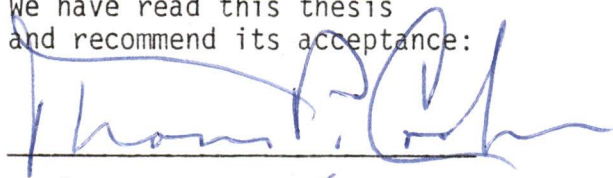
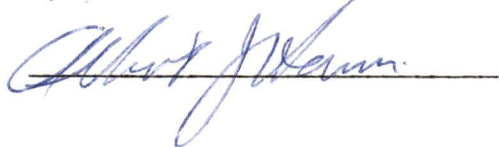


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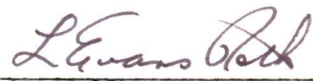
I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Barbara Bagwell Darling entitled "The Development of an Actress: A Case Study of Patricia Neal's Career." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in College Teaching, with a major in Speech and Theatre.


G. Allan Yeomans, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:


Vice Chancellor
Graduate Studies and Research

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACTRESS: A CASE STUDY
OF PATRICIA NEAL'S CAREER

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts in College Teaching
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Barbara Bagwell Darling

December 1979

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late husband, George Franklin Bagby (one of the finest human beings I have ever known), who inspired me to begin the project, to pursue it and to continue working on it over the past few years. Mr. Bagby encouraged me to obtain interviews with Patricia Neal, with the various Hollywood directors, with several actors and actresses and with Patricia's former acting teachers. He tirelessly accompanied me on three trips to California as well as on trips to New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, the Barter Theatre in Virginia and to Tennessee. Since Mr. Bagby was such a remarkable human being and referred to by his friends as a Renaissance man, he enjoyed being a part of this particular research project. He had a great deal of admiration and respect for Patricia Neal, and he referred to her as one of his all-time favorite people. I feel that my life has been blessed and enriched by knowing such a thoughtful and kind person who taught me the power of positive thinking.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this study is a very important achievement in my life. It has taken me eight years to reach my goal. Since I am employed full-time as a teacher, I have had only the summers and Christmas and spring vacations to work on my project. I could not have completed this project without the encouragement, inspiration, interest and love from the people who have cared about me. I wish to express my sincere appreciation to those who deserve so much credit for its existence.

My father, the late Charlie Morgan Bagwell, insisted that I receive at least one degree from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In the summer of 1971, he encouraged me to enter Graduate School at this university and to begin work on my Master's degree; he inspired me to pursue excellence in my chosen field of study. I decided to pursue the two-year program for the Master of Arts in College Teaching. During the 1973-74 school year, I was on academic leave from my school system to complete my graduate work. However, in the winter of 1974, I decided to write a thesis concerning Patricia Neal's career (the thesis was not a requirement under the two-year program) as I wanted to make a contribution to the university and to my native city concerning an extraordinary human being. Little did I know at that time that my thesis project would open doors for me to meet and interview not only the actress herself but also famous directors in Hollywood and New York, famous actors and actresses and other interesting people with whom I still correspond.

When I began the project, Dr. Paul L. Soper, who was my advisor at that time, gave me encouragement concerning the various interviews in my travels from East to West. Also, members of my family; my mother, Mildred Evelyn Bagwell; my sister, Marlene Moore; my dear grandmother, Jennie Bagwell; my aunt, Frances Crawford; as well as my late husband, George Franklin Bagby, became very enthusiastic concerning my project. They supported and inspired me to see it through.

When Dr. Soper retired, Dr. G. Allan Yeomans became my major professor. While I was enrolled in his class, Introduction to Graduate Research in Speech and Theatre, he helped me become more aware of the responsibilities and the joys of conducting research in a truly scholarly way. Dr. Yeomans, a very dedicated professor, was most helpful in directing my research project. He spent hours and hours reviewing, discussing my work, making suggestions and was always there when I needed him. To me, he represented a remarkable human being who not only became deeply involved in a student's work but also showed concern for the individual.

I also wish to express my respect and admiration for Dr. Thomas P. Cooke for his inspiring guidance both as a teacher and as a member of my committee throughout my graduate studies.

I am also indebted to the talented director and professor, Dr. Albert Harris, for his enthusiasm concerning my thesis subject.

Finally, I wish to thank the directors, teachers, actors and actresses who consented to be interviewed and made themselves available. And above all, my deep appreciation goes to the actress Patricia Neal who made this thesis possible.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an in-depth study of the development of the actress Patricia Neal's career.

Chapter I begins with Patricia's early life and training in dramatics. Many comments from her first acting teacher as well as classmates are included. Also, information concerning Patricia's experience at the Barter Theatre, Northwestern University and at Eaglesmere Playhouse are discussed and evaluated.

Chapter II deals with Patricia's summer stock and early professional experience. In this section, reference is made to her early stage roles and early films. Comments from critics as well as interviews are included. This information indicates Patricia was miscast in many of her roles.

Chapter III investigates Patricia's off-Broadway, London stage, television and later film experiences. Again, a great deal of the material presented is based on interviews, drama reviews and newspaper articles. This information shows Patricia Neal maturing as an actress.

Chapter IV explores Patricia's recent films, television roles and commercials. It also describes Patricia's recovery from illness and return to the screen, her acceptance of increasingly more mature roles in recent films and television productions and her participation in commercials which contributed to the growth and development of the actress.

The conclusion focuses our attention on the courage and the indomitable will to perform that have kept Patricia Neal before audiences.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to trace the theatrical career of Patricia Neal from her early days in Knoxville, Tennessee, to the present. An effort has also been made to give a chronological listing of her best-known performances.

Patricia Neal's early childhood was spent in Knoxville. One of my mother's sisters (Ernestine Parsons) was Patricia's sister's good friend. They were boon companions in high school. Patricia was the subject of much conversation at home and interest in her and her career were for me a part of growing up. When it was discovered that no place in Knoxville contained a record of her achievements, I decided to try to bring together a record--both for the University and for the people of my native city.

Many people have been kind and cooperative and yet there are gaps which no amount of effort can fill. These gaps are due in part to Patricia's memory (one result of her serious illness) and to the lack of method in "dating" in the film industry. Some films are dated the year they are completed and "in the can"; other films are dated in the year in which they are released for public distribution.

In the course of pursuing this project, the writer has made three trips to California--one in 1974, one in 1975 and another in 1976--together with trips to New York, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, the Barter Theatre in Virginia and Tennessee. Many hours have been spent reviewing a dozen of Patricia's films at the Library of Congress. The results of

these efforts will, it is hoped, shed some light on the development of the career of actress Patricia Neal.

CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE AND TRAINING

Patricia Neal was born Patsy Louise Neal on January 20, 1926, in Packard, Kentucky, to William B. Neal and the former Eura Mildred Petry. She has an older sister, Margaret, and a brother, Peter. At the time of her birth, Patsy's father was local transportation manager for the Southern Coal and Coke Company. When Patsy was three, the family moved to Knoxville, Tennessee. Patsy entered Belle Morris Elementary School on February 4, 1932, and left on March 1, 1934, when the family moved to the Park City section of Knoxville. She continued her elementary school education at Park City Lowry Grammar School where she enrolled on March 6, 1934, and stayed until June 2, 1937.

During Patsy's early years, she was interested in dramatics and was particularly inspired after hearing a woman give monologues at the Magnolia Avenue Methodist Church. She decided that giving monologues was what she wanted to do.¹ According to Miss Neal, this was the most thrilling experience that she had had up to that time. Her heart started beating very fast, her eyes filled with tears and she could hardly wait to start studying. As a Christmas present, she wished for elocution lessons.²

¹Patricia Neal, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 14, 1974. Taped interviews are located in the author's collection of material on Patricia Neal.

²Ibid.

The identity of this particular monologist has been lost. Every possible effort has been made to identify her, but we are told that "many people gave readings" and apparently no record was kept of them. So the lady who was Patsy's first inspiration must forever remain an unknown.

Mrs. Hugh Faust, Jr., (nee Emily Mahan), a native Knoxville, had attended The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and a drama school in New York. She had returned to Knoxville and in 1935 or 1936 opened her own Emily Mahan Studio in the Dean Block of West Cumberland Avenue. Patsy, a sixth grader, was one of Emily's first pupils, and from then on, Pat's (many people interviewed called her Pat and she is commonly known as Pat) teacher tirelessly encouraged her toward the career that was to be internationally recognized.

According to Emily Faust, when Pat came to her, she was about eleven years old, very tall, overgrown, awkward and gawky. Mrs. Faust thought that Pat did not know she was awkward or overgrown and gawky and large for her age; unlike so many children growing up, she was not self-conscious; she was happy with herself and enjoyed everyone else. One of the qualities Mrs. Faust emphasized about Pat was her fantastic voice-- a vocal mechanism which was very powerful. However, Pat had an East Tennessee accent. Other qualities included great enthusiasm, gusto, down-to-earthiness and a flair for comedy. The important task for Mrs. Faust was to help Pat develop her talents without becoming self-conscious. When Mrs. Faust began working with her, she started with broad comedy to which Pat could use her awkwardness, loudness and enthusiasm to advantage. Mrs. Faust thought that this approach worked out extremely well because as Pat became older, she naturally got more control

of her body--"grew into it"--so as to develop properly. Part of this developing included doing serious dramatic scenes.³

From the beginning of her studies with Mrs. Faust, Pat wanted to perform and enjoyed doing so. Mrs. Faust believed it was important for students to be given some opportunity to perform, even though they might not be ready to do so for otherwise they would lose their desire to perform. Thus, she sent Pat and other students to various Knoxville clubs that had programs involving acting performances--monologues and scenes from plays. While these students were getting exposure, learning how to project and hearing people applaud, they were also learning the basic principles of acting.⁴

In the spring of 1937, Miss Emily Mahan presented the dramatic students enrolled in her regular course in a recital--Patsy Neal's first. She presented a Protean monologue entitled "A Poor Old Maid."

One year later, Pat was in another recital under the direction of Miss Mahan presenting a monologue entitled, "A Sidewalk Controversy on the Ghetto."

In the spring recital of 1939, Patsy presented monologues entitled "At the Photographers" and "Mrs. Parrott Presides."

On February 26, 1940, Pat was the featured reader in a Red Cross Benefit Recital held at Cumberland (Kentucky) College Auditorium. The four readings she presented were:

³Emily Faust, interview held at home, Knoxville, Tennessee, October 18, 1974.

⁴Ibid.

"Personality Plus"

"A Sidewalk Controversy in the Ghetto"

"I Will and Bequeath"

"Dress Rehearsal"

In the spring recital of 1940, Pat presented the monologue "Mrs. Cohen at the Amusement Park."⁵

Pat enjoyed doing monologues so much that she remembered with fondness her trips to Williamsburg, Kentucky, to visit her "dear Aunt Maude," when she was persuaded to give a monologue. The people loved it and looked forward to Pat's visits.⁶

Miss Helen Brixey, Pat's junior high dramatics teacher from the seventh to the ninth grades, remembered Pat's outstanding performances. Miss Brixey saw the potential and remembered Pat as "a lovely girl, who was very popular with students as well as with teachers."⁷

Mrs. Don Bosson (nee Mildred Brannum) recalled that when Patsy was in junior high she always wanted to play theatre games and was very dramatic. Mrs. Bosson remembered that Pat's father came by the Brannum home to pick up his daughter, calling to her, "Come on, my little actress." According to Mrs. Bosson, Pat's father was very proud of her and predicted that someday "she will be a great actress." She described Pat as a typical American girl from a typical American family. From the

⁵Faust, recital programs.

⁶Neal, May 14, 1974.

⁷Helen Brixey, telephone interview, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 22, 1974.

first day Mrs. Bosson met her, Pat told her that she wanted to be an actress.⁸

According to Mrs. William Overcash (nee Myra Black), when Pat went to Park Junior High, she took auditorium and drama under Miss Brixey. She remembered Pat as a friendly, outgoing person who was active in plays.⁹

While continuing her study under Mrs. Faust, Pat took an active part in her church and Sunday School (Magnolia Avenue Methodist Church). Miss Anna Virginia Lee, who was Pat's Sunday School teacher in 1938-39, remembered Pat as a sweet, attractive, likeable girl, who had a vivacious personality. In Sunday School class, recalled Miss Lee, Pat was an interesting person who continued to contribute on every subject and who would relate characters in religious literature to everyday world events. She added that Pat was outstanding and a very special little girl.¹⁰

According to Mrs. Mary Moore Lay who was in the same youth group with Pat (Epworth League), Pat was active in plays at church, excelled in them and the people recognized her talent. Often assisting with devotions (Bible readings and Scriptures), Pat also loved to act, "clown around," and possessed a sense of humor.¹¹

⁸Mildred Bosson, telephone interview, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 23, 1974.

⁹Myra Overcash, telephone interview, Russell, Kentucky, July 26, 1974.

¹⁰Anna Virginia Lee, telephone interview, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 23, 1974.

¹¹Mary Moore Lay, telephone interview, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 30, 1974.

In all her early endeavors, Pat's father, W. B. ("Coot") Neal, gave her his full and complete support and confidence. An article in The Knoxville News-Sentinel related the following:

The late W. B. (Coot) Neal, father of Patricia Neal was walking up Gay Street with an associate, Reid Ford, to their Southern Coal and Coke Company offices. As they passed the Tennessee Theatre, Reid remarked, "You know, Coot, I wouldn't be surprised to see Patsy's name on that Marquee some day."

"And I wouldn't be surprised either," the father replied seriously. Patsy was about 15 then, lazy sometimes, growing like a weed, awkward, but possessed of unmistakable theatrical talent.

Mr. Neal retained his faith in his daughter's future while she was a Park City Lowry pupil. He encouraged her constantly, was never too tired after the day's work to accompany her to a recital or church monologue appearance and sit through it. Mrs. Neal who was the practical parent, was less enthusiastic about Patsy's theatrical possibilities. When Patsy's marks at school would slip now and then, her mother would put her foot down: "Better grades or no more dramatics." That worked.¹²

At age fifteen, Pat entered Knoxville High School. According to Louis Schneider who was a classmate of Pat's, he remembered her readings presented in chapel. The first time he heard her perform, he felt that he was "in the presence of greatness." He remembered that "Pat became very emotionally involved while giving readings and even shed tears when the situation was a sad one."¹³

Another classmate of Pat's, Mrs. Harold Lee Harlow, thought that Pat had a height problem. With the exception of maternal roles, Pat's height (5 feet, 8 inches) prevented her from being cast in most leading roles as most of the boys were not tall enough for her.¹⁴

¹²Lee Davis, "Patsy Neal's Father Saw Big Future," The Knoxville News-Sentinel, April 14, 1964, p. 1.

¹³Keith Runyon, "The Class of '43," The Courier-Journal, May 24, 1973, Sec. B, p. 1.

¹⁴Mrs. Harold Lee Harlow, telephone interview, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 23, 1974.

As a consequence, her acting coach, Mrs. Faust, advised Pat when she was considering an acting career that she would have trouble securing roles because of her age and height. At the time, Mrs. Faust believed that if Pat could stay in the business until she was thirty years old, she would have no trouble securing roles. However, since Pat was never an ingenue and could not play young girl parts, it might be difficult to keep in the business until she matured enough to secure the type of role that she was really equipped to play.¹⁵

Annette Muellenhagen, an acquaintance of Patsy during her junior high and high school years, alleged that Pat's main objective was to become an actress. Muellenhagen contended that being in plays set Pat apart as she was very serious, very dedicated and had a great deal of integrity. She remembered Pat in the senior class play, but she never thought Pat would be famous as "Broadway and Hollywood were beyond most of Pat's classmates' wildest dreams."¹⁶

According to the reporter Edwin Howard, not many of Pat's classmates watching her in the senior class play And Came the Spring, presented on May 28, 1943, would have predicted so successful a career.¹⁷

Miss Ruby Bird, Pat's high school dramatics teacher, contended that Patsy Neal was always a young woman who knew what she wanted. Miss

¹⁵Faust, October 18, 1974.

¹⁶Annette Muellenhagen, telephone interview, Knoxville, Tennessee, April 30, 1974.

¹⁷Edwin Howard, "The Class of '43 Honors Patricia Neal," The Memphis Press-Scimitar, May 22, 1973.

Bird recalled a favorite Neal expression: "I'll walk through fire to get to Broadway."¹⁸

Malcolm Miller, a long-time drama critic for The Knoxville Journal, became interested in Pat while she was still in high school. He thought highly of her work and described her characterizations as so well conceived and so clearly presented that she was in constant demand as an entertainment feature at civic clubs and other organization meetings.¹⁹ Pat herself thought of Mr. Miller as "a beautiful man" who was very supportive of her endeavors.²⁰

Mr. Miller was responsible for Pat's experience at the famous Barter Theatre of Abingdon, Virginia. According to Robert Porterfield, manager of the Barter Theatre, the late Malcolm Miller brought Pat to him in the summer of 1939 [sic]. Mr. Porterfield remembered that Pat was a strapping youngster who told him that she was eighteen years old. He never thought to question her age. However, she really was only sixteen and worked with the theatre group that summer as an apprentice. It was not until the next season when Pat returned that Mr. Porterfield learned that Pat had deceived him concerning her age. Pat was with the theatre for three seasons. Mr. Porterfield thought that Pat had that heroic character and classic features necessary to do some of the Greek tragedies.²¹

¹⁸ Anne Powell, "Miss Bird's Among Retiring Teachers," The Knoxville News-Sentinel, July 6, 1975, Sec. B, p. 4.

¹⁹ Malcolm Miller, "Knoxville's Patricia Neal Honored," The Knoxville Journal, May 1947.

²⁰ Neal, May 14, 1974.

²¹ Jane Smith, "'Small Fib' Launched Pat's Career," The Knoxville Journal, April 15, 1964.

According to Mrs. Faust, Pat was just an apprentice with the Barter Theatre painting scenery, cleaning up and running errands. However, she did travel with the company and did get to perform in one play in Knoxville and another at Johnson City.

