



Talent Night at the Grawood. Don't slip your disco

Neil Doherty / Postlax

Seaweed theatre

It's a Hard Rain's Gonna Fall

"The Rain Falls Harder," by Nova Scotia playwright John Culjak, premiered two weeks ago in a Seaweed Theatre production at the National Film Board Theatre. The play, based on a true incident occurring in Halifax a few years ago, deals with the treatment of rape in our society. Culjak presents a young woman bringing a twice convicted rapist to trial.

In reviewing the past history of the defendant, recording the reactions of his victims and revealing the workings of the judicial system, Culjak tries to show that the person actually on trial is not the defendant but the woman herself, pre-judged by society.

Gazette staffers Elissa Barnard and Maria Rey went to "The Rain Falls Harder" on its last night. Here they mull over their mixed reactions

ple were supposed to be real. Was the victim's lawyer stuttering because he had an unfortunate speech impediment or because he was meant to expose society's deafness to justice, as John Culjak told us after the performance? Until I saw the point of a victimizing society I was utterly confused.

I didn't feel any emotion, only a gut revulsion when the rapist talked to his doll and he and a policeman touched the girls. But I didn't feel sympathy towards the victims, even in the last scene when Madeleine Morton is herself thrown into prison.

M. I think Culjak aimed at an emotional treatment with poetry. All the characters spoke in everyday speech except for the victims who expressed their feelings in a literary, stylized language. He stated the horror without developing it.

E. The trauma was distanced and became unreal especially with the overly mature perceptions of the 10 and 13 year old girls.

M. I didn't feel sympathy; I felt embarrassed, not about the way we as society treat rape but by the way the actors were cavorting on stage.

E. and M.—In conclusion, "The Rain Falls Harder" was well intended but failed. Culjak got so caught up in making his point that he forgot to develop action and character in order to bring his theme powerfully across. He went in with a fixed idea and didn't let it ferment.

E. How did you like Culjak's structure—his use of a series of short scenes?

M. I liked the way the scenes revealed a historical progression from the rapist's earlier crimes to the present case. It made the play rounded and complete. Because the scenes alternated between soliloquies of the defendant and his victims and dialogues in the courtroom and police station, there was potential for development of character and of the judicial system.

E. Yes, but the scenes were so short, under 15 minutes, that nothing could be developed or absorbed before you were thrust into another situation. Coupled with the fact that scene changes were too long, I think the play lost continuity. We got a collage which didn't work.

M. Well, the potential was there. I agree the characters were not developed because they were stereotypes.

E. You're not kidding—the law-abiding, respected citizen perverted at heart; the tough, slick defense lawyer; the old corrupt judge; and the macho

male policeman who believes all women are motivated by lust. They were over-stereotyped. A stereotype must be slightly believable in order to be effective. These characters had no saving reality.

M. Anyway he chose the wrong characteristics to stereotype if he intended to expose socially conditioned attitudes. The point was how we have been brought up by society to think of and treat women. Personality traits conditioned by society should have been emphasized, so we could recognize ourselves, instead of purely individual characteristics which we could only hate. The judge was thoroughly corrupt, accepting and making bribes to help himself; the policeman, Rip Morris, was an insensitive beast, totally driven by sex, double, triple X. Corruptness and perversity were developed and these are not universal. . .

E. . . depending on your philosophy of man.

The climax itself did pull everything together but it came too late. For 13 scenes I wondered whether these peo-

Disco disables

(ZNS-CUP)—The widespread popularity of disco dancing is allegedly resulting in a rash of ailments which are disabling thousands of disco patrons.

A growing number of podiatrists have expressed concern about the possibility of permanent foot damage suffered by women who frequent discos. According to those foot specialists, many women run the risk of chronic foot problems because they insist on wearing platform shoes or spiked heels while dancing.

Other medical authorities have expressed concern about the possibility of hearing damage by disco-goers because of the excessive noise levels at many clubs. Disco D-J's as well as patrons have suffered long-term hearing loss, an ailment widely re-

ferred to as "disco ear".

Now, some plastic surgeons claim their business is on the upswing because of an alleged fondness for cocaine among a sizeable minority of disco enthusiasts. Billboard magazine claims that a number of plastic surgeons are encountering cases of what might be called "disco nose". Some coke sniffers are allegedly requiring plastic surgery to correct nasal problems caused by excessive use of the drug.

The latest medical problem to crop up stems from the growing popularity of disco roller-skating. One roller rink owner in Ottawa, recently found it necessary to spend \$2,500 on first aid equipment to treat cases of "disco butt", and other skating-related injuries.

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