

**THELMA TOOLE
ENCHANTS BRANDEIS N.O. CHAPTER MEETING**

The Brandeis University New Orleans Chapter sponsored an enchanting "Afternoon with Thelma Toole" recently at Tulane Alumni House. Mrs. Toole is the talented mother of prize winning author John Kennedy Toole, whose book, **A Confederacy of Dunces** won the Pulitzer Prize in Literature this year. The brilliant author died in 1969, at a time when he was unsuccessful in having his stunning, brilliantly satirical, and memorable book published. For years, Thelma Toole worked untiringly to get the book published, finally succeeding with Louisiana State University Press. Meeting Thelma Toole is an unforgettable experience. It is easy to see how John Toole was a Pulitzer Prize winning author, with a brilliant, versatile, talented mother like Thelma to inspire him. Her talk, "Trials and Tribulations and Reveries of Being the Mother of John Kennedy Toole" was priceless. Mrs. Toole, herself a brilliant actress, gave in accents, characterizations from the book; sang and played the piano; and with wit and penetrating insight told highlights of her life with her outstanding son. She read to him every night until 11 PM when he was a child. He entered Fortier High School at the age of 12 and entered Tulane at 16 years. He received a 4-year merit scholarship to Columbia, and received honors with his master's degree. He taught at U.S.L., Dominican, and at Hunter College. Scott Kramer, a 24-year old producer, will produce the film of the prize winning book. Her amazing skill with dialects depicted in her dramatic readings accents of French, Italian, Spanish, Irish, New Yorkese, Negro, Standard American and as well, the characters from the book. I have never met a more amazing woman than Thelma Toole. Incidentally, I am currently reading this treasure of a book and will review it in the next issue.