Although Miller, Porterfield and Faust all deny that the young actress performed at the Barter Theatre, Phyllis Adams Jenkins who was with Pat at the Barter vows that Pat did appear in a play Thunder Rock.²² According to Mrs. Jenkins, Pat was under the required age but even then very mature looking, tall and thin with the beginnings of that marvelous voice. Jenkins continued, "It seemed that from the moment Pat walked on stage everyone knew that she had or was a presence. In Thunder Rock, Pat wore a long skirt, held a candle and played the part of a much older person and electrified the audience--the talent already showed."²³

Pat herself cannot remember whether or not she performed at the Barter, but she has fond memories of the theatre. And, unfortunately, a fire at the Barter that took place sometime during the early 1970's destroyed the records. According to Mrs. Hayter (Mr. Porterfield's long-time secretary), Pat had written a letter to the theatre on January 17, 1973, in which she stated:

I adored the Barter Theatre and I made a lot of good friends there who are still my friends.²⁴

Among the earliest of Pat's theatrical experiences was a summer she spent as a member of the Tennessee Valley Players in her later high

²²Phyllis Adams Jenkins to Barbara Darling, August 26, 1974, New York.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Mrs. Hayter, interview held at Barter Theatre, Abingdon, Virginia, June 21, 1974.

school days. This play group was composed of amateurs--some of the TVA people--who were interested in acting and who came to Knoxville to present plays. Pat has fond memories of her time spent with the group. Fortunately, she won the first part (in the play Hay Fever) for which she auditioned. However, the Tennessee Valley Players had little money, gradually faded and were succeeded by the Carousel Theatre.²⁵

Following her graduation from high school in June 1943, Pat's first desire was to go to New York to pursue her career. However, an aunt insisted that her young niece attend college, so she applied to Northwestern and was accepted. There, as a sophomore, Pat was fortunate enough to be in a drama class taught by Miss Alvina Krause.

When a sophomore, Pat entered Miss Krause's acting class and sat on the first row, concentrating on improving her voice and diction. Miss Krause firmly believed that just as a musician must learn his scales, so an actress must learn her instrument; thus, Pat was confined to disciplined drills and not permitted to act in scenes. This was slow work and she had a difficult time staying with the schedule.²⁶

Miss Krause explained that the purpose of her first year drama course was a study of sensory responses to environment; it was to create the environment in which characters live on stage.²⁷

Miss Krause recalled vividly when one day big, awkward, ungainly Pat got on stage to do an assignment and of all things presented Hedda

²⁵Faust, October 18, 1974.

²⁶Alvina Krause, interview held at home, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, July 19, 1974.

²⁷Ibid.

Gabler, which she was not ready to do. Upon completing the scene, Pat walked to her seat "somewhat like a dog with his tail between his legs." The candid young actress refused to engage in the pretense of being good when she knew she was not. Believing that Pat was one of the most honest students she had ever known, Miss Krause perceived that the class thought that Pat was going to get what she deserved--that she had missed the assignment and that, therefore, they were not going to help her. Consequently, Miss Krause could not call on the class for comments because it would have been useless. Being a rather new teacher of acting at that time, Krause realized that most teachers would have stated that this was not the assignment and would not have discussed it. However, she recognized Pat's sincerity and, therefore, asked the young actress to return to the stage. The following dialogue then evolved:

Pat gave me one glance with those big brown eyes and shook her head and said, "No."

I replied, "Pat, get up on stage."

Pat said, "No, I won't."

I said, "You heard me! Get up there!" Finally, Pat slumped up there, dragging that big ungainly frame to center stage, and she stood and looked at me in a dumb manner. I asked Pat to be a pistol. And Pat just looked at me as if she were saying, "For God's sake, Miss Krause, don't be that crazy!" The class snickered. I asked, "What is Hedda? You have presented her. What is she?" Pat just shrugged her shoulders in total misery. I asked Pat to find a metaphor, a symbol for Hedda. Then the class began to respond and to classify Hedda as a pistol. I explained that Pat could not act a pistol because she was a human being; however, I continued, that the prevailing image throughout Ibsen's play is the reference to General Gabler's pistol; Hedda handles pistols throughout the play and eventually shoots herself. Hedda is a pistol.

Pat began to respond. They concluded that a pistol is beautiful, but a person could not act beautiful. However, they responded, a pistol is perfectly balanced. That was a term Pat could identify with, a woman of beautiful balance. Then, she began to pull herself up on the balls of her feet and turn

and move with perfect balance. She began to walk over to the window as if she were a perfectly balanced mechanism. Her chest began to come up and her head began to come up and she moved to the window; she had beauty. I explained that the pistol was really an extension of Hedda Gabler. And Pat began to see it. Pat held the pistol in her hand and it was very heavy. She wanted to aim and fire. Pat said the first line and fired into the air. This experience was really the beginning of Pat's learning to act because she began to discover herself and what she had to act with.²⁸

After this experience at Northwestern, others followed--some traumatic. For example, Pat was cast in the play Twelfth Night as Olivia under another teacher's direction. It seemed Pat would be a perfect Olivia because she had real beauty. According to Miss Krause, Pat was afraid of what is called showmanship as it was rather offensive to her; she wanted the realities.

Miss Krause taught motivation--motivation for walking--motivation for moving with freedom. When Miss Krause saw Twelfth Night, she stated it was "unbelievably bad--terrible."

If one can imagine Pat Neal being awkward and ugly and gawky and nothing on stage, one can imagine how terrible she was. Not only was Pat's profile bad--her chin stuck out and it gave her jaw a long angle, but also the costume was bad and showed Pat at her worst. Pat knew that she was doing the part badly and I had never known Pat to fake, but to be completely honest, even from the first day.²⁹

The usual procedure was for the teacher to speak to the actors after the last curtain, but she felt she could not face Pat. What could she say? Miss Krause finally found Pat in her dressing room alone and Pat said, "I am never going to act again," and she dropped her head on the dressing table and wept. Miss Krause said, "Pat, you be in my

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

office tomorrow at eight o'clock." Pat replied, "No, Miss Krause, I won't." Pat meant this; it was not any theatrics. Again Miss Krause said, "Pat, you heard me! I'll be there waiting for you at eight."³⁰

The teacher vividly recalled the events of the next morning:

Pat came in at eight looking utterly defeated, not a pretense, just sort of dead, colorless. I asked Pat to stand up tall. Pat replied, "No." I explained to her that her body was her instrument of communication. With that flat chest and those droopy shoulders, what could she communicate except awkwardness and ugliness? I explained further that Olivia was a beautiful woman and Pat had played her as a dowdy, flat-chested kind of person. Pat asked me to look at her. I responded. Pat said, "Do you realize I'm over six feet tall?" I replied, "Well, what of that? Look at me; I'm scarcely five feet and I hate it. I envy you." Pat asked me how I would like it if all my life every person I had known was a head shorter. I responded by asking Pat how she would like it if she were a tiny runt and wanted to be tall and everybody was a whole foot taller? Since I was getting nowhere, I searched madly for something to say. Finally, I asked Pat how she would like to play Saint Joan. Unbelievably, Pat's face lighted up and she said that she would like that more than anything. However, she was really undecided as she said, "No, I can't; I'm not going to act again."

I began discussing Saint Joan with Pat. I explained Saint Joan as a creature of the fields. She is a girl who runs across the fields, the plowed and unplowed fields, not on sidewalks but on fields, and she races toward a little speck up in the sky that is a lark. I asked Pat to race across the plowed field and to reach for a lark. Pat began to do it. And there it was, that simple thing that is really beauty. She expanded; her chest came up; she stood on both feet with one foot a little ahead so that the proportions were all different. She was a different Pat Neal. She felt different. From the body, I went to what does it mean to reach for a lark and what does it mean to pray (explaining Saint Joan)--that Joan just doesn't pray in space--that there is a God and Joan talks with Him. This was something that Pat could emphathize with totally. I just was not after the body, but what was inside as Pat could not be released until the body was free; her Hedda could not be released until she learned what it meant to be like a pistol and that changed her thinking. And then she could say, "Now,

³⁰ Ibid.

I'm going to shoot you." I continued to work with Pat on Saint Joan physically until Pat began to forget Olivia. I could see in Pat's eyes her determination to achieve and to become an actress.³¹

The technique Miss Krause emphasized to Pat dictated acting with her total body, "not with just hands or head or from the neck up but with all that she was and all that was inside that body--and Pat had so much inside. However, it was all bottled up; it was like a Hedda all shot up inside her until she learned to move." Basically, the approaches Miss Krause used in working with Pat during her sophomore year in acting concerned working with the body and working with movement.³² According to Pat, she remembers Alvina Krause at Northwestern as a lovely lady and a "great and heavenly teacher," but a strict one, and as a person who has had a great influence on her life.³³

In the summer of 1945, Miss Krause opened her own theatre at Eaglesmere, Pennsylvania, and took Pat with her. The proposed theatre was a series of abandoned buildings and she established her own summer theatre which lasted for twenty years. In a letter dated July 2, 1974, which Miss Krause sent to the writer, she described an impossible situation concerning the buildings that were in almost total disrepair. Pat's group spent days in cleaning, repairing and painting in order to make it presentable. All this was during the war when everything was scarce and hard to come by, but determination and perseverance paid off. Pat was the guiding spirit and the Eaglesmere Playhouse was her creation

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Neal, May 14, 1974.

when it opened in 1945. Miss Krause may have originated the idea, but it was Pat who put it into operation. The theatre opened with Hay Fever on July 4, 1945, and closed with Blithe Spirit on Labor Day.

In that summer of 1945, Pat appeared in Hay Fever, Uncle Harry (playing Hester), Squaring the Circle (as Tonya Zuknetzova), Jason (appearing as Lisa Otis) and Blithe Spirit (as the wife, Ruth). At first, Miss Krause thought the young actress was colorless in most of her early minor roles. However, in Squaring the Circle, Pat played a leading role. Then came Jason (not a well-known play) in which she played her first straight part. And in that play, Pat gained some confidence. Miss Krause stated further that between Jason and Blithe Spirit Pat really discovered how to be comfortable on stage. Pat and the others in the Eaglesmere Company had so few opportunities at Northwestern that they did not seem to mind that they were seldom paid at Eaglesmere Playhouse. And the theatre founded by the remarkable young actress and her group survived for twenty summers to produce Shakespeare, Shaw, Ibsen, Chekhov, Molière, Pirandello, Duerrenmatt, et cetera.

Pat Neal's determination, ambition and apparent potential as a successful actress were all characteristics which manifested themselves in innumerable ways to her many colleagues, friends, mentors and acquaintances during the formative years of her life.

CHAPTER II

SUMMER STOCK AND EARLY PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Following her experience at Eaglesmere, Pat was determined to go to New York and pursue her first real professional effort. There, she found what many people in the theatre have discovered: employment does not come easily. However, in less than two months, Pat was sent by an M C A agent to read for a part in The Voice of the Turtle, and she was awarded the role of understudy to Martha Scott as Sally and to Vicki Cummings as Olive. Later Pat was invited to Chicago and became the understudy for K. T. Stevens as Sally and Vivian Vance as Olive in the same play. It was then, at the suggestion of the play producer, Alfred de Liagne, that she adopted the stage name of Patricia. On New Year's Eve, 1945, Vivian Vance became ill and Pat went on in her place as Olive. This role of a mature woman of considerable sophistication was demanding for a nineteen-year-old; nevertheless, Pat's first performance was sensational and she played the part for two weeks.¹ She did so well that she retained the role during a two-week run on Broadway.

Next, Pat appeared as Claire Walker in the pre-Broadway tryout of Bigger Than Barnum. The play opened in Boston on April 22, 1946, and closed there on April 27, 1946. There are no available reviews of the play.

¹ Patricia Neal, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 14, 1974.

Through a friend, the young actress learned of a part open in one of the Theatre Guild's plays, A Moon for the Misbegotten. Playwright Eugene O'Neill was present at the audition and, although Pat did not get the role, she struck up an acquaintance with the playwright that turned into a lasting friendship. When she was about to leave the theatre, Pat overheard a director's conversation concerning a woman needed for the Theatre Guild's summer theatre. Thanks to O'Neill, the Theatre Guild soon hired her for a summer tryout of a new play Devil Take a Whittler (playing the part Wildcat) at the Westport Country Playhouse in Connecticut. Pat remembered fondly her performance as a very sexy mountaineer woman and claimed she was very good in that role.² No reviews of the play are available. Only a single prompt script remains in the Theatre Guild Collection.³ Her performance in Devil Take a Whittler brought two "dazzling" offers; one from Richard Rogers to play the lead in the comedy John Loves Mary and another from Lillian Hellman for the part of Regina in Another Part of the Forest. Pat was offered and accepted the part in John Loves Mary the same day she was asked to read for a part in Another Part of the Forest. According to Pat, the wife of a director who had seen her in Devil Take a Whittler encouraged her husband to call Lillian Hellman and ask Pat to read for her play.⁴ According to Miss Hellman:

²Patricia Neal, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 15, 1974.

³Peter Dzwonkoski to Barbara Darling, September 21, 1976, The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University Library, New Haven, Connecticut.

⁴Neal, May 15, 1974.

Pat came in to read for Another Part of the Forest on several occasions when I was not in the theatre. Then I heard about her and asked her to come back and read for me. We hired her within about five minutes of the reading and she, of course, was a sensational success--what I think used to be known as the toast of New York.⁵

Another Part of the Forest constitutes an earlier chapter in the family chronicle of the Hubbards, the rapacious Southerners of Miss Hellman's The Little Foxes. Pat was cast as Regina in the play. The part had been played by many outstanding actresses, which required Pat to work hard in order to compare favorably with her predecessors in the role (played on the stage as a middle-aged woman in The Little Foxes by Tallulah Bankhead and on the screen by Bette Davis).

Actress Mildred Dunnock who was also in the play was immediately struck by the charisma, the real beauty Pat possessed. Miss Dunnock thought Pat was one of the most beautiful creatures she had ever watched on stage. Since Miss Hellman was directing her own play for the first time, many of the scenes that Pat was in were rehearsed in a kind of secret way. To many actors, acting is a private experience. Pat's scenes that Miss Dunnock observed became an aesthetic pleasure to watch. One of the problems Pat had as a performer was that she was "bigger than life." She was beauty on a high level of beauty; she had more of the classical qualities. Miss Dunnock believed Pat created or brought to the role for Regina "a queenly quality." "Partly, it was her stature as she was a tall, Junoesque kind of person, but it was also something inside her--which might be a reserve, a kind of ego."⁶

⁵Lillian Hellman to Barbara Darling, December 13, 1974, New York.

⁶Mildred Dunnock, interview held at home, South Norwalk, Connecticut, November 9, 1974.

Another Part of the Forest opened on Broadway on November 20, 1946, at the Fulton Theatre and ran for 182 performances. Brooks Atkinson called the play "a witches' brew of blackmail, insanity, cruelty, theft, torture, insult drunkenness, with a trace of incest thrown in for good measure and some chamber music in the background." According to Mr. Atkinson, as Regina, daughter of this unlovely household, Patricia Neal caught "the bloom and greed of an amoral young woman determined to crush everyone around her." Mr. Atkinson felt that with the collaboration of several superior actors like Mildred Dunnock, Margaret Phillips, Patricia Neal, Percy Waram and Leo Gann, Miss Hellman had contrived scenes of madness, desperation and venom that had tremendous impact in the theatre. As her own director, Miss Hellman had assembled an excellent cast.⁷

Even though her performance was called "superb," Pat did not feel Another Part of the Forest was the hit she had hoped it would be.⁸ Nevertheless, the young performer received five best actress awards during 1947: the Donaldson, the New York Drama Critics', the Antoinette Perry, the Look, and the Pic awards. Pat's picture appeared on the cover of Life magazine during 1947. A January issue of Look magazine, 1947, carried a full page picture of Pat and had the following to say about her:

A beauty who is also talented is unusual. Patricia Neal is beautiful and an excellent actress. But more than this, she has an inner quality that can turn a play into an event. For these reasons, Look picks her as the top stage newcomer of 1947.

⁷ Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, November 21, 1946.

⁸ Neal, May 14, 1974.

Making a Broadway debut as the lead at age twenty is indeed an accomplishment, but to win five awards within a year is an amazing record.

After Pat's experiences on Broadway, she spent the summer of 1947 with the Elitch Theatre Company in Denver. Among the roles played by Pat during her engagement with Elitch Gardens Stock Company were the wife in Mad in Heaven, Laura in Laura, the wife in Parlor Story, Mary Dugan in The Trial of Mary Dugan, the wife in State of the Union, the young woman in Candlelight, Joan in Joan of Lorraine, Elizabeth Barrett in The Barretts of Wimpole Street and the wife in The Two Mrs. Carrols.

The season opened with Mad in Heaven, a farcial play by Hagar Wilde. The play is based on the domestic difficulties of a New York advertising executive. Pat played the wife. According to the review:

Patricia Neal, who turned down movie contracts to come to Elitch's, gives a delightful portrayal as the spoiled self-pitying but loving wife.⁹

Laura, the Vera Caspary-George Sklar murder mystery, opened the summer's second week of stock at the Elitch Gardens Theatre. Pat's role was the man-collecting Laura. According to the review:

Miss Neal, who handled the role beautifully, appeared in the second act resplendent in lounging pajamas. Considering her generous endowment, this alone could have made the show.¹⁰

The third week of summer stock opened at Elitch Gardens Theatre with a lively performance of William McCleery's hilarious comedy,

⁹Frances Melrose, "Elitch Theater Packed as 56th Season Opens," Rocky Mountain News, June 23, 1947.

¹⁰Richard Detwiler, "Elitch Cast Does 'Laura' up Brown," Rocky Mountain News, June 30, 1947.

Parlor Story. The play concerns an idealistic editorial genius who gets embroiled in the political machinations of a pragmatic governor and unscrupulous publisher. Pat Neal played the wife. The reviewer stated:

Patricia Neal, as Charles Burnett's vague but ambitious wife, enhanced the role with fine acting as well as a diverting physique exhibited to good advantage in a strapless blue gown.¹¹

The Trial of Mary Dugan, Bayard Veiller's durable courtroom mystery of the 20's, opened the fourth week. The play is set entirely in a courtroom and is distinguished by a huge cast of forty-six. Patricia Neal was Mary Dugan, the young lady of good heart and easy virtue who puts her brother through school on the proceeds of the trade. She is the accused. And in the review of the play, no comment was made concerning Pat's performance.¹²

State of the Union, a Pulitzer Prize winning drama, opened as the fifth play of the season which reviewer Frances Melrose alleged received laughs from both democrats and republicans. This Howard Lindsay-Russell Crouse comedy concerns two women (one played by Pat) who are in love with the same man and both want him to be President, but on different platforms. According to the review:

Blond Miss Neal acted her role well as Mathew's wife, whose political views leaned to the left.¹³

¹¹Richard Detwiler, "Hilarious Play Opens Elitch Stock Season," Rocky Mountain News, July 7, 1947.

