Emigrant film has simple charm

By LARRY CHARLES Collegian Staff Writer "Hester Street" is an utterly charming tale of the difficulties faced by Russian Jews trying to adapt to the ways of the New World. It illustrates universal human dreams and frailties with such simplicity and grace that it should delight any

audience. Jake (Stephen Keats) is a recent emigrant from Russia, working in New York's Lower East Side in 1896. He has shaven his beard and Americanized his name (from the original Yankel.) He considers himself "an American ... a Yankee, that's

all!"
The death of his father (still

in Russia) results in Jake's wife, Gitl, and son, Yoselle, journeying to America to join him. Old customs and superstitions are ingrained in Gitl (Carol Kane) and she finds the transition to New World ways most difficult.

"I can't go around in my own hair, I'm a married woman!" Gitl cries, in Yiddish, when Jake suggests that she stop wearing the traditional wig. Gitl is so confused with America that at one point she asks "Where the gentiles . . . everywhere Jews, the gentiles keep some other place,

Gitl asks a local merchant for a love potion and still fills

Yoselle's pocket's with sand to "keep the evil eye away," much to the chagrin of her "Yankee" husband. Jake succeeds in demanding that Yoselle be called Joey and even manages to get Gitl all done up in Yankee-style clothing once in a while, but these superficial changes do not alter Gitl's deep-rooted Old World ways and this enrages Jake. His desire to abandon his heritage and Gitl's desire to keep it alive

frontation. As the waif-like wife, Kane is an absolute joy. Wasted for five years in tiny roles in major films ("Carnal major films (''Carnal Knowledge,'' ''The Last "Dog Day After-

result in an inevitable con-

noon.") she finally emerges as an actress of great talent with this touching characterization. Her Oscarnominated transition from the bewildered, apprehensive immigrant Americanized woman who

develops a mind of her own finally masters "Enkelsh" (as she calls the language) is completely disarming. Keats (another actor wasted for years in small roles in films like "The Friends of Eddie Coyle" and 'Death Wish'') is also quite good as Jake. The supporting parts are uniformly wellplayed down to the last street

vendor and nosy friend. The atmosphere of the film been wonderfully

white, the entire movie has the look of an old brown daguerreotype of one's greatgrandparents. Two sequences in the film, a dance and an impromptu baseball game, are handled in silent moviestyle with exaggerated actions, no dialogue and a single piano for musical accompaniment. These scenes are extremely well-done and help to convey the time period very nicely.

Practically bursting with warmth and enthusiasm, grand and glorious ad-

'Hester Street'' is an experience everyone should share. It makes life look like a

By JOANNE McLAUGHLIN Collegian Staff Writer

"Lipstick" is a violent, fast-paced film about a fashion model who is raped. It can hardly be called a boring film, but it can hardly be called a very good one either.

The rape occurs almost immediately after the credits pass, when the audience has barely had time to figure out who the characters are, let alone be able to follow the motivations behind their actions. And no sooner has the model (Margaux Hemingway) been violated by her younger sister's music teacher (Chris Sarandon), when the scene shifts to a courtroom and a farce of a rape trial.

Director Lamont Johnson really let this film get away from him. There's nothing even resembling control.

"Lipstick seems to gather momentum so early that it can't slow itself down long enough to allow anyone to become involved in

what's going on. David Rayfiel's screenplay is awful and never gives the characters enough time to become any more than caricatures. It's a shame, too, because the film contains some fine, though stunted, performances.

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Chris Sarandon is frighteningly diabolical as Gordon, the rapist who strikes once and gets away with it, only to return to haunt the

the Collegian arts

'Lipstick' has its gloss,

but faults aren't hidden

model again. Anne Bancroft does a fine tob as the assistant district attorney who tries to keep the rape trial from turning into a circus. It just goes to show that not even the worst script, and this one is pretty bad, can keep some

actresses down. "Lipstick" marks the movie debut of a very promising young actress named Hemingway — but it isn't the highly touted Margaux. It's her little sister Mariel. The kid has Margaux outclassed as an actress all the way. "Lipstick" is worth seeing if only to enjoy the younger Hemingway's per-

formance. Margaux, on the other hand, will make a fine actress only if silent films come back into vogue. She looks gorgeous, but once she

opens her mouth, everything falls apart. The film's electronic score, composed by Michel Polnareff, is so good one can almost overlook what's wrong with the rest of the movie. Unfortunately, a good score can't replace a good script, which "Lipstick' sorely lacks.

Essentially, "Lipstick", now playing at Cinema Two, lives up to its name. All the film really is is a touch of color smeared up on a

Dialogue makes, breaks political novel

By SUSAN FROETSCHEL Collegian Staff Writer A CITY ON THE HILL. By George V. Higgens. Ballantine

Books, 213 pp. \$1.75. George Higgen's novel about Washington D.C., "A City on a Hill," is a continuous string of gossip about wiley politicians, their love nves, and failing careers.

The book is primarily dialogue with little action. Through the characters'

WILSONS

develops.

The story is set in late 1973 against the shambles of Watergate and the Nixon administration. Hank Cavanaugh is a young, ambitious pulic relations man working ruthlessly to re-establish a 1972 Democratic presidential candidate for the

1976 election. Despite the hard work,

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gossip, the weak plot slowly Cavanaugh knows that the scrambling for better fluential themselves, their candidate is a loser. The situation runs parallel to Cananaugh's life. His wife divorces him, he has no

book review

career future, and no savings. Likewise, Cavanaugh sees all of his friends and acquaintances' careers crumbling the same way and constantly are

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positions with more prestige. The plot drags because

of the confusing and digressive dialogue. Five characters do all of the talking and intimacy is preserved by never having more than Cavanaugh and another character present at

tative of stereotyped Washington power-plays. book The depicts Washington as a place where

conversations are represen-

anyone involved with its politics is dissatisfied and unhappy. However, some of the conversation is effective in its realism and credibility, especially when the Although the characters characters stop gossiping and are not prominent or in- analyze their own problems.

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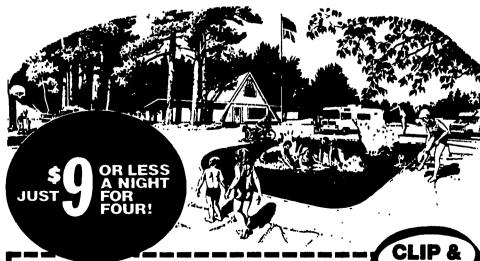
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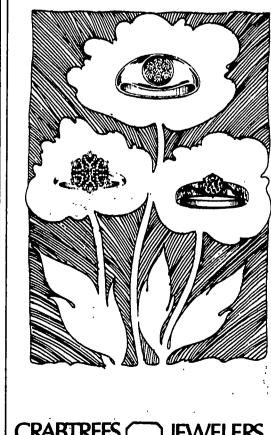
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