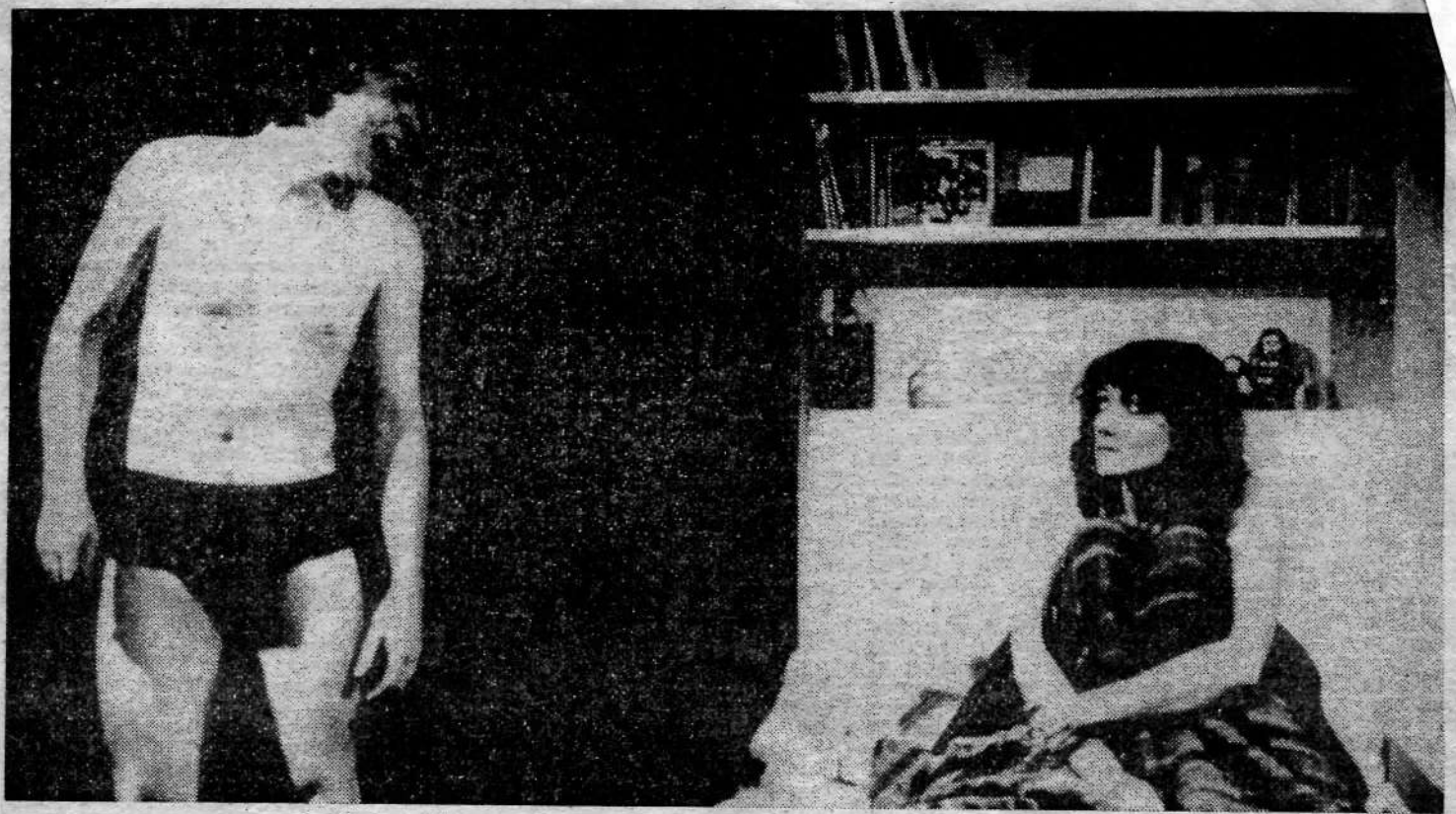


# Hampstead & Highgate EXPRESS

Hampstead Garden Suburb & Colders Green News • Camden Borough News

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● Roger Allam as Carl and Chris Bowler as Sally in Kiss and Kill.

## Scenes of inter-sexual strife

MONSTROUS REGIMENT'S first production, *Scum*, was highly successful because, while founded on feminist/socialist principles, the company set out to present good theatre rather than a semi-dramatised form of agit-prop.