¹²Richard Detwiler, "'Trial of Mary Dugan,' Elitch 4th Week Play," Rocky Mountain News, July 14, 1947.

¹³Frances Melrose, "'State of the Union,' Proves Laugh-Getter," Rocky Mountain News, July 21, 1947.

Candlelight by Siegfried Geyer, Elitch's sixth play of the season, is a story adopted from the German by P. G. Wodehouse. The story is based on the old theme of mistaken identity. A butler takes advantage of his master's absence and pretends to be his employer, Prince Rudolph Haseldorf-Schlebitten, in order to win the favor of a high-born lady. Excitement, action and high comedy ensue when the prince returns and insists upon helping his valet by pretending to be the servant. According to the review:

Last night's performance was well executed. Three players, Peter Cookson, Grant Gordon and Patricia Neal bore the brunt of the action. Miss Neal was delightful as the vacuous young woman who finds herself torn between love of the prince and the butler.¹⁴

One of Broadway's successes, Maxwell Anderson's Joan of Lorraine, opened as the seventh play of the season. The action takes place during rehearsals for a presentation of the story of Joan of Arc. The play's conflict revolves around a thorough disagreement between the director and the leading lady concerning the role of Joan (Pat). The reviewer stated:

Patricia Neal, who bore the brunt of the action, delivered a sincere, believable performance.¹⁵

According to Pat, the only time she ever forgot a line on stage was in the play Joan of Lorraine when she was acting with her leading

¹⁴Frances Melrose, "'Candlelight' at Elitch's Best Play of Season," Rocky Mountain News, July 28, 1947.

¹⁵Frances Melrose, "'Joan' Scores a Hit at Elitch Playhouse," Rocky Mountain News, August 4, 1947.

man Peter Cookson.¹⁶ However, the play's reviewer attributes the memory lapse to Cookson.

In an undated review in the Denver Post, John Snyder said of Pat's performance as Joan:

The name of Patricia Neal was on the lips of nearly every first-nighter as they left the theatre. With exceptionally long stretches of dialogue and without the benefit of an attractive setting, she received more comment than for any other performance she has given this season. Her sincerity was delightful.

Malcolm Miller stated that the reviewer, John Snyder, did not have the opportunity to view Ingrid Bergman in the role in the original New York production; consequently, the work of the two actresses could not here be compared. According to Mr. Miller, Miss Neal's portrayal would be hard to equal as her concentration on and intensive study of the part were in great evidence.

As the eighth play of Elitch Garden Theatre, Rudolf Bessier's The Barretts of Wimpole Street was presented. The play is based on the courtship of Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett, and her resurrection from a dull and uninteresting life under a morbid and tyrannical father. Pat played the part of Elizabeth Barrett. Reviewer Richard Detwiler wrote:

Patricia Neal, once again the work horse of the company, played Elizabeth Barrett. It is a highly exacting role. Miss Neal appears in every scene until the last. Yet her performance throughout was restrained and sensitive, her best of this season.¹⁷

¹⁶ Neal, May 14, 1974.

¹⁷ Richard Detwiler, "Elitch Cast Lauded for 'Barretts' Acting," Rocky Mountain News, August 11, 1947.

In the ninth play of the season Years Ago, Pat was not mentioned in the review.

Martin Vale's mystery drama The Two Mrs. Carrols was the final play presented at Elitch Gardens Theatre for that season. The story concerns a psychotic painter who pays ardent homicidal attentions to his wives. The painter dominates most of the scenes. However, according to the review:

His suddenly terrible appearance in the last scene was the year's most dramatic moment at Elitch. Most of the audience could not restrain a scream. As the victimized wife, Sally Carroll, Patricia Neal gave her usual, solid, competent performance, and seemed somewhat more inspired by better acting from her leading man.¹⁸

Pat stated that she loved Elitch Gardens and regarded it as a rewarding experience, even though it required rehearsal all day in order to perform at night.¹⁹

While Pat was in Another Part of the Forest and also when she returned to New York from Elitch Gardens, she studied at the Actor's Studio. There were two groups, the professional and the non-professional. She was placed in the professional group. She was required to act in two scenes a day and to do improvisations. Then the other actors commented on the scenes. Since Pat auditioned for the Actor's Studio, she was happy to have a place to work. She found it a good place to work out. Pat continued working there all fall, and in the early winter of

¹⁸Richard Detwiler, "Elitch Company Does Well in 'The Two Mrs. Carrols,'" Rocky Mountain News, August 26, 1947.

¹⁹Neal, May 14, 1974.

1947, she and other members received letters that they had been fired from the Studio.²⁰

In December, Pat was on her way to Hollywood under contract to Warner Brothers. She faced the cameras for the first time as Mary in the screen version of John Loves Mary playing opposite Ronald Reagan and directed by David Butler. John Loves Mary, a screen play by Phoebe and Henry Ephron from the Norman Krasna stage play, is a farce which concerns the basic dilemma of a soldier returning from abroad to a highly involved romantic mix-up. The soldier intends to smuggle an English wife to his best friend back home in this country. However, the frantic tricks of this soldier (Ronald Reagan) are confronted by his girl (Pat Neal) who wants to get married immediately while he is secretly bringing another wife. Reviewer Bosley Crowther wrote of the production:

In the role of the American fiancée, Patricia Neal, a brand-new Warner girl shows little to recommend her to further comedy jobs. Her looks are far from arresting, her manners are slightly gauche, and her way with a gag line is painful. She has a long way to go and a lot to learn. And we must say that John Loves Mary is a weak perch from which to be launched.²¹

According to Pat, John Loves Mary was directed by a fabulous man whom she characterized as "very funny, a good director but not the perfect director." However, since Pat had had no training in the technique of screen acting, it was not surprising that the reviews of the film were not very complimentary.²²

²⁰Neal, May 14, 1974.

²¹Bosley Crowther, New York Times, February 5, 1949.

²²Neal, May 14, 1974.

According to Pat's first film director, David Butler, he had seen her grow and develop as an actress. From the beginning, he regarded her as easy to work with because she was such a good actress. Pat had to move differently in front of the camera than she had on the stage. And she did well in making the adjustment. While she had been accustomed to projecting in the theatre, she had to practice keeping her voice down before the cameras. She had overcome her earlier awkwardness, was precise in everything she did, and Butler predicted that Pat would have a great future. He had fond memories of working with Pat on the picture John Loves Mary. He felt that talent is something that is God-given--that one cannot learn it at school. Said Butler, "Many times because a girl is gorgeous, it is predicted she will be good in pictures; however, she may lack personality. There is a kind of chemistry between some actresses and the camera that brings out a special quality in that actress and Pat Neal possessed this."²³

This quality was also observed by George Shdanoff who came to this country with a theatrical organization which was headed by the late Michael Chekhov and worked with an organization which was called the Actor's Lab. Later, Mr. Shdanoff worked independently as a consultant on scripts and worked directorially with actors and actresses on preparation of their parts. One day an actress was brought to Mr. Shdanoff's studio. She did a scene. Shdanoff recognized a striking talent. "Who are you? Where did you come from?" he asked. He was soon to learn and during Pat's stay in Hollywood (while she was under

²³David Butler, interview held at Arcadia Methodist Hospital, Arcadia, California, March 29, 1975.

contract to Warner Brothers and later at Twentieth Century Fox, Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, Universal and other studios) she worked often with George Shdanoff.²⁴

According to Shdanoff, they worked on roles that Pat had already contracted. Shdanoff used certain principles of his own which he developed in his theatre with Michael Chekhov and which are explained in Mr. Chekhov's book To the Actor. Shdanoff used these acting principles in working with Pat after she was cast in The Fountainhead, her second picture. Shdanoff's approach was completely different from what is called the Actor's Studio Method, which he thought was based on a series of misunderstandings. He believed that the American teacher who used the so-called Stanislavsky method used misunderstandings of this method because Stanislavsky changed his approach. Moreover, Shdanoff did not believe anyone could teach someone else's method. Actually, he had collaborated with Michael Chekhov on these principles, and they continued constantly to revise and to change them as they believed anything in art that was rigid and academic became dead. Mr. Shdanoff believed in approaching actors individually since he reasoned that certain tools and principles most helpful to one actor might not be helpful to another.²⁵

Other principles Mr. Shdanoff used in teaching and directing Pat included minimizing accident and chance. He reasoned that when most actors get a part, they approach their work accidentally because acting was not yet a precise art like music, but he thought it should be. Said

²⁴George Shdanoff, interview held at home, Los Angeles, California, May 17, 1974.

²⁵Ibid.

Shdanoff, "Because an actor may be inspired today and not tomorrow, I want to get away from chance. An actor cannot rely merely on talent because talent is capricious; inspiration is capricious; it may come or it may not come; what can an artist do to prepare the ground so he can become inspired?" This was the thrust of his approach. Shdanoff believed that it is a conscious approach to the unconscious--to draw out of the unconscious the inspiration but with conscious means. He further stated there is a thing called atmosphere as we are not acting nor living in empty space. There is always an atmosphere that surrounds us. He tried to impress upon Pat that every scene, every moment in a play must be filled with an atmosphere. Sometimes this atmosphere is supplied already by the playwright as in Anton Chekhov's plays or William Shakespeare's plays, but sometimes it is not; therefore, it has to be created by the actor. Mr. Shdanoff further emphasized to Pat the following:

You are not acting accidentally; a good actor knows how to create around him an atmosphere and the atmosphere is the soul of the performance. Great actors have atmospheres. Every talented actor creates atmosphere, but he creates it accidentally--by chance. He may have for half an hour this atmosphere and then he may lose it for awhile. For example, you may have it on Monday but not on Tuesday. The aim is to be able through conscious means to always surround yourself with an atmosphere.²⁶

As Mr. Shdanoff worked with Pat, he taught her that the actor must know in approaching a part what the character wants to do. "What does he like? What does he want to do as a character throughout the whole part?" According to Mr. Shdanoff, this is the key to unlock the

²⁶ Ibid.

real hidden content behind the words, behind the dialogue. "I think that the greatest mistake that all actors--the most talented actors--the most famous actors--make is when they act vaguely that they are beginning to perform feelings; feelings, emotions cannot be performed. They must be aroused, not accidentally but through conscious means." Mr. Shdanoff continued with these techniques in working with Pat over a period of several years. For a man who believes that his profession, the acting profession, must constantly grow, develop and change and not remain static, he was elated to see Pat Neal go through these processes.²⁷

Pat has stated that she adored George Shdanoff who has remained a good friend and a great influence on her life as well as on her career.²⁸

In The Fountainhead, Pat's second film, made in 1949, she was a beautiful and glamorous woman who had a lovely figure. Many of Hollywood's leading ladies wanted to play the part of Dominique. However, the director, King Vidor, saw Pat on the lot, met her and wanted to test her for the part. Pat found herself playing opposite Gary Cooper.²⁹

The Fountainhead, a screenplay by Ayn Rand from her novel by the same name, is a long-winded, complicated sermon on the right of the individual in society. It also concerns the right of a lady to change her mind. A point is made by the author that freedom resides in the right of the individual to do as he wishes. The Fountainhead tells the story

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Neal, May 14, 1974.

²⁹ Ibid.

of an architect, Howard (Gary Cooper), who dislikes compromise and who insists upon designing buildings as he wishes or not at all. He soon becomes involved with a peculiarly philosophical girl, Dominique (Pat), a power-mad newspaper publisher, a vicious critic and an old friend. The architect falls in love with the girl and she too finds herself fond of him, but she deliberately marries the power-mad publisher who is a cynical and corrupt person. The architect deliberately blows up a housing project because he is angry with changes which have been made in his plans. For this action he is brought to trial and is acquitted on the basis of his own plea for the rights of the individual. Eventually he wins the girl. Crowther stated the following concerning Pat:

Patricia Neal is almost funny, so affected is she as the girl, and a half dozen other actors do no better in minor roles.³⁰

According to King Vidor, his main objective was to interpret faithfully the book, particularly since it was a best-selling one. Even though a couple of writers had done a script on the book before Mr. Vidor came into the picture, he did not use this script and he felt the writers had lost the spirit of the book. Instead he got with the author (Ayn Rand) and she and Mr. Vidor wrote the final script. So the character grew out of the book and out of Mr. Vidor's talks with Ayn Rand. He remembered the character Dominique as a dominant and strong woman whose ideals were equally strong. However, Miss Rand wanted Greta Garbo in that part and insisted that Mr. Vidor give the script to Garbo. When Miss Garbo read the script she asked Mr. Vidor, "Do you think this is the part I should make my return to the screen with?" Mr. Vidor

³⁰ Bosley Crowther, New York Times, July 9, 1949.

replied, "No, I don't." Mr. Vidor thought Pat Neal was better casting than Greta Garbo because Garbo was "too exceptional, too erotic, too special to play the character as Pat did." As far as Mr. Vidor was concerned, "Pat was right out of the book, exactly what it should be."³¹

He recalled that they had started the picture at Fresno, California, in a rock quarry. The evening of their first day on location Vidor, Pat and Gary dined together and, according to Vidor, Pat and Gary Cooper fell in love immediately which "proved how the two characters were well matched and helped the picture." He asserted that throughout the picture there was a happy and pleasant association among the three of them.³²

Contrary to the prevailing custom, director Vidor did not rehearse the entire film through; he rehearsed each sequence and then rehearsed each scene separately until it looked as if the next take or next couple of takes would be best. He thought rehearsing too much would result in a stale performance and a commonplace scene. He had no set technique but sought to coax Pat through the various scenes by explaining or talking with her about her performance.³³

Vidor felt that Pat's individualism set her apart from most of the other young actresses of that time.

She seemed to have a quality more like Garbo that was absolutely individual. It was her voice, her distinctive looks, her size, her quality, her way of acting, as well as her strength that the

³¹King Vidor, interview held at home, Hollywood, California, November 28, 1976.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid.

part of Dominique required which was necessary to match Cooper's strength. When the two of them met with this quiet strength that they each had, it was inevitable that they were going to fall in love.³⁴

Pat's own feelings about The Fountainhead were somewhat more mixed. Although she has pleasant memories of making the picture (it remains one of her favorites) and working with King Vidor, she regarded The Fountainhead as a difficult experience. She knew little about screen acting at that time. Pat was aware that Jack Warner felt she was glamorous, wanted to make her the new Greta Garbo and believed she had the potential, but it did not come to pass.³⁵

Again, in 1949, Pat was under David Butler's direction when she appeared in It's a Great Feeling, a screenplay by Jack Rose and Mel Shavelson from a story by I. A. L. Diamond. The New York Times (in an article dated August 13, 1949) had a review of It's a Great Feeling in which Pat had a "bit" part. The film was packed with stars from Warner Brothers and Pat (along with Gary Cooper, Edward G. Robinson, Joan Crawford, et al.) "casually turn up before the cameras." The reviewer did not give details regarding Pat--and we know little of her role.

However, in The Hasty Heart, a screenplay by Ranauld MacDougall from the stage play by John Patrick (released in 1950), Pat played a more significant role, that of a British nurse. The story concerns a proud and aloof Scottish soldier, Lachie (Richard Todd), who is doomed to die in an Army hospital in Burma though he does not realize it. He is surrounded by friends. His short and lonely life is enriched by

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Neal, May 14, 1974.

passing friendships such as the one with Yank (Ronald Reagan). Since the setting is a ward of a hospital where six men and a nurse (Pat) live, the topic of conversation is the Scot's attitude toward his companions and their attitudes toward him. Bosley Crowther stated the following concerning Pat:

Patricia Neal is faintly artificial in the inevitable role of the nurse who becomes emotionally involved with the Scotsman, and Anthony Nicholls makes a pleasant medico.³⁶

In viewing the film, the writer thought that The Hasty Heart was a thin story with little real substance. The sole feminine role was played by Patricia Neal as "Sister Margaret" and Richard Todd came as close to being the leading man as the story would permit. There was little insight into Sister Margaret's character. She was kind and thoughtful--not unusual for a nurse. Beyond that, we know little about her performance. The Hasty Heart was Pat's fourth film. It did not require any great talent, was a low-budget film, played all scenes in interior and since it did not demand a character portrayal of any depth, it was difficult to judge Pat Neal's potential.³⁷

Vincent Sherman who directed The Hasty Heart had heard about Pat from Warner's producer, Jerry Wald, but he did not meet her until after he had arrived in London to make the picture. When Sherman met Pat he thought she was a lovely-looking girl who was very tall, very stately and very warm. She had a Southern dialect and, of course, the nurse in The Hasty Heart was an English girl and an officer in the Army with the

³⁶Bosley Crowther, New York Times, January 21, 1950.

³⁷The Hasty Heart, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 19, 1974.

rank of lieutenant or higher--somewhat different than the nurses in an American Army unit. The relationship between the nurses and the men in the wards was a little bit different than in an American hospital. In other words, a nurse could be friendly with the men but there was always a distance--a slight wall that separated officers from the other men, particularly in the British Army and in British life. Mr. Sherman attempted to explain to Pat this difference in character and relationships.³⁸

According to Mr. Sherman, the filming of The Hasty Heart encountered an uncommon number of problems. The 1948 winter was one of London's coldest. There was still an extreme food shortage in England. The setting for The Hasty Heart, a Burmese jungle, required studio scenes, which necessitated problems in quick costume change. Sometimes the fog was so thick that the crew had to open the stage and get a wind machine to blow the fog off the stage. The fog seeped in through the ventilators and this created a haze which the cameramen could not light. Also, the fog was so thick in London it took hours for the actors, director and technicians to get to the studio. And as if these problems were not foreboding enough, Englishmen resented the casting of an American actress to play the role of an English nurse. Clearly, the filming problems were many and varied.³⁹

Along about the fourth or fifth day, another problem developed. The opening scene of The Hasty Heart concerned the nurse coming into the

³⁸Vincent Sherman, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, November 28, 1976.

