Book Review

The Night is Dark and I am Far From Home

By Marc Swartz

"A chilling indictment of our public school system." This statement appears on the cover of Jonathan Kozol's book. Kozol's propositions is that the school system is not to educate good people, but good at trying to "educate" youngsters. He has written a critical appeal underscored with destructive action. Kozol tells us that the evils in today's society will be cured by answers to questions like "What has school done to me as a person?" "What are the values of the educational system in America?" and "What impact have these values had on me?" These questions should concern all of us. Kozol's book may not be entirely readable for everyone, but at least it will start thinking, and more importantly, move us to some constructive, or if necessary, some destructive action.

I would like to cite two myths as examples of Kozol's thesis. The first is the Myth of Progress: As a result of progress all the evils in today's society will be ameliorated. "The evil little secret in the center of the Myth of Progress is the lie that it will come along without us... Education takes away from children, as unjust nations take away the labor of the poor, the leverage of our own inherent sense of moral potency, and then invites us to come down and exercise our impotence within the voting booth." Kozol tells us that a boy named Peter who was found to be a microcephalic, his brain growth was impeded prior to birth or else in infancy and he will not grow up to normal size. Progress did not prevent Peter's malnutrition and progress will not be able to help Peter grow. Yet Peter is still alive; he is a real person who must face life. What will progress do to help Peter?

The second myth deals with the public school's treatment of Great Men and Women. "How do the ideological hand servants of the leading counter-revolutionary nation... cope with a history that has been studded with so many bold, and revolutionary, and subversive, and exhilarating men and women?" For instance, Henry David Thoreau is presented as a nature writer, but his political and moral beliefs are not discussed. Can the state ask its citizens to read, "How does it become a man to behave toward this..."

AT THE MOVIES

Torre Bela, the American premiere of a new Thomas Harlan film. On Fri., Sept. 22 at 8pm, Thomas Harlan will personally present and discuss his film. The film will also run on Sat. & Sun., Sept. 23 & 24, 7:30 & 9:30pm each night. All programs are at Center Screen, Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, 19 Prescott St., Harvard University. Admission is $2.50 on Fri. and $2 on Sat. & Sun.

The Cocoonists The MitNite Movie, Sat., Sept. 23, second floor of the Student Center.

This weekend's LSC line-up:
Looking for Mr. Goodbar (Fri.) 7 & 10pm, Krenke.
Kind Hearts and Coronets The LSC Classic Film, Fri., 7:30pm, 10-250.
Blazing Saddles (Sat.) 7 & 9:30pm, Krenke.
Bananas (Sun.) 6:30 & 9pm, 26-100.

AROUND MIT

Skidmore and Callahan A retrospective exhibition of the works of two of America's foremost photographers is on display at the MIT Creative Photography Gallery, 120 Mass. Ave. Gallery hours are 9am-10pm Mon.-Fri.; 10am-6pm, Sat.; and noon-8pm Sun. For information, call 253-4624.

The MIT Dance Workshop, directed by Beth Soll, will meet on Mondays and Wednesdays (from 3 to 5 pm in the T Club Lounge of duPont Gymnasium; open to all members of the MIT community. For information call 864-5418.

IN TOWN

Kinetic Light Sculptures, an exhibition of slowly changing colored lights in Plexiglas forms, is on display at the Peabody Gallery of the Museum of Science. The artist, Claude Marzullo, will be present to talk to visitors Saturday, Sept. 23, from 1 to 4pm. Gallery hours are: Mon.-Thurs., 2-5pm; Fri., 2 to 10pm; Sat., 10am to 5pm; and Sun., 11am to 5pm.

Bob Segar and the Silver Bullet Band at Boston Garden, Thurs. & Fri., Sept. 21 & 22, 8pm; tickets $3.50.

Willie Alexander and the Boom Boom Band at the Paradise, Thurs., Sept. 21, 8pm; tickets $3.50.

Billy Joel at Boston Garden, Sat., Sept. 30, 8pm; tickets $10.50, $9.50 & 8.50.

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In addition, the Navy has opportunities for almost every major at MIT.

Come in and get the facts. We're in room 20E-125. Or call x3-2991 and talk to LCDR Urmston.

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