It is an attitude that has been maintained by the company as it has grown and prospered over the last two years, and on Monday the Regiment brings its latest pro-

duction to the Round House Downstairs for six performances.

*Kiss and Kill*, by Susan Todd and Ann Mitchell, looks at the causes and effects of violence between men and women through a series of short scenes interwoven with jazzy songs and humour.

The play presents a number of relationships: a separated husband subjecting his wife to telephone abuse; a father, mother and daughter each unable to understand the other; a receptionist having an affair with her boss, and others.

Each story is connected with the others, allowing a broad social picture to evolve, showing different facets of the central theme.

The Regiment, a company of seven women and two men, has been taking *Kiss and Kill* around the country, and has generally had good receptions.

The week's season at the Round House Downstairs is, incidentally, being promoted by Camden Council's Arts Department.

It starts at 7 pm on Monday; 7.30 pm subsequently.

### Kiss and Kill

MONSTROUS Regiment is a feminist theatre group. Their latest show has been presented at the Round House Downstairs by the London Borough of Camden and has played to full houses. Susan Todd and Ann Mitchell have devised "Kiss and Kill" around two generations and two separate marriages at a state of wilt. Stephanie Howard's excellent set — giving a new meaning to the word "box" — folds easily from one household to another, indoors to outdoors. The acting is accomplished and the characters tolerably credible.

Where it comes unstuck is with the relentless hammering home of the messages. Josefina Cupido's self-accompanied songs in a jazz idiom do this very successfully at the side of the acting area to cover scene changes but, like so much preaching theatre, the production as a whole is not prepared to let us make up our own minds — it insists in making them up for us. The violence which is omnipresent in the abusive phone calls Lou receives from her ex-husband, in Pete's relationships with his wife, daughter and girl-friend, in the daughter's gang of friends in the women's own social interplay — all this requires subtlety which the authors seem perfectly capable of providing. Only they haven't done it. At considerable length.

Clive Russel is very good as the husband, and Gillian Hanna is extremely moving as the wife in the other marriage. Other parts are played by Chris Bowler, Mary McCusker, Roger Allam, Helen Glavin and Susan Todd. M.A.M.

## Monstrous women to play Southend

THE Monstrous Regiment Theatre Group, among the best of the fringe theatre touring companies and consisting almost entirely of women, makes an appearance in Southend next month.

Monstrous Regiment is an historical title. It comes from the words of the militant puritan John Knox who was outraged by what he described in the 16th century as the monstrous regiment of women.

For this theatrical group is composed almost entirely of women, two of whom are pictured right. Formed in 1975 its declared aims are to fight back against the treatment of women, in the theatre and in society.

The play they perform at The Shrimpers Club, at Roots Hall (Southend United Football Club) on Monday, March 13, is *Kiss and Kill*. It is a benefit for Southend Women's Aid Refuge.

It is a full-length production which looks at the causes, and effects of violence between men and women.

The company have been highly praised in many parts of the country, playing at arts centres, colleges and universities, etc. They recently played a successful week at London's Roundhouse.

Monstrous Regiment have been invited to Southend by SAGA, Southend Action Group for the Arts.

SAGA state that the nearest a fringe theatre group have come to Southend is Basildon and that Southend is a centre large enough to cope with more professional theatre. Their view has been endorsed by the Eastern Arts Association and the touring officer at the Arts Council of Great Britain.

By inviting the Monstrous Regiment to Southend, SAGA are testing the market.

As a follow-up the action group is bringing the widely acclaimed 7.84 theatre group for one performance as part of the Southend Trades Council May Festival



**HERE'S** your housekeeping money, darling. Now run along and be a good girl.

But if a good woman isn't good enough she would end up counting her bruises not her blessings. That's the moral behind this picture.

Wife bashing is the underlying theme of *Kiss and Kill*, a fringe theatre production by The Monstrous Regiment, at The Shrimpers Club, Roots Hall, Southend, for one night on March 13.

The company of nine women and two men was formed in 1975 to stage productions supporting women and has earned a high reputation.

The performance, to test the reaction of Southend audiences to fringe theatre, is being staged by Southend Action Group for the Arts, in aid of Southend Women's Aid Refuge.