³⁹Ibid.

ward hospital in the jungle compound and the boys getting a bit too fresh. The nurse was supposed to slap the boys, but Pat was not achieving the subtle distance Sherman demanded. She was playing the scene as too warm a person. Sherman wanted the scene to be real and he did not want the British to look at it and say, "Oh, that's an American nurse and not an English nurse." After repeated takes, Pat became upset and tearfully lamented, "Maybe I had better go back and you ought to get an English girl to play this part." The shooting stopped for an hour while Sherman explained the particular quality he wanted. Reassured, Pat stopped crying, the shooting resumed and the director had no more trouble. One of the problems that plagued Pat was the limitations placed on her movement during the shooting. As a stage actress she was used to working within the whole stage and even after four films she was unaccustomed to the restricted blocking required for camera angles.⁴⁰

Sherman, however, thought Pat was excellent in The Hasty Heart. "She did a wonderful job, gave a beautiful performance, the right feeling came across and it was a pleasure to work with her." Sherman remembers Pat as "a marvelous human being who is a rich, warm and a talented actress." However, he feels it is sad that Pat never became a top box office attraction, explaining that she never received the "smash" role in a "smash" picture. "That is the accidental nature of the film business," concluded Sherman.⁴¹

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

Pat loved doing The Hasty Heart and was pleased with the picture. Even years later when Pat was on the set of "The Waltons" and she learned Vincent Sherman was on the lot, she saw him and expressed fond memories for the picture.⁴²

In retrospect, Alton Cook recalled that:

The radiant warmth of that Neal personality already was in full bloom. . . . She was able to reduce male members of her audience to moonstruck lovers but there was little delicacy or shading in the characters she constructed. She was strongly reminiscent of Constance Bennett in the very early days of talking pictures.⁴³

Another film Pat made with Gary Cooper was Bright Leaf, a screenplay by Ranauld MacDougall from the novel by Foster Fitz-Simons. This film, made in 1950, was directed by the late Michael Curtiz. Bright Leaf is an epic tale of the tobacco industry. Mr. Royle (Gary Cooper) and his family have been ousted from their land by a Major Singleton who manufactures cigars. Mr. Royle is in an angry mood for revenge. Immediately he asks a girlfriend, Sonia Kovac (Lauren Bacall), to finance a venture with a new cigarette machine. However, he meets a new girlfriend, Margaret Jane Singleton (Pat), becomes utterly absorbed in her and forgets the tobacco industry. Finally he persuades Margaret to marry him. And according to Bosley Crowther, "This proves his absolute undoing, for the lady--unlike a good cigar--is not fit for burning. She haunts and taunts him shamelessly. And finally she willfully betrays

⁴² Neal, May 15, 1974.

⁴³ Alton Cook, New York World-Telegram and Sun, January 18, 1964.

him to the trust-busting government.⁴⁴ As Kipling said, "A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke."

Crowther was disenchanted with the role of Margaret:

Patricia Neal plays his (Mr. Cooper's) female tormentor as though she were some sort of vagrant lunatic. Her eyes pop and gleam in crazy fashion, her face wreathes in idiotic grins and she drawls with a Southern accent that sounds like a dim-wit travesty. It is hard to perceive how this lady could fascinate anyone.⁴⁵

When the writer asked Pat her thoughts concerning the playing of the wife, she replied she was miserable playing the part of Margaret Jane Singleton because she wanted the role of Sonia Kovac, played by Lauren Bacall. The flaw Pat noticed most in her own performance in Bright Leaf concerned her eye movements, which she seemed unable to control. Bright Leaf is a film that Pat wished she had not made.⁴⁶ However, Vincent Sherman believed that her failure in that film was not Pat's fault as the picture itself was lacking. "When the material is not there, there is nothing that either you or the director or God can do with it."⁴⁷

A different kind of role was offered Pat in Three Secrets, made in 1950, a screenplay by Martin Rackin and Gina Kaus and directed by Robert Wise. This story concerns a five-year-old boy who is left alone on a California mountain top as the sole survivor of a plane crash in which his foster parents have been killed. The fate of the youngster

⁴⁴Bosley Crowther, New York Times, June 17, 1950.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Neal, May 15, 1974.

⁴⁷Sherman, November 28, 1976.

evokes the only real drama in the film as a rescue team attempts to save him. Three women (Eleanor Parker, Ruth Roman and Patricia Neal) each believes the boy is the son she gave up for adoption.

According to Bosley Crowther:

And while they are played by Eleanor Parker, Ruth Roman and Patricia Neal in ways that are suitable to the substance, they are not of high quality. . . . Patricia Neal plays a young woman, now sweetly and happily wed, who before her marriage had a baby which she placed in an adoption home (so she could go on with a newspaper career) . . . the birth and subsequent surrender coincide with the birthdate and adoption details of the lad on the peak.⁴⁸

The parts of the suspecting mothers are little more than sentimental "trash" and only serve to bring together three females. They are not good or demanding parts and almost any starlet could have performed as well as any one of them.⁴⁹

According to Pat, this was one of the few roles in which she had an opportunity to portray her real self.⁵⁰

When Robert Wise first met Pat, he was attracted to her lovely profile. He sensed a quality of maturity--she had the look of a much more mature woman. Pat was only twenty-four when she played the part of Phyllis Horn (a newspaper woman) in Three Secrets. Technique-wise, the director used no tricks. He felt it was important that Pat be at ease. He would quietly make suggestions and once he got the scenes "rolling" in rehearsal, he liked to build scenes with her. He remembered Pat as a lady with quite a lot of patience. He realized that her extreme

⁴⁸Bosley Crowther, New York Times, October 21, 1950.

⁴⁹"Three Secrets," WBFF, July 24, 1974.

⁵⁰Neal, May 15, 1974.

height and pronounced jaw line required that she capitalize on her other characteristics which were attractive: her lovely figure and face, marvelous voice, good diction and personal presence. Mr. Wise felt Pat "had this marvelous chemistry and large talent that came across on the screen." He believed that "a person is born with this chemistry--it is in the genes"--and with this quality, "Pat became special for the screen--a mystery on the screen." Mr. Wise recalled that "Pat was a delight to work with, very professional, very real and very sincere. She never seemed to have picked up any degree of Hollywood phoniness."⁵¹

According to Pat, Robert Wise was a lovely man who used to be a cutter and who knew a lot about films. Even though she has not worked with him for a long time, Pat thinks Robert Wise is one of the great directors.⁵²

In Pat's earlier films, she had appeared awkward, stilted and uncertain. She was now becoming more at ease and maturing as an actress. Her natural talent began to assert itself in The Breaking Point (her seventh film), a screenplay by Ranauld MacDougall based on Hemingway's To Have and Have Not. The film, made in 1950, was directed by the late Michael Curtiz. Warner Brothers changed the location of the story from the Florida Keys to the California coast and they wrote a part for a female that was not in the original story. The story concerns Harry Morgan (John Garfield), a hero who has a wife and a couple of children. He operates his sports fishing cruiser out of a port south of Los

⁵¹Robert Wise, interview held at Universal Studios, Universal City, California, March 28, 1975.

⁵²Neal, May 15, 1974.

Angeles. He first encounters trouble when he is chartered for a trip to Mexico by a deadbeat. This deadbeat disappears from the boat in Mexico and leaves Harry without any money as well as with the deadbeat's girl, Leona Charles (Pat). This becomes an adventure story as there is smuggling of some Chinese and a grim adventure with the crooks who are escaping from a racetrack hold up. According to Bosley Crowther:

We have a surprisingly good taut adventure story of a hard-luck fellow who is trying to support a wife and kids and who finds himself in the situation of having "nothing to peddle but guts." Somehow, the faces of people and the real pinch of living are revealed. Patricia Neal is surprisingly credible as a wise-up good-time girl.⁵³

The observations made by the writer who viewed the film were that Pat had a mature role but a small part as she was not on the screen for more than forty-five minutes. She played the "party" girl who tried to seduce John Garfield. Again, the role had no depth. Twenty to thirty females of the period could have performed as well. As a siren she was too timid, not "hard" enough. Garfield was interested in her but she just did not try hard enough.⁵⁴

Pat's own recollection of The Breaking Point was that she enjoyed making the picture, but she felt that the director was not very kind to people with small parts.⁵⁵

Pat made four films in 1950. Obviously, any actress who makes that many films in one year cannot give her best performance every time. And then, in 1951, Pat made five films: Operation Pacific, Raton Pass,

⁵³Bosley Crowther, New York Times, October 7, 1950.

⁵⁴The Breaking Point, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 20, 1974.

⁵⁵Neal, May 15, 1974.

The Day the Earth Stood Still, Diplomatic Courier and Weekend With Father.

In the beginning of 1951, Pat made the film Operation Pacific, written and directed by George Waggner. This film is a story about submarines based on a film made seven years earlier entitled Destination Tokyo. Initially the lead female role was inconsequential. However, in Operation Pacific, she becomes as important as the Japanese Imperial Fleet. Duke Gifford's pursuit of his ex-wife Mary consumes as much of his time and attention as do his wartime submarine patrols. When the Thunderfish, a famous undersea vessel, is out on the Pacific, there is an attack on a trapped Japanese gunboat. However, "Duke" (John Wayne) stays on command of the boat and pursues his ex-wife (Pat Neal) who is a Navy nurse. She rejects him because he is "in love with the Navy." As Bosley Crowther has stated concerning Pat:

And the performance of Patricia Neal in the thankless role of this lady does not help matters in the least. . . . Miss Neal with her airiness and sashays is a walking jeremiad against dames.⁵⁶

When reminiscing about his picture, director Waggner stated that Pat was not only a lady but also a competent actress.⁵⁷

Pat's next film was Raton Pass, a screenplay by Tom W. Blackburn and James R. Webb, based on a novel by Mr. Blackburn and directed by the late Edwin Marin. Concerning the film Bosley Crowther thought:

A woman with beauty and an insatiable appetite for power stirs up bitter hatreds and a lively range war in the New Mexico

⁵⁶Bosley Crowther, New York Times, February 3, 1951.

⁵⁷George Waggner, telephone interview, Redondo Beach, California, November 26, 1976.

Territory of 1880 in Raton Pass. Playing the husband Dennis Morgan for a chump, Patricia Neal almost succeeds in maneuvering him out of his half interest--she got the other half as a wedding present--in their vast ranch.⁵⁸

As the story progresses, the greedy woman (Pat) scares away the wealthy Kansas railroad man after she has trapped him and without his financial assistance is doomed to failure. The moral of the story appears to be that cheaters usually lose. The vengeful husband is anxious to get even with his wife, so he leads his clan against a group that is protecting the ranch. The story is an old-fashioned Western. Even after Mr. Morgan has been shot in the back he makes an amazing recovery. As Mr. Crowther stated, "Miss Neal has a fat role in this picture and plays it commendably."⁵⁹

After making Raton Pass, Pat was dropped by Warner Brothers Studio apparently on the slim excuse that she would not leave her hair dyed blond. Pat wanted to return to her natural hair color. Pat also thought the films she was doing for Warner Brothers were getting worse and worse. Almost immediately she received a contract from Twentieth Century Fox where she made her next two films.⁶⁰

After having made nine films at Warner Brothers, Pat appeared at Twentieth Century Fox in another film directed by Robert Wise. The title was The Day the Earth Stood Still, a screenplay by Edmund H. North from a story by Harry Bates. This was an early science-fiction picture, complete with strange machines from outer space. The audience

⁵⁸Bosley Crowther, New York Times, April 20, 1951.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Neal, May 15, 1974.

was expected to accept the creatures who appeared to be as human as we are. The head of the invading force spoke perfect English! Their mission was to urge peace for the universe. Pat had the female lead. She was convincing in the part even though it was pure fantasy; the audience was expected to forget reality. Pat's facial and emotional expressions prevented her characterization from being quite as vapid as some other roles she had to play. Moreover, the strength of her characterization when compared to that in earlier films indicates her improved talent.⁶¹

Both Pat and Robert Wise agreed that The Day the Earth Stood Still was a good film and, according to Mr. Wise, it was far more successful than Three Secrets.⁶²

Pat was delighted when she was cast opposite Tyrone Power, who had been her childhood idol, in her second picture at Twentieth Century Fox, Diplomatic Courier. This film, made in 1951, a screenplay by Casey Robinson and Liam O'Brien, is based on the novel Sister Errand by Peter Cheyney and was directed by Henry Hathaway.

The story is thin and requires the viewer to accept unbelievable events. We are not sure whether Pat is on the "right" side or the "wrong" side--and the same is true of the male star, Tyrone Power. Most of the reviewers were also uncertain. The story has no substance and is of little importance. It seems to be only another excuse to bring together a group of stars.

⁶¹The Day the Earth Stood Still, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 21, 1974.

⁶²Wise, March 28, 1975.

Power is an American diplomatic courier entrusted with great responsibility. Americans have discovered the Russian time table for the invasion of Yugoslavia. It is Power's job to get it to the proper authorities. With Pat's help he is successful. The story is a "pot boiler," and both the story and the film ought to have been thrown into the trash can!

In viewing the film, the writer noticed Pat had second female lead; she was certainly not the female star. The part Pat played (Joan Ross, a Russian spy who tried to seduce Tyrone Power, the male courier) lacked substance. Despite the poor quality of the role, Pat's beauty and talent were not concealed. However, the part did not lend itself to character development.⁶³

Pat contended that in Diplomatic Courier the director was good with people who had important parts but rude to people with minor roles.⁶⁴

Another film made in 1951 at Universal Studios was Weekend with Father directed by the late Douglas Sirk. The writer has been unable to find any other information concerning the film, including any reviews, and Pat's recollection of the film is both faint and unreliable.

In 1952, Pat was cast opposite Van Johnson in the film Washington Story, written and directed by Robert Pirosh for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. The story pays a tribute to Congressmen and portrays them as fair, clean, decent, fine and hard-working people who sometimes are victims

⁶³Diplomatic Courier, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 20, 1974.

⁶⁴Neal, May 15, 1974.

of the press. In this case the villain is a Washington radio commentator and columnist. It is he (Philip Ober) who spreads rumors about the lawmakers on Capitol Hill. This columnist is almost successful in influencing a newspaperwoman, Alica Kingsley (Pat), to accept his point of view. It is not until this lady has followed and spied upon Congressman Joseph Gresham (Van Johnson) that she comes to the conclusion that he is a decent person. According to Bosley Crowther, the writer-producer had the angular Miss Neal pretending to be a newswoman as though she were a slumming Hollywood star.⁶⁵

Washington Story (in the beginning called Mr. Congressman) was made at a time when the communist investigations were taking place. Since this was a precarious time for Hollywood, Mr. Pirosh had to be careful as he was subject to certain pressures from politicians. Mr. Pirosh's purpose was not a great expose, but to show the good and the bad in Congress. First he discussed the picture with President Harry Truman. Truman became very interested in the picture and thought it was a good idea. Next Pirosh had to get Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn's permission to prowl around the Capitol, to do research and to shoot the picture. A huge replica of the auditorium was built along with an ingenious backdrop of painted people since the only place they could shoot the picture was in the corridors where the Hall of Fame statues are located. Time was spent with Pearson's right-hand man, columnist Jack Anderson. According to Pirosh, he received some interesting information, "since Pat played a newspaperwoman in the picture who

⁶⁵Bosley Crowther, New York Times, July 2, 1952.

was trying to do a hatchet job on a Congressman and Drew Pearson and Jack Anderson had done their share of hatchet jobs."⁶⁶

Mr. Pirosh had recognized Pat's talent when he had seen her in Another Part of the Forest and Mr. Pirosh found Pat "delightful and stimulating" because "her standards were high." Since he was both writer-director, it became a sensitive situation if an actress or actor wanted to change a scene. But this was no problem for Pat. Once she had accepted a script, Pat felt it her job to do the best she could with that script without requesting major changes. There was none of the breast beating saying, "I don't feel this line." Pat did often talk with Mr. Pirosh before the scenes, and changes sometimes came out of those discussions. When he thought Pat was right he would say, "Okay, let's change that." But added Pirosh, "There was never this kind of temperament or tantrums in front of other people. If Pat had a question, she just winked at me and we went somewhere to discuss the situation." Mr. Pirosh regarded Pat as an interesting and honest person, who was not without temperament but was honest and genuine--not infantile.⁶⁷

Perhaps one thing that might have hurt the picture Washington Story was that Pat's performance became a little mechanical. This problem arose when the studio required Mr. Pirosh to do a lot of "looping" with Pat's scenes. Some of the spontaneity went out of her performance because the dialogue recorded that way can never be

⁶⁶Robert Pirosh, interview held at home, Beverly Hills, California, November 26, 1976.

⁶⁷Ibid.

reproduced exactly the way it was, especially when there were exterior scenes.⁶⁸

In viewing Washington Story, the writer felt that the chemistry between Pat and Van Johnson was not right as they appeared to act on different levels. Pat was much deeper and Van had been the boy next door for many years and America's idol during the war years. Pat was a stage actress and a highly gifted one. However, it was not Mr. Johnson's fault that they were placed together in the picture.⁶⁹ Even though Washington Story was not a big commercial success, it fascinated the public because of its appearance during the era when McCarthy madness was at its height.

Another film made in 1952 was Something for the Birds, a screenplay by I. A. L. Diamond and Boris Ingster based on stories by Alvin Josephy, Joseph Petracca and Boris Ingster and directed by Robert Wise. The story concerns an engraver, Johnnie Adams (Edmund Gwenn), who continues cheating Washington society by swiping invitations to exclusive parties. The story seems to be a humorous commentary on high society as well as government trickery. Anne Richards (Pat) appears on the Washington scene with a great desire to preserve California bird life. She is opposed as well as helped by the professional lobbyist Steve Bennett (Victor Mature). High points of the film include Mr. Adams' exposure, the saving of the birds and Mr. Bennett's reformation. According to the reviewer concerning Something for the Birds:

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Washington Story, Library of Congress Film Collection, August August 21, 1974.

. . . the haute monde is quickly stifled by the introduction of lobbying, vote fixing and expensive gifts--aspects of government which are woefully lacking in humor, to say the least. Patricia Neal is plainly miscast and deserving a better role.⁷⁰

In viewing Something for the Birds, the writer noticed a highly improbable plot--was really "for the birds." Pat had the female lead, a role that any of a dozen female actresses could handle as the part did not require too much technique. However, Pat tried to do the best by a very poor role in a poor film.⁷¹

In conclusion, the writer agrees with Pat that she was miscast in her last seven films--maybe the films themselves should not have been made. From the beginning of Pat's film career it appears that Warner Brothers did not know how to use her talent; she did not receive any specific training for screen acting and she was required to make too many films in one year. This, in part, was due to Pat's being under contract and the studio trying to make as many low-budget films as they could produce. Therefore, whether Pat was right for a part was of little importance to the studios which shows something about the Hollywood mentality during the late 1940's and early 1950's.

