

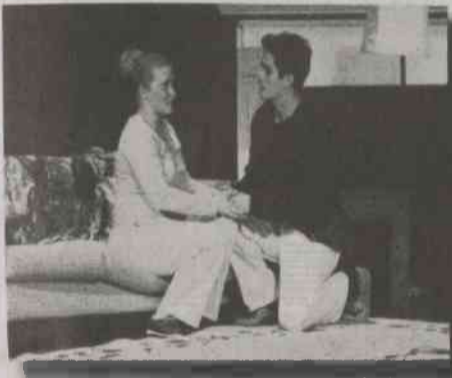


"I do not agree with what you have to say, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it." - Voltaire

A Review of Raney

Melissa Whittaker

The Saint Andrews Highland Players opened their fall production, *Raney*, on November 10th, 2006. The play ran for four nights (November 10th, 11th, 17th and 18th). *Raney* is a play by John Justice and is from the novel by Clyde Edgerton. The play is set in rural North Carolina in the 1970s and is about a young couple's marriage and their differences that they must work out and live with. *Raney* is a southern Baptist and her husband, Charles, is an Atlanta liberal. The play has great supporting characters along with the two leads. Susan Paschal directed this production with the assistance of Matthew Peak.



Reid Mosher and Susan Stewart performing on stage. Picture courtesy of Rooney Coffman

The production started with some music from Andy Reynolds and Chance Bell, played on guitar and banjo. The play opened with *Raney*, played by Susan Stewart, and Charles, played by Reid Mosher, in their room, getting ready for bed. I thought this scene was a great opening, especially with the shiny red boxers that Charles wears. After seeing all of the Highland productions that were skits, I personally was glad to see a non-skit play. The costumes went very well with each character. I thought that Kenny Walker, who played Uncle Nate, looked like a bouncer with the sunglasses on. The supporting characters were Aunt Naomi, played by Mary McDonald; Mr. Bell, played by Nate Jones; Mrs. Bell, played by Natasha Grimm; Dr. Bridges, played by Lydia Bravard; and Mr. Simmons, played by David Goodman. The whole cast worked very nicely together and played off each other well.

I was happy to see not just students in this play but SAPC staff too. I cannot forget to mention the wonderful crew that helped out with the play; they get everything done behind the scenes and help with costumes, props and sets. The play would not be what it was without these people. There were a couple of flubbed lines and after learning in high school drama club that most times you should actually speak slightly slower than you normally talk, in

order to be understood, I thought that Nate and Susan needed to slow down just a bit in a couple of places. Everyone spoke loudly and could be heard from the back of the theater. On opening night there were over 60 people who attended.

Raney dealt with some touchy subjects such as racism and marriage and family problems. There was a powerful scene where Uncle Nate kills himself. I thought that the cast handled all of these issues maturely, as to some people this may be a hard thing to do. Both *Raney* and Charles were people who spoke their mind and although they seemed very different, I felt that they were quite similar in many ways also. I thought that *Raney* made you open your eyes to the world a little more, seeing that there are problems no matter where you live and you have to find a way to work them out. I thought this was a superb play put on by a fantastic group of people and I applaud their hard work.

Fiction

A Cold Blue Sunday

Sara Messina

Dr. Karras held on to the other side of the examination room door with all of her strength. She screamed for an orderly and after several minutes ticked into an eternity, she was forced to accept the help of Larry 'Knots' Stevens, a patient wandering the halls. Dr. Karras ran to the central nursing station to see the seats empty and several muffled moans and yells left unchecked. All of them were from the rooms of patients known for raising false alarms, so she concentrated on her task. She grabbed a dose of sedative before running back to the disturbed patient.

Mr. Robert Wells was a nice enough man when he arrived, nervous, but nice. He was a resident connoisseur of juices and grabbed attention with a snappy sense of style. His chameleon eyes turned blue or green depending on the shade of his clothes. When his eyes were a soft hazel, he was calm, gentle, and caring. But on blue days he was as cruel and vindictive as his icy stare suggested. Dr. Karras did everything she could to make the green days count, and worked through his therapy session rather quickly. It was the erratic nature of his sessions that led her to insist she be Wells' first and last person to contact in case of an emergency.

Today was a blue Sunday, and Dr. Karras had been roused from her bed by an urgent call from the head nurse for the night shift. While doing the early morning medicine round, a new employee accidentally gave Mr. Wells the wrong dose of medication. It started out a very cold, blue morning. But, when Dr. Karras arrived, she was in such a hurry she gave no thought to the five nurses and orderly that, though undoubtedly busy handling their ridiculous number of patients, had until that morning never failed to send someone to give her details on emergency calls. She did find several patients wandering, trying to figure out locks on the doors and elevators. All the while Mr. Wells pitched a fit, and nearly everything he could lay his hands on was being pitched across the halls.

"Where is everyone?" Dr. Karras said between gasping breaths.

"He has given everyone an awfully hard time," replied Knots.

Dr. Karras gave an angered huff as an answer as she struggled to remove the ropes tied to the doorknob. She let the door creak inward slowly and stuck the tip of her foot through the widening gap.

"Mr. Wells...it's Dr. Karras. I'm coming in now, and we need to

have a little chat about this morning."

She saw the quivering lump on the couch across the room and lowered the syringe to her side. The room was only a ten foot square with a small couch, an in-the-wall closet, and an over turned chair being the only survivors of Mr. Wells' wrath. The curtains of the window above the bed now let in pinpricks of light through new tears. Dr. Karras heard whimpering coming from under the blanket, and righted the chair.

"I just want to talk," she said sweetly, but the whimpering continued. She put the syringe down on the chair and opened the curtains above the bed. She hesitated for a moment before touching the blankets, but no fist shot out at her touch. She pulled back the blankets, and found a guard dog whimpering through a slit throat.

Dr. Karras could only let out half a choke as Mr. Wells sprang from his place in the closet and plunged the syringe in her throat. His fingernails cut even lines across her neck as her legs grew weak. She heard chortled laughter and locked on crazed blue irises before she blacked out.

Outside the closet, Knots worked feverishly to restore his masterpiece and struggling in locked residences, the nurses and orderly continued to scream useless warnings.

*****This story was featured at the Halloween party in October.*****