

American Sexy
The New Theatre Group

Trista Baldwin's new play plops four college-age hormone factories on the edge of the Grand Canyon midway through a road trip to Las Vegas. Mood-altering substances are duly consumed, and all manner of uncomfortable weirdness emerges amid a torrent of deceptively vapid youth-speak. Sex is, of course, beneath the surface of the conversation, when it isn't the primary topic. But that isn't why this work has such capacity to disturb—it's a jaundiced, heart-heavy depiction of post-romance sexuality, when a declaration of love is regarded as an antiquated inconvenience. This is a work that drops grenades without cleaning up afterward, a raw look at a culture unacquainted (or perhaps overly acquainted) with its own desires. Wed 8:30 p.m., Fri 7:00 p.m., Sat 10:00 p.m. U of M Rarig Center Arena Stage.

—Quinton Skinner, City Pages

American Sexy

Wreckage wrought by society's oversaturation of sex is explored unflinchingly in Trista Baldwin's shattering one-act. Four college students of various racial backgrounds expose their unexamined attitudes and fixations while stopping at the Grand Canyon en route to Las Vegas. Director Brian Balcom's beguiling cast exudes a reckless sense of eroticism that unfolds organically into revelations that astound. Patrick Kozicky is moving as an alienated young man who rejects the unconsciousness that has depleted the souls of those around him. (7 p.m. Fri., 10 p.m. Sat., Rarig Arena, 330 21st Av. S.)

JOHN TOWNSEND, Star Tribune

American Sexy

There might not be another script in the Fringe that lends itself less to a quick-and-dirty 100-word review than Trista Baldwin's chronicle of four kids on a college road trip that morphs into an examination of sexual attitudes and a jarring journey of discovery. Naysayers will find it top-heavy with exposition; ultimately a bathos-riddled, sensationalistic peek at the interior Drama of the Pretty Girl. Proponents will laud its good ear, the way it flirts with and then slaps away titillation and its steely-eyed examination of how intimacy can be shellacked with irony. Either way, you'll leave with plenty to discuss.

— Dominic P. Papatola, St. Paul Pioneer Press