⁷⁰O. A. G., New York Times, November 15, 1952.

⁷¹Something for the Birds, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 21, 1974.

CHAPTER III

BROADWAY, OFF-BROADWAY, LONDON STAGE, TELEVISION EXPERIENCE AND LATER FILM EXPERIENCE

After five years of disappointment with her roles, Pat left Hollywood and for an equal period of time she made no films. She returned to New York without a job. However, she knew a theatre that was casting for The Children's Hour and Pat asked if she could come and read for it. The director-producer loved her reading and Pat chose to play the lesbian (Martha Dobie).¹

The Children's Hour was a revival of Lillian Hellman's earlier play produced in 1934. The play concerns a Mary Tilford, the protagonist, who spreads tales of an unnatural relationship between two women, Karen and Martha, who run the school which she attends. Mary succeeds in convincing her grandmother, Mrs. Tilford, about this relationship. Mrs. Tilford decides to direct a campaign that causes all of the children to be withdrawn from school. The two owners of the school lose a libel suit because a cowardly teacher fails to testify. The two are ruined professionally. These allegations of lesbianism drive Martha Dobie to commit suicide. Karen sends her fiance away and finally Mrs. Tilford, who is horrified by the destruction she has brought through her good intentions, attempts to help Karen financially. Miss Hellman explained that the theme of The Children's Hour concerned irresponsible

¹Patricia Neal, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 14, 1974.

talk that created tragic suffering--the evil committed in society by unjust accusation or slander; in this case, the slander was a charge of lesbianism.² The Children's Hour opened on December 18, 1952, at the Coronet Theater. Of course, the public and critics immediately found the play's theme relevant to McCarthyism. When the tragic results of slander were presented, Miss Hellman's play took on political dimensions. Brooks Atkinson wrote that Kim Hunter and Patricia Neal played the parts of the schoolteachers with great skill and that Miss Neal was tall, gaunt, wild and incredulous.³

A Variety reviewer stated: "Miss Neal has a gaunt, low-pitched eloquence that admirably suggests caged-animal desperation."⁴ The Children's Hour ran for 189 performances on Broadway and later went on tour.

Miss Neal recalls that on opening night the audience stood up, cheered and applauded her. Elated by this overwhelming response, she was unable to understand why she did not receive better reviews in the New York Times. Nevertheless, she said that she loved doing the play and that Lillian Hellman was a great playwright although not the best director, particularly of her own plays.⁵

In June 1953, Pat played Lady Teazle in an off-Broadway revival of The School for Scandal at the Theater de Lys. Then, on June 16,

²Lorena Ross Holmin, The Dramatic Works of Lillian Hellman (Stockholm: Rotobekman, 1973).

³Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, December 19, 1952.

⁴Variety, December 24, 1952.

⁵Neal, May 14, 1974.

she played the part of the witch in The Scarecrow directed by Frank Corsaro at the same theatre. Brooks Atkinson wrote:

Patricia Neal's acting as the witch is the best thing she has done here this season; it is hearty, and relaxed. Credit Frank Corsaro, the director, and the leading members of the cast with their full share of the play's vitality. They have all done a rattling good job of translating an old play into an actor's holiday.⁶

Returning to Broadway in 1955, Pat was cast in Edith Sommer's A Roomful of Roses which opened at the Playhouse on October 17. The story concerns a mother, Nancy Fallon (Pat), who is divorced and has remarried. She attempts to reconcile her adolescent daughter to the new marriage. According to Brooks Atkinson:

Although Patricia Neal is starred and gives a glowing performance, the central character is a teen-age girl. Between them (Betty Lou Keim and Patricia Neal) they have rescued "A Roomful of Roses" from commonplaceness and made it into a moving play. Miss Neal gives her best performance to date as the troubled mother. It is relaxed style without losing emotional force, and it puts a solid foundation under the drama.⁷

Thus, Pat's experience in these plays of the early 50's did much to help her mature in her chosen profession.

Her next film, Stranger From Venus, made in 1954 and directed by the late Burt Balaban, was an immediate disaster. This film was produced by a studio (Princess Pictures) which is now unknown. No reviews of the picture are available as far as the writer knows.

In 1955, Pat made a film in Italy called La Tua Donna (Your Woman--this translation in English was provided by the Italian

⁶Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, June 17, 1953.

⁷Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, October 18, 1955.

Embassy).⁸ Since Pat could not speak Italian, she spoke English and the film was dubbed.

While in New York, Pat made her appearance as a student for the second time at the Actor's Studio. There she met Elia Kazan and Lee Strasberg. According to Pat, Mr. Strasberg criticized her work severely, but she thought he was a fabulous teacher as well as an interesting man.⁹ It was her association with this program which brought her to the attention of Elia Kazan. In March 1956 he chose Pat to replace Barbara Bel Geddes as Margaret in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. Pat played the role at the Morosco Theatre for three weeks while Miss Bel Geddes was on vacation.

In 1957 Pat returned to the screen when she was cast in A Face in the Crowd, a screenplay by Budd Schulberg and directed and produced by Elia Kazan for Warner Brothers. The story concerns Lonesome Rhodes (Andy Griffith) who is picked up as a drunken guitar-playing tramp by a television reporter (Pat) in an Arkansas town. Lonesome Rhodes gradually becomes the dominant masculine figure who rises to power as a television hero. He not only dominates the television audience to which he is exposed but also his employer. He comes close to dominating a political party and a presidential candidate. Suddenly all this power is taken away from him when his girlfriend pulls a studio plug. He is on the air when he thinks he has completed the program. According to Bosley Crowther:

⁸Italian Embassy, telephone call, Washington, D. C., August 1, 1978.

⁹Neal, May 14, 1974.

Everyone condescends to him (Lonesome)--instead of taking positive positions that would better represent reality. Patricia Neal as his doting discoverer, Paul McGrath as an advertising man, Percy Waram as a big manufacturer, Marshall Neilan as a scheming Senator and Anthony Franciosa as a wise guy--all play their roles capably, but they're forced to behave as awed observers, not as flexible factors in the scheme of things.¹⁰

In A Face in the Crowd, Pat presented a well-acted role that was convincing. She demonstrated a more mature control than she had in any previous film. She explained that she was more nearly herself in A Face in the Crowd than in any other of her roles. She gave a superior performance, very well done.¹¹

Even though the writer had a twenty minute interview with Elia Kazan, she received very little information regarding his techniques used in directing Pat. His persistent answer to questions was, "I don't know; I can't remember; I wasn't there."¹²

Regarding Kazan's directing techniques used in A Face in the Crowd, he said he talked with Pat, provided a preview synopsis and explained how he wanted her to play each scene. In working with Pat, Kazan felt she was smart, very sensitive and a beautiful person. In fact, he alleged that he had never worked with anyone he liked better and would welcome the opportunity to work with her again. When it was necessary to give her criticism, it became a kind of encouragement where he would ask her to stress certain points. Kazan felt that

¹⁰Bosley Crowther, New York Times, May 29, 1957.

¹¹A Face in the Crowd, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 21, 1974.

¹²Elia Kazan, interview held in office, New York, New York, June 11, 1974.

Pat's absolute integrity and decency were qualities which both guided him in directing her in various scenes and gave the scenes value.¹³

According to Kazan, Pat was marvelous in A Face in the Crowd. He agreed with Pat that the role she played in the film was closer to the true Patricia Neal--he had great sympathy for her, so he used her own qualities which worked out well. Mr. Kazan's closing comment was, "I think Pat Neal is a great star."¹⁴

In A Face in the Crowd most of the actors and actresses were making their first appearance. In a discussion with Pat, she emphasized that Elia Kazan ("Gage" as she called him) was a great director (one of her favorites) as well as a fabulous man, adding that his earlier experience as an actor no doubt contributed to his strength as a director. Pat contended that Kazan knew how to treat actors to get the best from them. Being in A Face in the Crowd was a good experience for her--perhaps the first really solid role of her screen career.¹⁵

In September 1958 Pat made her London debut at the Arts Theatre Club as Catherine Holly in Tennessee Williams' Suddenly Last Summer. The story concerns Catherine who cannot believe her mother would have a lobotomy performed on her in order to receive monies from her cousin Sebastian's estate. Also, the story deals with cannibalism. Sebastian, a degenerate poet, is eaten by depraved and hungry young boys on an unidentified beach where he has been searching for unusual homosexual

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Neal, May 14, 1974.

stimulation. There was something about the part of Catherine that intrigued Pat and she felt right for it. She remembered taking the train to London every night to the theatre; during this time she went through the entire part on the train because she did not want to forget one line. She prepared for the role, as she had for all previous roles, by trying to understand the motivations of the character. She loved playing Catherine Holly and felt it was a fabulous part.¹⁶

In a magazine, the reviewer Douglas McVay wrote a fulsome article concerning his praise for Patricia Neal. He considered seeing Suddenly Last Summer the most intense theatrical experience of his life.¹⁷

It came in the last ten minutes of the production when Patricia Neal, rendering the play's climactic recital of death, stood centre-stage with a single spotlight illuminating her pale, high-cheekboned features, gazed fixedly and hauntedly out across the footlights, over the heads of the audience in the stalls, her lips parting--and then proceeded to fasten my own gaze on those features as unyieldingly as her flatly twanging American voice enchained my ears.¹⁸

He further stated that her long narrative speeches became declamations, incantations of virtuosity in breath control and diction, always clear and coherent no matter at what speed or urgency they were taken.¹⁹

At times the urgency and speed of them made me quiver and stiffen in my seat. The pulsing "Run, run, run!" describing her reaction to the sight of the murdered poet Sebastian's corpse was followed by a huge, saw-edged, diminuendo scream torn from her

¹⁶ Patricia Neal, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 15, 1974.

¹⁷ Douglas McVay, "The Art of the Actor," Films and Filming, July 1966, p. 19.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

depths, shattering and terrifying in impact. And the final numbed sentence, the last still half-incredulous words, "White . . . wall; hung with paralysing hollow slowness in the awed, electrified air of the auditorium."²⁰

Mr. McVay further claimed that toward the end his absorption in Catherine (Pat) was so acute that she seemed to his vision detached from her surroundings, and with those surroundings began to swim and change color as if in an unearthly haze of heat. Twice, the saliva rattled in his taut throat, and when she straightened, she appeared ten feet tall.²¹

As the curtain fell I could have continued listening and watching for hours; there was a silence in the house which continued momentarily before the thunder of applause. I believed the silence was due less to horror at what the character Catherine Holly had said than to overwhelmed exhaustion at the way in which Miss Neal had said it for her. I felt the rest of the audience no matter where they were sitting were in a hypnotic state. Even after I left the theatre, my hands were still shaking and my knees were so weak that I could not communicate with my two companions on the way home. Miss Neal's own staring-eyed face and parted lips filled my mind. I felt that my reaction to Miss Neal's performance reflected the quintessence of what acting in the theatre might afford us . . . an element which can occur when the text and the performer unite to generate an impact either overridingly dramatic--or obsessively boring.²²

Pat was most happy when she received these great notices. A producer reading the paper during his flight to London read about Pat's performance. So he came to see the play on his second night in London and he called Tennessee Williams that night and bought it for a film. Pat was led to believe that she would play the part of Catherine Holly

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid.

²²Ibid.

in the film. However, Pat was surprised when she read in the paper that Elizabeth Taylor had been signed to play it. Yet Pat still considered Suddenly Last Summer her most successful stage production, even over Another Part of the Forest, and it remains one of her favorite parts.²³

Next, Pat was cast in The Miracle Worker, a play by William Gibson which opened at the Playhouse in New York on October 19, 1959. The story is based on the life of Helen Keller who is left blind and deaf because of a childhood illness when she is less than two years old. A great teacher named Anne Sullivan (Anne Bancroft) comes into her life and remains with her for almost fifty years. Mrs. Keller (Helen's mother) is played by Pat. To the blind, Helen becomes a symbol of hope that physical handicaps are not insurmountable when there is courage and determination. According to Brooks Atkinson, "Patricia Neal gives an excellent performance as Helen's anxious loving mother whose heart is torn between pity and fortitude."²⁴

According to Pat, the role in The Miracle Worker was her most difficult one on stage to keep up night after night. This was due to the fact that she had to scream when she realized that Helen Keller was blind. Screaming night after night produced fear in Pat that she would damage her voice. Somehow she managed neither to damage nor lose her voice.²⁵

²³ Neal, May 15, 1974.

²⁴ Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, October 20, 1959.

²⁵ Neal, May 15, 1974.

Thus, it is probable that given stronger dramatic vehicles that Pat's work on Broadway, off-Broadway and the London stage might have produced a fine stage actress who could have become "The First Lady of the Theatre." However, according to George Shdanoff, we need more permanent ensemble theatres in this country to give exceptionally talented people like Patricia Neal the opportunity to perform the great classical parts--Shakespeare's tragedies, the Greek tragedies, etc. Mr. Shdanoff felt she should have played roles like Medea, Lady Macbeth and the queen in Hamlet. He saw Pat as an actress who grew constantly in Hollywood as well as in her work in the theatre and he expressed sadness "that theatre in this country is so commercialized and actors just do not have the opportunities to play a variety of parts."²⁶

According to Alvina Krause, it is a tragedy of our theatre that we have not recognized people like Pat Neal. She commented:

There is no place for her kind of acting; our theatre has a place only for box office successes as money rules our theatre. Pat does not belong in that kind of theatre which is our tragedy because Pat belongs in a theatre that is big--big as the world and big as the human heart. Pat could interpret anything that goes on in the human heart. I know this positively as I have seen Pat do it. And this includes doing the great plays by playwrights as Chekhov, Shaw, Ibsen and Shakespeare. When I think about Pat and the theatre, I just want to weep because it is so tragic. Pat had greatness in her and the American public had little opportunity to see that.²⁷

In 1961, a small part for Pat followed in Breakfast at Tiffany's, a screenplay by George Axelrod and based on the novella by Truman Capote

²⁶ George Shdanoff, interview held at home, Los Angeles, California, May 17, 1974.

²⁷ Alvina Krause, interview held at home, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, July 19, 1974.

and directed by Blake Edwards for Paramount. Pat played the part of "2-E." The story concerns Paul Varjak (George Peppard) who is transformed into a gentleman. He is paid for purely romantic reasons by a rich and beautiful woman, Holly (Audrey Hepburn). It appears that Holly deserves a handsome husband after she is cheated out of the Brazilian millionaire. We see Holly disrupting the sleep of the residents of her East Seventies brownstone with nocturnal bell ringing. She forgets her keys and drives Mr. Yuniosh (Mickey Rooney) into near loss of consciousness. Holly causes Mr. Varjak to be puzzled by her parties, her many boyfriends and her visits to Sing Sing. Holly has a strong attraction for foot-long cigarette holders, a half-furnished apartment with a bathtub-like sofa and a striped alley cat. She also explains that if she could find "a place that makes me feel like Tiffany's, I would buy some furniture and give that cat a name." According to the reviewer, "Patricia Neal is simply cool and brisk in her few appearances as Mr. Peppard's sponsor."²⁸

According to Pat in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, she was most unlike the character "2-E" as she "was not that sort of woman."²⁹

During the early 1960's Pat worked in American and British television. Many programs presented at that time were "live" which required a great deal of rehearsal. On American television, Pat appeared on The Stronger (play of the week, WNTA, 1960), The Magic and the Loss (play of the week, WNTA, 1961) and on Playhouse 90 (CBS).

²⁸ A. H. Weiler, New York Times, October 6, 1961.

²⁹ Patricia Neal, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 16, 1974.

According to Pat, The Stronger was a play in which she did not have one line. It was lovely and Pat had chosen her part. The other girl in the play did nothing but talk, talk, talk to Pat in a restaurant. The woman met Pat and in the end she realized that Pat was having an affair with her husband. Even though Pat did not have a speaking part, she felt her reaction (as a listener) to the girl was fabulous.³⁰

Pat had little recollection of The Magic and the Loss or the roles that she played during Playhouse 90 productions. The writer has been unable to find any information concerning Pat's early television appearances in America.

In English television, Pat played roles in Clash by Night, The Country Girl, The Royal Family, Biography and The Days and Nights of Bee-Bee Fenstermaker. Pat remembered that all these productions were live, requiring intense concentration and extensive rehearsal. They proved to be a frightening experience. Pat loved doing all of the English television productions but particularly felt that in The Days and Nights of Bee-Bee Fenstermaker she gave her best television performance. She liked her role in that play as well as her role in the stage play Suddenly Last Summer better than anything she has done in her life. Although the British Newspaper Library in London has several reviews of Pat's work in British television, they were unavailable at the time of this research.

Named best actress of 1963, Pat won an Oscar for her work in her next picture Hud. Hud, a screenplay by Irving Ravetch and Harriet Frank,

³⁰ Neal, May 16, 1974.

Jr., adapted from a novel by Larry McMurty, was directed by Martin Ritt for Paramount. In Hud Pat was cast along with such notables as Paul Newman, Melvyn Douglas and Brandon de Wilde. The story concerns a "heel" named Hud (Paul Newman) on a Texas ranch. Hud becomes impatient for his father's death (Homer, played by Melvyn Douglas) so he can search the land for oil; he is very caught up in the materialistic world. Also, there is a seventeen-year-old nephew in the story and the conflict evolves around which man will influence him (the nephew, portrayed by Brandon de Wilde). Will it be the high-principled cattleman or the greedy uncle? Alma (Pat) is a slatternly housekeeper. Concerning Pat's performance, Bosley Crowther stated: "Patricia Neal is brilliant as the lonely housekeeper for these men. She is a rangy, hard-bitten slattern with a heart and a dignity of her own."³¹ Judith Crist wrote that her "portrait of a woman who has lived the hard way and retained compassion, dignity and soul, is superb."³²

In viewing the film, the writer felt that Hud offered Pat her best role to date. She presented excellent characterization as a rural housekeeper. Her predicament and difficulties elicited sympathy from the audience. One could not help but empathize with her loneliness.³³

Martin Ritt, the director of Hud, had met Pat when they were both young actors in New York, and he had seen her in Another Part of

³¹Bosley Crowther, New York Times, May 29, 1963.

³²Judith Crist, New York Herald Tribune, May 29, 1963.

