

is" making "consensual decisions" and pulling their hair out living agony agonizing living stirring

Robert's film lacks reality

by Michelle Phillips

HERE'S A FRIGHTENING statistic: every week in North America, at least two women are murdered by their husbands, ex-husbands, boy-friends, or ex-boyfriends.

In Julia Roberts' latest film "Sleeping With The Enemy", audiences are exposed to a different type of movie violence; it is domestic violence. What makes this movie unique is the subject matter; violence against women is one of the most terrible, most common, and most condoned crimes in today's society. Although the message is very important, as a film, "Sleeping With The Enemy" has major flaws.

Director Joseph Ruben uses tired film cliches to provide most of the thrills, such as abnormally loud bursts of sound track to jar viewers, as well as, the expected scene where Roberts tensely looks through closets, etc., upon hearing someone in the house. This particular scene is extremely disappointing, as we later see that all our nail-biting was for naught: it was just her kindly neighbour poking around!

Right in the middle of the film is a flitty full-length video where Roberts tries on theatre costumes to Van Morrison's "Brown-Eyed Girl". Further cheapening the film

is its climax which is, sadly, almost humorous. When her deranged husband finally does track her down, he conveniently brings along a cassette of Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique" (his favourite, don't you know) to listen to as he terrorizes her for the last time.

As for the actors, Roberts and Kevin Anderson do an admirable job of trying their best in a movie that just doesn't work. Patrick Bergin, on the other hand, plays the wife-beating husband in such a stiff, unconvincing way that it is difficult to believe in the character's motivation for his actions. Bergin's role-playing is one dimensional; as a purely evil person with almost no other characteristics that make him human.

In portraying "the wife-beater" as an uncommon abomination, the director fails to acknowledge the reality of domestic violence. Violence against women is a common crime committed daily by doctors, lawyers, taxi drivers, and plumbers; it exists in all aspects of society and culture. Most of these men cannot be categorized and spotted as easily as this movie portrays.

"Sleeping With The Enemy" fails most miserably by using cartoon-like characters and refusing to acknowledge the harsh realities and complexities of domestic violence.



Kelly Whynot

Shaune MacKinlay

Last week the body of a seventeen year old girl was pulled from a dumpster in Dartmouth. Kelly Whynot, whose name was not withheld, was a prostitute, a hooker, a whore, but above all else a person.

The murder of Kelly Whynot brings the public face to face with the issue of prostitution, begging the question, "what was a teenage girl doing on the street in the first place?" Although the details of Ms. Whynot's life may never be made public, one thing can be said for certain- the reasons why women sell their bodies are much more

According to the same report, the majority of prostitutes reach the streets at a young age, having received only low-level education.

These frequently emotionally disturbed girls are befriended by pimps who offer them food and a place to live. Once trust and dependence has been established, the pimp proceeds to destroy self-esteem, often using threats and violence to keep them in the profession. It is the pimp, not the prostitute, who receives the majority of the money earned in the selling of sex.

In Canada, prostitution itself is not a crime. However, the Criminal Code does address the activities

Everywhere she turns she is shunned, exploited, and abused

complicated than economic gain.

Prostitution is not a supply and demand relationship which both parties enter into for personal gain. It is a direct expression of male dominance over women. Not only does the client, or john, assert his manhood, but he also, for the length of time he can afford, makes the woman his property to do with as he pleases. The prostitute, on the other hand, has sold her sexuality as well as a little bit more of her self-esteem.

"Like rape, prostitution perpetuates the oppression of women by encouraging the view that women are mere sex objects, hence reinforcing male dominance and Female inferiority," write feminist Allison Jagger in an article entitled "Prostitution".

According to a 1987 report by the Ontario Status of Women Council, results from numerous studies indicate that more than 60 percent of prostitutes suffered physical abuse at home. Studies also revealed 60 percent were subject to sexual abuse by their fathers, uncles or other relatives.

associated with prostitution, including street solicitation, operation of bawdy houses, and procuring or living off the avails of prostitution.

Although the law addresses all persons involved in prostitution, it is widely seen as a crime committed by women. The prostitutes, not the johns, have been most subject to fines and imprisonment, according to the Ontario Status of Women Council.

In society, the prostitute stands little chance of rehabilitation. Everywhere she turns she is shunned, exploited, and abused. Cut off from her family, lacking an education, trapped in a relationship with her pimp, her income tightly controlled, it is the prostitute who is the victim of the greatest crimes.

The problem of prostitution, that public nuisance that makes our streets look ugly, will not disappear until society has grappled with its underlying causes. Only then will young women like Kelly Whynot cease to be victims of their profession.



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