Romeo, Juliet, and the IRA

Romeo and Juliet, performed by the Boston Shakespeare Company, directed by Gav- en Cameron-Webb.

The BSC opens its 1982-1983 season with an entertaining if unnatural perform- ance of Shakespeare's most famous ro- mantic tragedy, Romeo and Juliet. The production is very well staged, particularly the fight scenes, and it is well-acted all around, with special mention to Henry Woronicz (noted last year's BSC season) as a very bawdy and very dynamic modern punk Mercutio.

Yes, that's right, punk. The BSC's new- artistic director, Gavin Cameron-Webb, could not let it be that the play in Verona, as did the world's greatest English playwright, but put it in a different, more contemporary locale was needed. Unfortunately, he did not choose New York City (a la West Side Story) but instead selected Belfast, Northern Ireland, with the Prince as the head of the ma- chine-gun-wielding British occupation forces.

While Northern Ireland contains much the same senseless hatred and feuding that Romeo and Juliet are supposed to have its audience has seen the play be- fore, and they downplay the scene in which Romeo and Juliet are supposed to be falling madly in love, so that it seems a bit hard to believe the two are instantaneously engrossed.

Yet, once this scene is past, Mark Robins is acceptable as the lover/revenge-kill- er Romeo, and Jacqulyn Riggs delivers a fine interpretation of the tough role of the 13-year-old Juliet in jeans.

While most of the actors eschew an Irish accent, the three best do not. These are Sandra Shipley as Juliet's loquacious friend and, of course, YWoronicz as Mercutio, who engages the whip-wielding Tyrant in a slashing street fight. The production's serious flaws, the set- ting and the editing, are presumably all the director's fault. If you can tolerate these changes, then you might enjoy the play, if only to watch the actors circumvent a scene in which Romeo and Juliet are supposed to befalling madly in love, so that it seems a bit hard to believe the two are instantly engrossed.

The play remains powerful and moving, with an entertaining if unnatural perfor- mance. Indeed, if you're unable to visit with us, send a resume or detailed letter of interest to: Ms. Laura Bogg, College Relations Department, Booz-Allen & Hamil- ton, 200 Melrose Street, Cambridge, MA 02140. We're looking for innovative and highly talented people with degrees in Electrical Engineering, Computer Science, or related fields. If you're ready for the challenge of a consulting career, stop by and investigate Booz-Allen. We're one of the largest, most prestigious, international management and technological consulting firms in the world.

If you're unable to visit with us, we're one of the largest, most prestigious, international management and technological consulting firms in the world, with preppiness well on the way to being under control, we should be prepared for yet another invasion, and this time it comes from our Western shores. The Val- ley Girls' Guide to Life is a quasi-entertaining handbook on how to talk, act, dress, and think like the so-called "Val" - as if anyone, judging from the book's descriptions, would ever want to do something like that. The book lists the "necessities" (a boyfriend, a blow- dryer, a walkman, and at least one gold chain, "status symbols") (a health cha-