³³Hud, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 22, 1974.

the Forest. When he bought McMurty's book and made it into a screenplay, he knew the character (Alma) was a black woman and it was before the time when one could use whites and blacks together sexually. When the part was written, Mr. Ritt did not think of anyone but Pat to play Alma. There was no one that was quite that wry and tough an American as Pat. He had some trouble getting her to do the film as she lived in England and was a devoted wife and mother. Finally, he convinced her to come to America and play the part.³⁴

In a discussion with Mr. Ritt concerning his techniques used in directing Pat in Hud, he did not have to do much because Pat was an extraordinary lady; she understood everything about the plot (that peculiarly American Southwestern humor, that toughness). When the cast arrived in Amarillo and began to rehearse, Mr. Ritt knew right away (a week into rehearsal) that Pat was going to be extraordinary. Asked how he directed her, Ritt replied:

I did not do anything special with Pat other than point in terms where I thought the scenes ought to go. She did the rest. For example, if one had someone as Willy Mays playing center field, one just lets him alone. That was the way I felt about Pat as she was a great actress and would have been without question one of the premier actresses of all time had she not become ill. Pat was as good an actress as I have ever worked with.

I thought Hud was the first film that used Pat in a womanly sense. Even though she played a housekeeper and she played a woman who had been used and hurt, she had a certain kind of dignity. The part in Hud particularly suited Pat and generally a person does her best work when the piece of work she is doing hits some mainline in her. It does not have to be necessarily physical and generally is not; it is generally much more deeply truthful than just physical. Somehow some

³⁴ Martin Ritt, interview held at home, Pacific Palisades, California, March 27, 1975.

mainline in a person's emotional life has been struck. I agree with George Shdanoff and Alvina Krause that Pat could have played any of the great parts as Medea, Lady Macbeth had she had a normal career in the theatre and a normal evolvment from films into theatre.³⁵

Concerning Pat's work at the Actor's Studio, Ritt stated:

I feel that Pat's studying at the Actor's Studio helped her in film acting, particularly in Hud. At the Actor's Studio, they attempted to approach everything internally; that is, from what they considered the real truth of the situation. Sometimes it worked and sometimes it did not. Like all points of view, it was successful when it was successful and when the people employing it were really very good. However, Stanislavsky, who was the originator of the so-called method, went to see all the great actors in the world and sat down and asked, "Why are they great?" And he wrote down why they were great and that became his method of teaching; he was right most of the time. Moreover, Pat understood this method--how to get to the truth of any given situation she was dealing with. She was unafraid as a woman and as an artist; she was unafraid to exhibit herself in any way she felt was right for a scene. And being unafraid is very important, because fundamentally the difference between people who are artists and people who are not is that most artistic people will commit themselves and most other people are more careful. Artists will not equivocate or they will not equivocate at their best. Equivocation is inartistic because even when it is correct, it does not make for anything; it does not allow for the daring of new perceptions. How many artists come out finally to the variety and complexity with which they understand their own perceptions? And complexity is the key word because skill is much easier to achieve. One cannot really achieve complexity of perception as it almost is native; it is like the ability to run a hundred yard dash.³⁶

When asked if Pat learned her skills or was she simply a gifted person, Ritt replied:

Pat was a gifted woman who had a certain kind of genetic make up--a kind of genetic luck. What one does with the genetic luck one is responsible for as a man and as a human being, but the genetic luck itself is really a matter of accident. Pat

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

had the talent to express herself, and talent is some kind of expression of matter. If one assumes that society evolved from single cells which had no specific function in which developed this specific function over millions of years, the ability to see or the ability to hear or smell was developed by the human organism out of need. Assuming that they were all ones--that cellular protoplasm--that was what finally evolved, perhaps talent is somehow connected to that. If certain sensibilities are developed and treated that they themselves are an expression of matter, then these can be used with certain actors and are of value; for example, a highly developed tactile sense. If an actor touched a piece of cloth, certain things could happen in him, but the actor would not understand how they happened.³⁷

Ritt theorized about his ideas concerning the "release of the subjective":

Somewhere in that area (and it varies so enormously) the whole key to the artist is the release of the subjective unquestionably; that is what it is about. Anything that we think of unless we are Einstein or a genius of that nature is something we either heard some place, saw some place or read some place, but when we get a release of the subjective, we get what is highly personal to us, to nobody else. There are no two subjectives in the world that are alike. And when one gets that release, then whatever a person is, whether he is a Tibetan painter of the nineteenth century, whatever comes out is what can only come out from that person, not from anybody else. That is the whole key; that is the key to acting. So the whole game in art is the release of the subjective and that is talent.³⁸

According to Alvina Krause, Pat Neal had that talent. Hud was great. "Even though the film was built around Paul Newman," stated Krause, "the small role that Pat had was the show. That was perfect."³⁹ Long-time Knoxville friend Emily Faust felt Hud was the role where Pat had material she could work with that was quite worthy of her talents.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Krause, July 19, 1974.

Declared Faust, "It was her best role."⁴⁰ Vincent Sherman thought Pat did a magnificent job in Hud. When he saw the film, he "knew she was going to win the Academy Award."⁴¹

Predicting an Oscar for Pat, Richard L. Coe, the Washington Post drama critic, in his "One on the Aisle" column had written:

Knoxville's Patricia Neal deserves an Oscar. Under Martin Ritt's concise direction, Miss Neal brought a strikingly truthful blend of gusto and sadness to a character written by Irving Ravetch and Harriet Frank, Jr. . . . So fully did Miss Neal realize the part's potential, that after seeing her play it, one could not imagine any other actress in the role. It was the definitive performance of a particular role, and it is heartening to find Miss Neal decisively recognized. The final salute should be a springtime Oscar.⁴²

Pat herself believed Hud was the film that achieved for her the most satisfying public acclaim. She stated the following:

Hud was a good film (one of my favorites) and Martin Ritt was a great director. I would like to work with him again. Again, as with Elia Kazan, perhaps this can be attributed to Martin being an actor originally. Even though I did not expect to win an Academy Award in April 1964, I cherish the Oscar. Hud made more money for me than any other film. I realize that I have not been a box office attraction--that people went to see Hud because Paul Newman was in the film.⁴³

However, it was not only the Academy Award Pat won for her performance in Hud; she also won the Best Actress awards of the New York

⁴⁰Emily Faust, interview held at home, Knoxville, Tennessee, October 18, 1974.

⁴¹Vincent Sherman, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, November 28, 1976.

⁴²"People and Parties," The Knoxville News-Sentinel, January 12, 1964.

⁴³Neal, May 16, 1974.

Film Critics, the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures and the British Film Academy.

As Howard Thompson stated, "Oscar or no Oscar, Patricia Neal has brightened many a blighted movie. But she is an actress, not a miracle woman, and even her restrained, unstudied characterization of a blind wife can't save Psyche 59."⁴⁴

Psyche 59, Pat's next picture, a screenplay by Julian Halevy based on the novel by Francoise des Ligneris and directed by Alexander Singer, was presented by Royal Films International in 1964. The story evolves around Alison (Pat) who is braving her traumatic blindness (after a fall during pregnancy). She is the wife of Eric (Curt Jurgens) who is a London businessman. They have two children. Trouble comes when Pat's unruly younger sister Robin (Samantha Eggar) returns. Behind those dark glasses will Pat sense her husband's reaction to her sister's smooth enchantment? Will the wife remember she caught them together just before she blacked out down those stairs? Perhaps that is her psychic block. Toward the end of the story the four main characters are on a holiday in the country. The sister is a young seductress with both men attracted to her.

According to Howard Thompson:

Miss Neal handles herself and those dark glasses gracefully, no mean feat considering the tightrope demands of Julian Halevy's script. Her three colleagues are in there pitching in a strange film that strikes out almost triumphantly.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Howard Thompson, New York Times, April 30, 1964.

⁴⁵Ibid.

In viewing Psyche 59, the writer felt that Pat's role of the blind wife was not too convincing. One has the feeling she really can see. But otherwise, the role is well acted and other elements of characterization are well done--a mature job. Also, Pat was very beautiful and glamorous in the film.⁴⁶

Director Alexander Singer revealed that Psyche 59 came about during a meeting he had with several other people. Singer persuaded the head of the production for Columbia overseas to make the picture. The original story involved three central characters: a husband, a wife and the wife's young sister and a friend of the husband who became a profile character. In the book, the husband was English, the wife and the sister were French and the friend was also English. In discussing the picture with Singer, he stated that he cast the picture according to the characters' nationalities. At first, the cast looked like an extraordinary trio. Then, the executives in charge of the studio made a decision which had no relationship to the project. The executives were given the script and made the following comment to Singer: "No, we know you've got other people for this film, but we want you to cast this picture with Curt Jurgens as the husband and Patricia Neal as the wife." Mr. Singer felt that the change in nationalities of the characters was not ruinous, but it changed some of the content as well as some of the approaches that might have happened. However, it was very hard for Singer to feel tragic about the change in cast. To recruit Patricia Neal was hardly a disaster, as she had

⁴⁶Psyche 59, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 23, 1974.

just received an Academy Award for Hud. He said that Columbia Studio judged that her value to the project would exceed whatever disruption the change in nationalities of the principals might produce. The problem was how to find a young woman to play Pat's sister, a younger sister. After meeting a lot of people and seeing a lot of film, it was decided to cast a relatively unknown girl named Samantha Eggar. She had many of the qualities that Mr. Singer thought the character required. And Curt Jurgens was involved because the studio had made a multiple picture deal with him involving several projects, so his rightness for the piece was never a matter to them.⁴⁷

According to Mr. Singer:

If it were a matter to him, it was of no consequence as most of the time a film is a commercial event. If something good happens out of the film, it is surprising--it is almost accidental. Most films are not marked by individuality because they are not made by individuals. They are group efforts and they originate out of commercial considerations that have little to do with artistic consideration. Psyche 59 was that kind of film--not because I wanted it to be but because I had no other choice.⁴⁸

In approaching the picture, Mr. Singer was confronted with many problems. One problem concerned his cameraman who was an Academy Award winner. The cameraman had never worked in a studio before; he had only made pictures on location and Psyche 59 was predominately a studio picture, thus it was a harsh adjustment to make. Even though the cameraman was extraordinary, he had little experience in beautifying women. In none of the films he had previously filmed had he the problem

⁴⁷ Alexander Singer, interview at home, Los Angeles, California, November 27, 1976.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

of making a female star look beautiful. With his own good judgment and competency, and Pat's beauty, he solved the problem. Still another problem at Shepherdson Studio in England was that both Becket and Psyche 59 were being shot simultaneously. Since Becket was enormous, a big-budget picture and got the first call on good people, the crew, etc., Mr. Singer got what was left over for Psyche 59. What was left over in an English crew had to be seen to be believed. Another problem concerned a Jamaican electrician who had gotten off the boat a few weeks before and was unable to communicate with the cameraman. This was not known until one day the cameraman literally started crying on the set because an electrician up in the grids above the set did not understand him. Singer alleged that it was a miracle that the electrician had not fallen out of the scaffolding and killed either himself or somebody else. As a director, Mr. Singer had never encountered these kinds of problems before and this became a frustrating experience. Consequently, Singer spent more time with technological problems than he did with the actors. Another problem involved the young woman playing the sister who was inexperienced and seemed "psychologically unwilling" to put forth her best effort. Mr. Singer stated whatever it was, she was not doing her best. He felt she was seldom giving the level of performance that he thought was necessary. Consequently, the picture was shaped by these events. Singer did feel that Pat became an inspiration to the young actress playing her sister (Samantha Eggar). Because Samantha had many scenes with Pat, the young actress was compelled to strive for the level of performance which Pat achieved.⁴⁹

⁴⁹Ibid.

As far as directing Pat, Mr. Singer did not spend much time with her. Said Singer:

I had the feeling that Pat felt she was not getting as much attention, as much time as she should have. However, I had to make a priority list to take care of items that needed immediate attention. Pat needed the least attention. Since it was inherent in the book and script the story was a pathetic soap opera, when the subject matter was treated seriously, there were some real problems. However, Pat did most of her work just from her own intuition of interpreting the part. The process that occurred was a series of conventional steps. Pat read the script, a couple of things happened, and there was a conference with her; then, there was the rehearsal which was very little. The rehearsal that seemed most valuable was the rehearsal on the set with the props and the physical forms that the actors moved around. This was particularly important to Pat because she was playing someone who had psychosomatically lost her sight which is a tough theme to handle; the movements around the set were particularly meaningful to such a person. I felt that the amount of rehearsal on the set before the scene was committed to film and the amount of subsequent discussion about the problems in a given scene probably was less than Pat was used to. I felt the time spent in a scene before the filming was the most valuable time. However, time was not allowable in a low-budget picture as Psyche 59.⁵⁰

As a director, Mr. Singer realized that he did not have a terribly good piece of material and knew there would be some problems in terms of interpretation, in terms of behavior and in terms of making things believable or compelling.⁵¹ Singer further stated the following concerning the picture:

It so happened that every scene that Pat was in had a measure of conviction about it, a measure of caring about it that was very special. There were elements in the book that made that theme more consistent with the fabric. The book was outright grande gingyo. Since the qualities that were attractive about the project were qualities that neither I nor my performers had stomach for, Pat tended to give her part the sense of

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

reality and conviction that was almost in contrast to, in contradiction of, the essential unreality of the piece and its material. Whatever worked in the piece, I thought was a triumph of little bits and pieces that worked in isolation, separately and a flash of a convincing performance or a convincing moment for the most part. Everybody around Pat enjoyed her enormously and she had quite marvelous presence on the set. The feeling that Pat brought to the film gave the piece a different kind of weight than it would have with the original planned cast. It was important to the story that the character Alison be a very attractive woman. Pat had that extraordinary face with marvelous bones; it was simply a case of getting it on film as reasonably as possible. Pat brought a sense of conviction to everything in the piece. She had a very convincing relationship to the woman that played her mother in the piece, to the grandmother (Beatrix Lehmann) who in effect was a powerful actress. Miss Lehmann was very special and the scenes with her and Pat were great fun to do.⁵²

Mr. Singer felt everyone struggled dutifully to make something come alive that resisted the process. Declared Singer: "It required a kind of very special courage to go into something, struggling with it daily, knowing or feeling that it would not quite work, but that one would do the very best he could." He added, "This was characteristic of Pat's whole attack on life and everything she did. Despite the film's limitations--problems--there was something about it that was curiously haunting. The film had atmosphere; the atmosphere was intentional as they worked for it." He felt that Pat's performance which had been central to the piece probably threw a kind of awed coloration on the whole work and certainly helped make it work enormously. Singer commented: "The whole experience in making Psyche 59 was not a particularly satisfying one for Pat as this was not a part that her power or strength as a person could really be used. There were times when Pat's

⁵²Ibid.

resources as an actress made a moment memorable or significant despite the material.⁵³

Mr. Singer recalled the reviewer Andrew Saris in The Greenwich Village Voice who commented on Psyche 59 and who liked the picture in spite of itself. What he particularly liked was Patricia Neal and he was very moved by her performance. Both Mr. Saris and Mr. Singer are New Yorkers. Mr. Saris told the story that when Mr. Singer and Stanley Kubrick were growing up in the Bronx and had just gotten out of high school that Alex Singer wanted to make a film and his enthusiasm for the film was one of the things that got Stanley Kubrick started in motion pictures. The film that Mr. Singer wanted to make was Homer's Illiad. Mr. Saris then said, "Alex, I just want to tell you for your own information that one close-up of Patricia Neal is worth a whole rank--a serried rank--of Homeric heroes."⁵⁴

Mr. Singer wished that the roles Pat had been given might have explored other areas of her resources as an actress. He stated:

Being the good person is very often the least interesting part in a show. The most interesting parts are not the good women. They are not the simple villains either, but they are parts that are the most complex, the most fun to do. I felt that Pat wanted (as most actresses) to get the best parts, the richest, the most varied and the most colorful ones. Because of a quality that Pat projected both on the screen and to a certain extent in real life, the tendency was to think of her as a warm, deeply responsive, caring person who was very genuine. It is a rare time in film where such a figure--or in literature generally--where such a figure has a good part. In theatre, it usually is not the case. That Pat had made this sort of reputation that she had with those parts was an index--it was a kind

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

of triumph because they were not the parts that work to build a reputation to achieve the level of excitement that stamps an actress as very special. It was a kind of triumph of hers that she has done this. I just wished that I had had more in the part of Psyche 59 for her so that we both could have been tested more in terms of stretching ourselves--to explore our resources more fully. I doubt that Pat has ever really been tested dramatically.⁵⁵

Regarding Pat's ability as an actress, Singer stated:

Pat did have some kind of special quality (just as Gary Cooper and Humphrey Bogart had) that came across on the screen. There was a projection of personality that came off the screen and preceded her; it was not intrinsic in the script because she rose above the material consistently. Most great actors or great screen personalities have survived bad scripts, in-different directing, poor films--they seemed to stand apart; something came off the screen that lay outside the material. This was true of Pat and the things that came across were a sense of authentic engagement with a real person.⁵⁶

However, Mr. Singer believed that talent is involved with the creative process. He stated the following:

There is a high measure of creativity, a high measure of creativity at birth in almost all human beings. It is an aspect that is frustrated and destroyed or dampened or buried very early. By the time most people are six, they have had it in terms of growth, in terms of change, in terms of creativity. Fortunately, Pat Neal's creativity sustained itself through adulthood. Also, the creative folk tend to examine their lives endlessly over and over again. It is an endless process where the unexamined life is the life that has not been lived.⁵⁷

Regarding why Pat Neal has never been a box office attraction, Mr. Singer stated the following:

Few people have. I feel that box office people, people with very big popular successes fulfill some kind of fantasy of the audience, a very wide scale fantasy of the audience, for

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

the most part. There are stars, female and male, who have in the past been very attractive to large numbers of people all over the world. They are almost always in the position of a kind of God-like myth, a mythic attractiveness, a fantasy attractiveness--they are the god and goddesses of the world. However, Pat has always seemed too real, too authentic, too human, to be the material of fantasy. Unless an actress is the material of fantasy, she probably will not be that great box office phenomenon.⁵⁸

In conclusion, Singer stated:

I remember Pat on the set of Psyche 59 as a bulwark of strength and someone I did not have to worry about. This was unfortunate because I wished in this project that I had been more able to use her full range of powers. I recognize that Pat Neal as an actress has become part of the interior values of millions of people over all the world. Perhaps that might have been one of the reasons her parts have consistently been of "good" people; therefore, she has been typecast. With affection, I remember Pat in her rose garden with her children and with her husband.⁵⁹

An element of luck seems to play a part in every career--being at the right place at the right time. Pat admitted the following concerning luck:

I admit I have been lucky; however, I have had unlucky moments in my life--one such moment was accepting the part in Psyche 59. When I accepted the part in Psyche 59, I was wanted for a part in another picture. I thought I could do them both, but I was wrong. When I said I would do Psyche 59, I lost the part in the other picture to Anne Bancroft. I regretted that I did not take the part in the other picture and decline the part in Psyche 59--that was my worst mistake--one of the unlucky moments in my life.⁶⁰

A lucky moment occurred in 1965 when Pat found herself under the direction of Otto Preminger in In Harm's Way, a screenplay by Wendell Mayes and based on the novel by James Bassett for Paramount. Pat was

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Neal, May 16, 1974.

cast opposite such notables as John Wayne, Henry Fonda, Kirk Douglas, Burgess Meredith, Brandon de Wilde and Carroll O'Connor. The story concerns naval action in the Pacific during World War II. The admiral (Henry Fonda) who is in command of the Pacific theatre is very concerned about naval operations. Also, Rock who is a captain (John Wayne) is followed from the attack on Pearl Harbor to the big smashing battle at the end of the war. He undergoes numerous experiences. He is temporarily beached after the nightmare of Pearl Harbor, and then is placed in charge of the island-hopping task force, to a blazing sea battle. Eddington (Kirk Douglas) who is an executive officer rapes his son's fiancée (a Navy nurse played by Jill Haworth). The rape causes the nurse to commit suicide. Maggie, another nurse, is played by Pat. In effect, the private lives of men and women are contrasted with their lives in combat. John Wayne, Kirk Douglas and Patricia Neal star in this action drama depicting the uphill struggle of the U. S. naval forces following the Pearl Harbor attack. Bosley Crowther stated, "Patricia Neal is weary and wistful as the nurse who attends Mr. Wayne."⁶¹

In viewing In Harm's Way, the writer felt that Pat (the female lead) had a good "meaty" part. She played the nurse who fell in love with the leading man, John Wayne. Pat did an excellent job. Her facial expressions were excellent. She was very convincing as a nurse who had fallen in love.⁶²

⁶¹Bosley Crowther, New York Times, April 7, 1965.

