

arts & entertainment



'Goodbar' a tale for singles

Book review by Bill Roberts
Looking For Mr. Goodbar, by Judith Rossner/Simon and Schuster, New York/
\$7.95

Judith Rossner's *Looking For Mr. Goodbar* is an instructive novel for people who think it is safe for a young woman to pick up strange men in singles' bars. But for those who perceive emotional and physical hazards in such a practice, *Looking For Mr. Goodbar* is merely a slick, mildly erotic, throwaway novel.

Rossner starts her fourth book by giving away the ending. Theresa Dunn is killed in her apartment by Gary White, a pathetic lost soul with a violent streak, whom she met earlier that evening at the Mr. Goodbar tavern.

The rest of the book is a flashback, tracing the life of Theresa from her childhood to her mid-20s death. It's a sort of pilgrim's progress, as the reader watches her change from a nice girl into a loose woman.

Sarcastic fraud

The portrait of Theresa's first lover, English professor Martin Engle, is cleverly done. Engle is a sarcastic, unfeeling fraud, and his affair with her is a classic snow job. He's the kind of character a reader loves to hate.

"To everything, turn, turn, turn, there is a season, turn, turn, turn," he tells Theresa in explaining his inevitable desertion.

Rossner loses her sense of humor after telling about Theresa's initial contact with a man. She sends her tarnished heroine down a melodramatic path to a swinging single's doom.

Theresa is an excellent school teacher, but a daytime rapport with the children won't get her through the night. So she goes to the Manhattan bars, often oversleeping the next day and disappointing her devoted class.

Away from it all

She meets a Boy Scout-type lawyer who wants to marry her and take her away from it all. She dumps him for bedroom athlete Tony Lopanto, who makes love in time to rock music.

She even attends a meeting of a feminist rap group. Men rule and ruin her life, she is told. Theresa nods thoughtfully, then puts on her customary sweater and jeans and heads for a bar.

Looking For Mr. Goodbar was written to give readers something to do besides think. Quickly read and quickly forgotten, Rossner's novel is suitable for long-distance bus trips.

'Crucible' cast suffers from emotional lag

There is a misty plot afoot so subtle we should be criminal to cling to old respects...The Devil is alive in Salem and we dare not quail to follow wherever the accusing finger points!

—The Crucible
by Arthur Miller

The date is 1692; the location, a small village in Massachusetts; the event, the hunting of witches. This bizarre episode in American history serves as the background material for Arthur Miller's dramatic tour-de-force *The Crucible*, current production by the UNL Theater Dept.

Miller, who won the Pulitzer Prize for *Death of A Salesman*, recreates, with enormous strength, the religious mass hysteria that prevailed in New England in the late 17th century.

In historical notes prefacing the play, Miller says, "One will discover the essential nature of one of the strangest and most awful chapters in human history."

1950 parallels

Although Miller was writing about events that occurred in the distant past, the play was published at the height of the McCarthy era, a time that closely compared to Massachusetts in the 1600s. The parallels between the investigations of alleged Communists by the House Un-American Activities Committee and the

Salem Witch Trials are almost too frighteningly obvious.

Only three years after *The Crucible* appeared on Broadway (1953), Miller himself was convicted by the committee for the failure to disclose names of persons in attendance at Communist Party meetings. Fortunately, Miller's conviction was overturned by a higher court.

The Crucible deals with lies—the lies of children. In the course of events several of these children pretend to be approached by the spirits of witches, and begin naming names. Innocent people are led to jail, already proclaimed guilty by association.

In an attempt to discredit the trials and end the insanity, John Proctor, a stalwart farmer, comes before the court, only to be convicted and hanged himself, rather than confess a sin he never committed.

Emotional lag

The large cast in the Howell production, under the direction of Hal Floyd, realized very little of Miller's original emotional impact. It was not evident that either the audience or the actors understood what was being transmitted. This was one of a number of reasons *The Crucible* seemed so interminably long (three hours).

Floyd must be given credit, however,

for introducing a host of new faces to the Howell stage. It was refreshing to see a shift from the traditional casting.

Chan Taylor, as Paris, the town Parson, was unnaturally stiff and rigid in his performance. Although some of this was needed for his character, most of it appeared affected. It was apparent that most of the characters suffered from this effectlessness stemming from shallow interpretations.

Notable acting

Notable exceptions in the cast were Randall Parker, who alternated between moments of strength and weakness as Proctor, and Ann Perkinson, who portrayed Elizabeth Proctor with a certain depth of feeling. Judy Zimmermann also turned in an interesting portrayal as Abigail Williams, the instigator of the witch crying.

The set for the Howell production was superbly designed by Sandy Moeller and Dan Proett. It is equally impressive for its austerity and subtle detail, truly one of the finest scenic designs in recent years. The lighting, designed by Bob Moeller, brought the set to life, adding the exact moods required.

The Crucible continues through Dec. 13.

'Choirboys' high on list

Below are Lincoln's best-selling books.

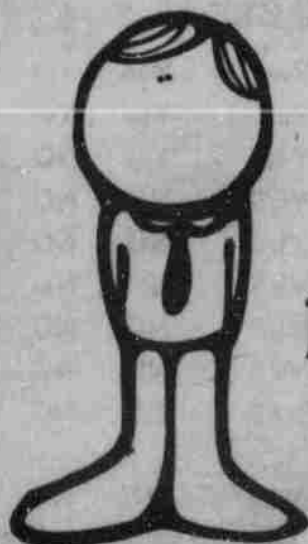
Fiction

1. *The Choirboys*, Wambaugh
2. *Curtain*, Christie
3. *The Greek Treasure*, Stone
4. *Centennial*, Michener
5. *Looking for Mr. Goodbar*, Rossner

Non-fiction

1. *The Cornhuskers*, Israel
2. *A Pictorial History of Nebraska*, Nicoll
3. *The Doonesbury Chronicles*, Trudeau
4. *Angels*, Graham
5. *The People's Almanac*, Wallechinsky

List compiled from the five best-selling books at B. Dalton, The Nebraska Bookstore and Miller and Paine.



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of
Hardly Small
Dec. 8 thru 13th

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Men's A-Go-Go Contests

Tues. at 11:00 p.m.

Womens' Contest

Wed. at 11:00 p.m.

Cash Prizes

2-fers & Nickle Draws 6:30 - 8:15

The Royal Grove 340 W. Cornhusker

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FILM THEATER

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NATIVE LAND



plus a second feature

FINALLY GOT THE NEWS

(U.S.A. 1970 55 minutes)

Produced by Stewart Bird, Peter Gessner, Rene Lichtman and John Louis, Jr. in association with the League of Revolutionary Black Workers. *FINALLY GOT THE NEWS* is a unique and forceful documentary offering the workers' view of working conditions inside Detroit's auto factories.

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday — December 9, 10 & 11 only.
Screenings begin at 7 p.m.

Admission \$1.50