⁶²In Harm's Way, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 27, 1974.

Next, Pat was cast in the film Seven Women under John Ford's direction. However on February 17, 1965, she suffered a stroke. Pat recalled that she had been working on the picture for about four or five days. She remembered John Ford as a lovely director whom she adored. She recalled that she had been rehearsing and Mildred Dunnock, who was in the film with her, brought her home. Pat did not remember much about that particular day.⁶³

However, Mildred Dunnock remembered that Pat was staying in Pacific Palisades (renting Martin Ritt's house) and she had taken Pat home that afternoon as Pat did not drive. When Pat's husband (Roald) called Miss Dunnock and told her that Pat had had an aneurysm, it was 12:30 a.m. and Miss Dunnock was in a deep sleep. However, she finally realized what Roald had said and made her way to U. C. L. A. Hospital.

According to Miss Dunnock:

I found it a very strange night as I made my way through the hospital. The corridors were all darkened with low lights that just lit my feet so I moved very strangely. When I identified myself at the nurses' station, I was led to an office where as the door opened, a cloud of smoke greeted me. Inside was Pat's agent as well as all the people involved with her career. However, Roald was in the waiting room where I found him. The doctors were operating; however, after the operation, everyone had to wait for twenty-one days while Pat was in intensive care. She was unconscious all this time.⁶⁴

Miss Dunnock recalled vividly the event of the twenty-first day:

⁶³Neal, May 16, 1974.

⁶⁴Mildred Dunnock, interview held at her home, South Norwalk, Connecticut, November 9, 1974.

I went to see Pat on this day. While I was visiting, Roald slapped Pat's face good and hard and said, "It's Millie! It's Millie! Suddenly Pat turned her head; it was moving, very exciting, wonderful. Of course, it was a phenomenon--her persistence and her health and Roald's absolute determination that Pat was going to live. And so she did. However, Anne Bancroft replaced Pat in Seven Women.⁶⁵

Miss Dunnock was amazed with the number of people who identified with Pat and recalled the following incident:

A total stranger came down from Montreal with a crucifix that had been blessed by the Pope. He never got near Pat's room. He just came and left the crucifix and that was all he wanted to do.⁶⁶

Miss Dunnock thought that Pat was an extraordinary kind of personality which communicated itself with love and beauty to people and that was why she must never stop working.⁶⁷

Pat Neal was a determined woman--her indomitable will had prevailed in a long, checkered career of stage productions and films--some near great roles and some mediocre ones. In all of them she had displayed a courage, resolve and commitment which were unique qualities of stardom--now, she was to meet her greatest test.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

RECENT FILMS, TELEVISION ROLES AND COMMERCIALS

Despite the gravity of Pat's illness and the long, arduous recovery which it imposed, the actress accepted the task with the same resolve and determination which had characterized her acting career. A U. C. L. A. Hospital nurse, Jean Alexander, commented that the first time she saw Pat after her stroke, she knew her patient was going to make it. Miss Alexander described Patricia as a delightful, "queenlike" patient whose regal demeanor and gracious warmth made her a delight to care for. "Of course," added the nurse, "she had her bad days when she was more aware of her speech limitations and inability to express herself. On those occasions she showed some frustration and anger, but she never lashed out at anyone."¹

Pat's continuing resolve, courage and ability to compose herself under pressure is demonstrated in an ordeal that involved a fall in her home during her convalescence. One evening she had fallen and received a scalp laceration. Badly shaken, she was being calmed by husband Roald as the nurses, Jean and Gloria, dressed the wound. In the midst of the excitement their phone rang. Roald answered and after a brief conversation called to Pat: "It's Otto Preminger. Shape up now and pull yourself together. He wants to talk with you."

¹ Jean Alexander, interview held at the Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 17, 1974.

Pat quickly took the phone and with evident composure and control spoke to the famous director: "Otto, darling! How are you? It's lovely to hear your voice."²

Pat's ability to recover her speech and affect such composure under stress was a direct effect of her long years of discipline, receptiveness and quickness in learning--all essentials to effective acting, according to husband Roald.³

Pat's return to the screen was in the film The Subject Was Roses. Memphis correspondent Edwin Howard wrote:

In The Subject Was Roses, she doesn't portray suffering; she defines the triumph and joy of overcoming, enduring and just plain being alive.⁴

The Subject Was Roses, a screenplay by Frank D. Gilroy based on his Broadway play, was directed by Ulu Grosbard and produced by Edgar Lansbury for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. The story concerns a family by the name of Cleary and takes place in the Bronx. The action begins at the breakfast table where Nettie Cleary (Pat) and John Cleary (Jack Albertson) are drinking coffee. The drinking of coffee becomes symbolic as all of the family's disagreements center around it. Mr. Cleary seems to be the "life of the party" to everyone except at home. He claims the coffee is too weak. Timmy (Martin Sheen), their son who has just received an honorable discharge from the army, joins them. He claims the coffee is too strong. Timmy seems to be the

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Edwin Howard, "Class of '43 Honors Patricia Neal," The Memphis Press-Scimitar, May 22, 1973.

weapon that husband and wife use against one another. Near the end of the film, Nettie decides to leave home and take a bus ride. As the film concludes, we see her walking along the beach.

According to Vincent Canby who obviously liked the actress but not the play:

Miss Neal's presense--after her long illness--gives the movie an emotional impact it wouldn't otherwise have. She has a slight limp, but nothing has impaired the husky voice, the large magnificent eyes that listen as well as see or the over-all screen intelligence. She has, in fact, simply too much style and wit for this kind of monosyllabic nonsense.⁵

In viewing the film The Subject Was Roses, the writer felt Pat was great in this--probably her best role. She gave good to excellent characterization and was probably every bit as good as she was in Hud. Considering her handicaps (her first picture since her illness), this was probably the best acting she had done in her entire career.⁶

According to Ulu Grosbard (the director of The Subject Was Roses), he met Pat for the first time when he and the producer went to England to ask her to do the part. Mr. Grosbard had seen her in various films and liked her very much as an actress. He had wanted her to play the part of the wife in the Broadway production; however, at that time, Pat was unavailable as she was filming In Harm's Way. Although Grosbard worried about Pat's memory, he was determined to risk it because he had such a high regard for her talent. Accordingly,

⁵Vincent Canby, New York Times, October 14, 1968.

⁶The Subject Was Roses, Library of Congress Film Collection, August 23, 1974.

he cast her in the role. After the first couple of days, recalled Grosbard, when Pat got over the first hurdle of being under the pressure of the camera, she really rose to the occasion and to the challenge. Jean Alexander helped her memorize the lines. Commented Grosbard, "Pat worked very hard and when the cameras started to roll, it was like putting a good horse in a horse race. Occasionally, she "blew" a line, but she came back into the scene, did it over again and dealt with it in a wonderful way, as if she were doing it for the first time."⁷

In reference to technique, Grosbard felt Pat responded very well to directions, was able to work spontaneously and met the demands of the character. "She was certainly able to do what the part required her to do and did it wonderfully," added the director. "Because of her terrific training at this point, with a number of years behind her as an actress, acting came naturally to her. The remarkable thing was that she was able to deal with pressure in the way a good actress always does; she was able to relax in a scene and her concentration was terrific. She was able to go back again and again and improve with each 'take.'" A great advantage to Pat was the support of two very good actors, Jack Albertson and Martin Sheen, who liked her and who had portrayed the same roles on Broadway. Pat was the one character in the production who was new. In further discussing The Subject Was

⁷ Ulu Grosbard, interview held at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studio, Culver City, California, May 27, 1975.

Roses, Mr. Grosbard felt the role in the film was more demanding than her role in Hud.⁸

Playing opposite Pat was Jack Albertson. He recalled many problems during the earlier stages of rehearsals because of Pat's faulty memory due to her illness. Jack and Martin became very fond of Pat; their relationship became more intimate as they realized "what a wonderful person and what a great actress she was." Jack discovered that being very firm on the set was the best way to treat Pat, to show her no pity and to give her "no quarter." So both Jack and Martin treated Pat as someone who was quite normal physically, realizing that she did not want any sympathy or pity and that she refused to recognize any handicaps. During the filming there was a problem with dancing. Pat and Martin waltz around, and because of Pat's limp, she has problems with her leg. Then, her husband grabs her and wrestles. However, it was difficult for her husband to try to hold her up at the same time he was throwing her down which was an interesting physical thing to do. At that time Pat weighed almost as much as Jack; therefore, Jack had much difficulty with the scene. The limp was noticeable in the beginning of the film where Pat was walking across the street as well as when she was on the beach. Jack was also impressed with Pat's unusual voice. Her distinctive voice, her ability to portray her innermost depth of emotions and her professional techniques persuaded Jack that Patricia Neal was an uncommon actress! According to Jack, not to see the technique was a test of good acting. Jack

⁸Ibid.

noticed in his work with Pat that she was a realistic actress in that there contained a certain naturalness about her performance that transcended most of the actresses he had worked with.⁹

Concerning the picture Jack felt:

The kind of role Pat played in The Subject Was Roses was a universal situation with problems between the father and mother and between the parents and the child. It was the kind of picture that could have played in any country in any language. I found the scene on the rooftop incredible as Pat had a monologue and she read this long monologue from cards, as it was too long for her to remember. She read it beautifully and one never saw her eyes flicker in the direction of the cards; it was almost unbelievable that she was reading it.¹⁰

A tribute was paid to Pat by Pearl Bailey in New York when Miss Bailey appeared in Hello Dolly. At the end of the performance, Miss Bailey introduced Pat and Jack Albertson, the stars of The Subject Was Roses. The audience gave Pat a standing ovation. Jack felt that this was a very sweet and wonderful moment in show business to show this love and affection for Pat. As Miss Bailey has expressed to the writer, Patricia Neal is Love.¹¹

When Jean Alexander discovered Pat was cast in The Subject Was Roses, she went to see the play. She was concerned whether Pat could do the part as there were only three main characters. There was minimal scenery, nothing to divert the audience if Pat did not perform reasonably well. Miss Alexander knew Pat could act, but this was a difficult

⁹Jack Albertson, interview held at CBS Studio, Los Angeles, California, March 28, 1975.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Pearl Bailey to Barbara Darling, Northridge, California, April 25, 1975.

role for her return to the screen. Then, Jean spoke with Pat's doctor shortly before attending the premiere and he said, "I guess they have had quite a bit of difficulty filming with Pat, difficulty with her remembering the lines." Jean felt someone had given the doctor the wrong information. Before the premiere, Jean and Pat attended a dinner hosted by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer with many Hollywood notables attending. So apprehensive was Jean that during the film she noticed everything including the thumb that stuck out on Pat's right hand as well as Pat's walk.¹²

In viewing the film Nurse Alexander stated:

During the first hour I thought it was going all right. Half way through the film I thought Pat was doing a good job. Near the end of the film there was a beautiful shot of Pat through the bus window on her way to the beach. Then Pat got out of the bus and started walking along the ocean. At this time I started to cry because Pat was working so hard not to limp. It was not just the fact that I was impressed with Pat's strength in trying not to limp, but I was impressed with her facial expressions as they were just marvelous. Also, the entire body was filmed--not just the upper part. Pat was carrying a handbag--the viewer saw her; the cameras "panned in" to her face and then they pulled back. Pat was shown walking. The director did not try to say, "Well, we know she's got this limp so we'll film her from the waist up." Since Pat was shown full length, the viewer could see the courage of this woman. I saw the determination in Pat's face to make that leg work as well as she could. I was very impressed. Because this scene was so touching, it overwhelmed me emotionally and I shall never forget it as long as I live.¹³

Jack Albertson objected to the bus scene and Pat's beach walk. He felt the scene was irrelevant, arguing that it would have been better for the film audience to wonder what his wife had done for those twelve

¹²Alexander, May 17, 1974.

¹³Ibid.

hours. Another objection Mr. Albertson had concerned a scene in the play that was not included in the film. In the play, his wife tells her husband that she met a man in the lobby of a hotel. Her husband responds, "Stop that! Stop it!" as he does not want to hear. However, in the film the viewer does not know what happened. In the play, the viewer knows in that particular period of time what happened to the money and where it had gone. Mr. Albertson felt that this is a problem with motion pictures in that the play is never as strong on film as the play is on the stage; everything is too explicit in the film.¹⁴

After Pat had made The Subject Was Roses, the crew, characteristically unemotional and not subject to such overt expression, gave Pat a beautiful pin with roses on it.¹⁵

Pat's own recollection of the film was a warm one. She loved doing The Subject Was Roses (it remains one of her favorite films), even though she felt the situation in the story could never happen to her. She enjoyed working with both Jack Albertson and Martin Sheen. Her greatest regret was the The Subject Was Roses did not make more money.¹⁶

Knoxville theatre patron Emily Faust thought The Subject Was Roses was excellent. She saw the film several times on television and alleged that "it grew on me." "It was only after seeing the film again and again that I realized how good Pat was. She worked very hard on

¹⁴Albertson, March 28, 1975.

¹⁵Patricia Neal, interview held at Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 17, 1974.

¹⁶Ibid.

that fine role," commented Mrs. Faust.¹⁷ George Shdanoff also praised Pat's performance. He thought she was "magnificent" in this picture. "She gave a mature, excellent performance, and the growth and development of Patricia Neal from the beginning until today is astounding," commented Shdanoff. He added that he expected it, however, because he felt she was one of the greatest talents he had come across since he has been in this country.¹⁸

Pat's next film The Road Builder, made in 1970, was written especially for her by her husband Roald Dahl. The film was directed by Alastair Reid and produced by Alan Courtney and Norman Powell (Youngstreet-Tactitus Production for MGM). Pat stars as Maura, a middle-aged woman with a neurological deficit--a speech impediment; she helps people with speech therapy at a hospital. Maura lives in seclusion with her mother (Pamela Brown) who is blind. Along comes Billy (Nickolas Clay), a twenty-four-year-old man on a motorbike who brings excitement and love of a tragic, frightening kind into Maura's life.

Important to the story is the setting--an enormous ugly mansion covered with Gothic towers. The film is called The Road Builder as Billy comes to where Pat and her mother are living in this large run-down English home looking for odd jobs. He comes on a motorbike. In the past, Billy has killed several women in order to achieve sexual satisfaction. At one of his killings, he buries the girl in a site where

¹⁷Emily Faust, interview held at home, Knoxville, Tennessee, October 18, 1974.

¹⁸George Shdanoff, interview held at home, Knoxville, Tennessee, May 17, 1974.

a road is being constructed, buries her where the workmen are going to pour cement the next day. In the past Maura had had a romance, but her mother prevented her from going with the man. She is not missing the chance this time as she is in love with Billy. Maura and Billy go to Scotland and there, as husband and wife, they enjoy a very blissful relationship. Suddenly, again Billy has the idea to kill another woman as he leaves on his motorbike. He always goes on his motorbike to do all his bad deeds. Maura recognizes his problems, gets in front of him on the road and Billy on his motorbike goes off the cliff.

Jean Alexander, who helped Pat work on her part, thought it was a great part for Pat but a disappointing film. She commented that the cast thought Pat was a great professional--a great star--as good as ever!¹⁹

A film similar to The Road Builder is Baxter, Pat's next film. The story concerns a young boy who has emotional difficulties and he becomes psychotic. Pat plays the speech therapist whose skill and sympathy is used to rescue the boy brought to the edge of insanity by his divorced parents. Pat's role is one of supporting actress while Lynn Carlin's role is the mother of the boy.

While there is little information available regarding the film Baxter, informant Jean Alexander thought that although Baxter was a marvelous film without violence, she was also forced to acknowledge that it lacked action as well as adventure.²⁰

¹⁹Alexander, May 17, 1974.

²⁰Ibid.

In 1971 it was Earl Hamner, Jr., who wrote the special called "The Homecoming: A Christmas Story," which was televised and later became the basis of "The Waltons." Mr. Hamner was the creator and the executive producer. The story concerns Olivia (Pat) and her seven children who prepare for Christmas Eve, 1933. Their eagerness for the evening slowly turns to fear as the roads are icy and Olivia is waiting for her long overdue husband.

Originally the book was sent to Pat, then the script. Pat was asked to play the wife Olivia. Pat loved that name as she had named her eldest daughter Olivia; however, when Pat appeared on the set to play the mother, the name Olivia had been changed. Pat was very angry and threatened to quit. Consent from Twentieth Century Fox had to be obtained to change the mother's name back to Olivia. Pat stated that she loved playing the wife and she adored her children.²¹

In viewing "The Homecoming," the writer felt Pat was quite capable in the role of farm wife. She seemed to fit that role. Witnessing her later television film, Things in Their Season, and earlier film, Hud (no wife in Hud but the role of a farm woman), Pat seemed to understand the toil, trials and tribulations of farm life. In "The Homecoming," she played the role with consummate conviction.²²

According to Alvina Krause, Pat's former acting teacher at Northwestern, we have an excellent example of Pat's acting--of what she can do. Even though the plot concerns a simple story of a family, a woman

²¹ Neal, May 17, 1974.

²² "The Homecoming: A Christmas Story," WTOP, December 8, 1974.

and her children waiting for her husband to come home on Christmas Eve, we see Pat give a beautiful performance. As a result, what does she get from the children? Miss Krause never saw such beautiful child acting as in that show, so fresh is their response to Pat. Miss Krause feels it is our tragedy that there is no theatre for Pat in this country.²³

Pat feels that one of the greatest disappointments in her career was that she was not selected to play the mother in "The Waltons." For a long time the children in the series regarded Pat as their mother.²⁴ As of this date no one including Vincent Sherman, Alvina Krause or Emily Faust understands why Pat was not selected for "The Waltons" after she had completed "The Homecoming." Whether she was even considered for the series still remains a mystery.

After making two films in England, Pat's next film Happy Mother's Day, Love, George was filmed in Nova Scotia. This film was directed by Darren McGavin. While Pat played the part of the mother, Pat's daughter Tessa made her movie debut in this film. According to Pat, she felt her daughter Tessa gave a better performance than she. However, Pat did not regard Happy Mother's Day, Love, George a good film. When the film was shown in New York, Pat claimed it received bad notices.²⁵

Perhaps most of the younger population knows Patricia Neal through her Maxim coffee commercials and television roles. During the early 1970's Pat made several Maxim commercials.

²³Alvina Krause, interview held at home, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, July 19, 1974.

²⁴Neal, May 17, 1974.

²⁵Ibid.

Pat is aware that thousands of people have seen her through the Maxim commercials and she has established a reputation. When the writer asked Pat whether doing commercials enhanced her image, she replied:

It's a hard thing to do, but they wanted me to do it. I love the coffee. However, since I've been doing the commercials, I've become a lot more famous than I was with all the films I did, all the television and all the plays. I walk the streets and people recognize me. It's very odd, but it happens. It's good for me, except I don't like to be known as "Maxim Coffee."²⁶

Pat commented that she did not think the Oscar award influenced Maxim to use her in the commercials. Nevertheless, Pat enjoyed making these commercials and has enjoyed the notoriety attached.²⁷

Emily Faust, Pat's first acting teacher, felt that Pat was very successful in her commercials and that they were well received. According to Mrs. Faust, people who have never known Pat or seen her in a film or on the stage know her from Maxim.²⁸

Pat has made several films for television. Among them was one presented as The Night Digger made in 1971. This was based on the film called The Road Builder written by Roald Dahl. The story of The Night Digger concerns a lonely middle-aged woman filled with bitterness who tries to protect a mysterious young handyman, Billy, from the law even though she knows he is responsible for a string of brutal killings.

The writer viewed the mother as dictatorial and malicious. She tells friends that Billy is her great nephew--a figment of her

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Faust, October 18, 1974.

imagination because his family name is the same as her sister's husband. Both sister and husband are now dead. There is no record of the child ever mentioned. Maura (Pat), an adopted daughter at age fifteen, is submissive to her mother and an overworked domestic slave. Maura eventually rebels when her mother (after a heart attack) in the hospital orders Maura to send Billy away. Maura, now in love with Billy, knows his problems; she draws savings out of the bank and persuades Billy, her "beautiful man," to flee with her to Scotland. (She tells her mother before leaving that she is not her daughter and her mother has never let her forget it.) Billy deserts Maura when she has an aneurysm after living with him for five months. They were to be married the day of the aneurysm. However, Billy, the handyman killer, plays the harmonica before each murder. Billy kills a neighbor and he is killed as he flees from Maura (realizing she knows she may be the next victim). The writer felt that the story was not too far-fetched from a detective story. Again, this was a very good part for Pat to play; her characterization as Maura was very convincing.²⁹

On November 27, 1974, Things in Their Season was presented on television. The drama was written by John Gay and directed by James Goldstone. However, the title was taken from a poem written by Stephen Vincent Benet. The story concerns the Kroehler family; Karl (Ed Flanders), a dairy farmer who appears to be in love with the work ethic and with his farm; Peg (Pat), a wife who was never the belle of the barn dance and has learned not to make any emotional demands on

²⁹The Night Digger, WDCA, April 23, 1975.

her mate; Andy (Marc Singer), a son who wants to get away from the home place, largely because his father is one to take a job well done for granted and to be impatient with any sort of shortcoming. Pat as the farmwoman discovers that she does not have long to live. She has kept family and farm together. Once she accepts her doctor's diagnosis of leukemia ("but only this morning I drove the tractor for an hour!"), she sets about trying to find some way for Karl to keep on running the farm without her ("this farm is all there is--it means everything in the world to him").

According to Tom Donnelly:

Ed Flanders and Marc Singer give solid performances as father and son but Patricia Neal makes this a real occasion. She was always a powerful presence, even in her beginning years as an actress, though neither she nor Hollywood (certainly not Hollywood) could seem to figure out a rational career for her. Now, with all mannerisms and excess burned away, she is strong and true and moving; she shows us how eloquent simplicity can be.³⁰

In viewing the program, the writer felt Pat looked as if she had had a hard life of toil.³¹ Pat was well made up and looked every inch the workworn farm woman. Her acting was convincing--an excellent job of professionalism--little evidence of her handicaps, i.e., right hand and leg. Pat was convincing in speech and deed. The average working farm woman has little conversation while she works--keeps her thoughts to herself--seldom questions her husband's decisions. Most farm wives know how important the farm is to the husband. It is their excuse for existence. Pat conveyed the reality of this with no doubt or hint of

³⁰Tom Donnelly, "A Sensitive Season," The Washington Post, November 27, 1974, Sec. WE, p. 1.

³¹Things in Their Season, WTOP, November 27, 1974.

doubt. And she conveyed a deep love of the land where she had spent her adult life.³²

Presented on television for the first time in 1975 was Run, Stranger, Run. The film, made in 1973, stars Pat and Cloris Leachman. The drama was directed in Nova Scotia by Darren McGavin. The story concerns a New England fishing village which is shaken by a series of murders.³³

In a two-part television story, Pat made her appearance again as a farm wife on the series "Little House on the Prairie." Pat portrays a terminally ill widow who must find a home for her three children in the short time she has to live. Part I of a two-part drama was written and directed by Michael Landon. This was not a very demanding role for Pat. Pat was competent and able as usual. However, she died as Part I ended.³⁴

In November 1975 the Hall of Fame presented Eric based on Doris Lund's bestseller Eric. Eric Swenson (John Savage) is an active athletic youth who is stricken by leukemia. Fighting for life, Eric attends college, plays soccer and even falls in love. He undergoes painful relapses, powerful drugs and long hospital stays. It is the love for life that helps this family endure their grief. Doris Lund wrote in the true story about her son that inspired this drama, "The things he

³²Ibid.

³³Run, Stranger, Run, WMAL, February 11, 1975.

³⁴"Little House on the Prairie," WRC, November 5, 1975.

gave all of us would never be lost." Pat played the mother, Lois Swensen. As usual, Pat gave a fine performance.³⁵

Pat played a different role--that of Senator Margaret Chase Smith--in her next television film Tail Gunner Joe, presented in February 1977. The story concerns the rise and fall of the late Senator Joseph McCarthy and traces McCarthy's political career from its Wisconsin beginnings to the senatorial term that ended in disgrace. Pat had a small part in the film and was cast along with such notables as Burgess Meredith, Jean Stapleton, John Forsythe and Ned Beatty. Pat as Senator Smith delivers the famous "Declaration of Conscience" speech against McCarthy's reckless tactics. The writer was unable to find any reviews of Pat's performance.³⁶

Because of Pat's miraculous recovery from her illness, she has given thousands of people who are ill courage and inspiration. Many organizations and rehabilitation centers have asked for Pat's support of their various programs. Pat gave such support in September 1977 when she narrated a program for television concerning the handicapped entitled "Including Me."

According to the reviewer:

Though narrated by a too-preachy Patricia Neal, the program movingly details six cases of handicapped children who were accepted into the educational system and were able to function productively. There is a slight truth-blurring problem with the show in that some scenes were re-staged for the camera out of sequence and others are pure documentary footage. But the particulars are real and their message important.

³⁵Eric, WRC, November 10, 1975.

³⁶Tail Gunner Joe, WRC, February 6, 1977.

"Including Me" will make implementation of the law a smoother process for school boards, teachers and students as well.³⁷

One of the many programs presented as a Bicentennial observance was "The Kent Family Chronicles: The Bastard." The author of the fictional American family, the Kents, is John Jakes whose first novel in the series was The Bastard. This novel concerns a family patriarch, Phillipe Charboneau. This two-part program, the opener, which is filled with love and adventure, begins in France in 1771. Phillipe (Andrew Stevens), then seventeen, learns his true identity. He is the illegitimate son of the dying Duke of Kentland and is heir to half of the British nobleman's estate. He discovers this fact through his innkeeper mother (Pat). In Part I they journey to England, hoping to claim Phillipe's inheritance. However, the Duchess of Kentland stands in their way and so does the Duke's legitimate son. Pat's role of Phillipe's mother was convincing. It evoked the viewer's sympathy for her struggle to obtain a good life for her son.³⁸

As a recent tribute to Pat, the city of Knoxville presented a Patricia Neal Homecoming Festival in October 1978. One part of the celebration included a salute to Pat held on October 19 at the Tennessee Theatre. At this time there was an organ salute to Pat, a slide presentation entitled The Patricia Neal Story, a Welcome Home, Pat address given by Archie Campbell and the showing of the film The Hasty Heart. The festival was sponsored by Fort Sanders Hospital Foundation.

³⁷ John Carmody, "The T. V. Column," The Washington Post, September 5, 1977, Sec. D, p. 15.

³⁸ "The Kent Chronicles: The Bastard," WDCA, May 22, 1978.

In October 1977 the Fort Sanders Presbyterian Hospital dedicated their new Patricia Neal Rehabilitation Center and in 1978 this was an opportunity to honor Pat at her homecoming.

In summary, the most troubled years of Patricia Neal's long career proved to be the most significant ones. Her recovery from illness and return to the screen, acceptance of increasingly more mature roles in recent films made in England and Nova Scotia and more recent television productions and commercials all contributed to the growth and development of the actress. She has become a remarkably mature actress with a wide range of ability. No doubt this maturing process has prompted the many accolades she has received as one of America's truly outstanding actresses.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS CONCERNING PATRICIA NEAL'S

ACTING CAREER

In view of all the estimations by teachers, directors, fellow actors, friends and critics, what do we finally conclude concerning the woman Patricia Neal and her long career? How reliable are these estimates? Can these estimates measure the qualities that have been discussed? Careful examination of her career and interrogation of many of the people involved with it do prompt several observations. An acquaintanceship developed with the actress herself gives further insight into this study.

Early in Pat's life, her strong desire to perform and to become an actress became apparent. Accepting every opportunity, she performed in little theatre groups, in class and church plays and before any other audience she could muster. Although she represented the desire of many young women to go on the stage and be a star, with Pat, fame was unimportant--what was important was to perform. Her early experience at Eaglesmere attests to this commitment. She was determined to perform before New York audiences. It was only by her aunt's insistence that Pat went to Northwestern University instead of New York. During her college years, Pat seized every opportunity to perform. Even in summer stock, to Pat, the roles were unimportant as long as she had an opportunity to be in the productions--to have a part.

After Pat's early professional experience on Broadway, appearing in Another Part of the Forest and winning five awards for her performance, she did succumb to the beckoning call of Hollywood, adding a new dimension to her performing career.

When Pat found herself under contract to Warner Brothers and faced cameras for the first time, it was apparent that she possessed no training in screen acting. As a consequence, in her early films Pat was very awkward. She admitted she did not know what to do with her body or how to move before the cameras. In the theatre, Pat had had the entire stage to act on; she had been used to projecting to the last row in the balcony. When she attempted to use her stage techniques in films, Pat became "bigger than life." She found it difficult to lower her voice, to stand in one marked place under the lights for the shooting. In most of Pat's earlier films she played parts that many girls her age could have played. Because she was under contract, Warner Brothers was often indiscriminate in their use of her in many films--particularly low-budget ones. It was of little significance to them whether Pat was right for a part. In 1951 Pat made five films in one year. Most of them were low-budget films and Pat was often miscast. From the beginning of Pat's film career it appears that Warner Brothers did not know how to use her talent. Jack Warner believed that Patricia Neal was glamorous and wanted to make her the new Greta Garbo. It did not come to pass.

Pat left Hollywood disappointed because of the bad roles she had received. Again, because of her desire to perform, she was willing to accept just about any available part. From a lead in The Children's

Hour to minor parts in off-Broadway productions, we see Pat taking advantage of every opportunity, often failing to discriminate in her selection of roles. One such example was playing Catherine Holly in Suddenly Last Summer. However, as Pat matured, better roles seemed to come to her such as A Face in the Crowd and Hud. Although indiscriminate in her role selection, it is noteworthy that during all these years Pat has been employed; she has been able to get a job when she wanted to work--a condition not characteristic of the average actress's career.

In the various interviews the writer has conducted, all people have had fond memories in working with Pat as an actress and also in their relationship with her. Perhaps with the passing of time it is easy for these people to view Pat through rose-colored glasses, to forget unpleasant experiences and to place her on a pedestal, particularly since her Oscar award for her role in Hud. Moreover, Pat is such a likeable individual and has so many friends that interviews with many of them were undoubtedly biased. Nevertheless, they all attested to her earthiness, simplicity, a warmth and sensitivity to and interest in others. Also, since Pat's remarkable recovery from her illness, many people have identified with her and regard her as a person of indomitable will and courage. Has her recovery interfered with people's evaluation of her as an actress? In discussing her early life with her school friends, they all alleged that while Pat showed talent in her early performances, Broadway and Hollywood had been beyond their wildest dreams. It is possible, of course, that Pat's later reputation influenced her school friends' judgment of her early performances.

Why was Pat's potential not fulfilled? Did she really have bad luck or did she lack some quality short of stardom? The writer feels that with Pat's beautiful mahogany voice, her classic and expressive features and great interest in acting that she could have become "The First Lady of the Theatre." However, one problem was the lack of repertory theatres in this country as well as available roles. The writer agrees with George Shdanoff, Alvina Krause and Emily Faust that more of the classics should have been presented. Pat should have sought the opportunity to play Shakespeare, Shaw, Ibsen, Chekhov, Molière, Pirandello and Duerrenmatt. However, many plays by these writers do not bring money to the box office. And the box office dictated the nature of much of Patricia Neal's career.

In interviewing many of the directors as well as Pat herself, the question the writer posed was why Pat had never been a box office attraction. No one person seemed to have a definite answer to this question. However, the director Alexander Singer believed that people with big popular successes fulfill some kind of fantasy of the audience; they are a God-like myth--a fantasy attractiveness--the gods and goddesses of the world. And Singer believed Pat Neal has always seemed too real, too authentic, too human to be the material of fantasy.¹

However, many directors felt there is a kind of chemistry between some actresses and the camera that brings out a special quality

¹Alexander Singer, interview at home, Los Angeles, California, November 27, 1976.

in that actress and Pat Neal possessed this special quality that came across on the screen. In light of this quality, it is sad that she was not given special training for screen acting. Perhaps then the public would have seen Pat in better roles.

How hard did Pat really work in her film roles? The writer believes Pat studied her role, rehearsed her part and then used her natural ability. According to most of the directors, Pat was filmed after a couple of rehearsals as they believed that too many rehearsals would result in a stale performance and a commonplace scene.

Any person who has the will, determination and strength of character to pursue a particular career usually does so. This was true in Pat Neal's case. She has these special qualities as a human being, and she has met and conquered all kinds of circumstances and still has retained her humanistic qualities. In addition to her strenuous pursuit of a career, she has been a successful wife and mother. As Jean Alexander has stated, "Pat is an exceptional woman who can be very ordinary."²

Patricia Neal is an extraordinary kind of personality. Mildred Dunnock characterized the esteem with which a host of people view the Knoxville actress: "She communicates with love and beauty to people and that is why she must never stop working."³ This writer believes she will not stop. The courage and the indomitable will to perform will keep Patricia Neal before audiences throughout her life.

²Jean Alexander, interview held at the Ramada Inn, Beverly Hills, California, May 17, 1974.

³Mildred Dunnock, interview held at home, South Norwalk, Connecticut, November 9, 1974.

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VITA

Barbara Bagwell Darling was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, to Mildred Evelyn Bagwell and to the late Charlie Morgan Bagwell. She attended schools in that city and graduated from East High School. She was married to William Lewis Darling and lived in Heilbronn, Germany, for two years. During this time they traveled 20,000 miles throughout Europe. A Speech and Theatre major and an English minor, she graduated from The Ohio State University in August 1964 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. She is also a graduate of John Robert Powers School of Modeling.

In the summer of 1967 she entered Graduate School at The University of Colorado; in the summers of 1966 and 1969 she attended The Shakespeare Institute held at The University of Bridgeport. The summer of 1970 she attended The American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York, New York. She entered the Graduate School at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in June 1971 and she received a Master of Arts in College Teaching degree with a major in Speech and Theatre in December 1979. She was a member of Scarlet 'n' Gray at The Ohio State University and is a member of Phi Kappa Phi at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

She was married to the late George Franklin Bagby of Arlington, Virginia.

Since 1964 she has been employed by the Montgomery County Board of Education in Rockville, Maryland. For eleven years she taught English and Public Speaking at Bethesda-Chevy Chase Senior High School,

Bethesda, Maryland. For two years she taught English at Wheaton High School, Wheaton, Maryland. At the present time, she is an English teacher at Springbrook High School, Silver Spring, Maryland.

Her plans for the future include pursuing further graduate studies to obtain a Doctor of Philosophy degree and to continue her interests in writing and acting.