

## 'Yellow Dress' illustrates domestic violence vividly

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[Original Article](#)

Couples have issues. Anyone who has been in a relationship can tell you that things don't always go as swimmingly as one would hope. In "The Yellow Dress," a one-woman show that came to Drew this Thursday in the University Center, Anna and Rick are a dysfunctional couple. The fictional couple was born of the stories of hundreds of relationships gone bad, researched and combined into one illustration of the dangers of dating violence and sexual coercion.



John Bone Rydia Vielehr as Anna, clad in her character's blood-stained yellow dress, gave a stunning performance

The scene was set by Rydia Vielehr, a member of Deana's Educational Theater, who carried off the entire presentation with a spirit that brought the character of Anna, the college freshman who was in love, out of the storyline and into the lives of the audience.

The play starts out on a simple premise: Anna has just been dumped by Rick, who is taking a new girlfriend to the spring semi-formal dance. Obviously upset, Anna prepares to confront Rick and his new date to give his girlfriend some inside information on what Rick is really like—and just maybe win Rick back too.

Something is amiss, however, and the show seems to emit an eerie vibe. Things are off in subtle ways, giving the impression there is more to this story than Anna is telling the audience. It feels as if her little comments on situations are hints, like she is trying to reach out and tell everything, despite being held back by something. "I've been through a lot in the past 24-hours." Vielehr mused, explaining why she seems to be frazzled. The final scene of the story told of Anna's last encounter with her abusive boyfriend, the final act of violence that left her dead by the side of the road, with blood staining her favorite yellow dress.

Immediately after the last lines of the show, the audience was silent, processing everything that had just been thrown at them.

Kate Thomas ('14) broke the silence first, summing up everyone's feelings, saying, "That was intense." Chelsea Hunt ('14) agreed. "It was a program worth going to."

After the play, there was a question and answer session with Vielehr that addressed what warning signs Anna had ignored and what resources were available to anyone who may currently find themselves in a similar situation. There was a representative from the Jersey Battered Women's Service who talked about help lines to call, and Dean of Campus Life and Student Affairs Frank Merckx addressed the audience on what the university could do to help anyone who felt they needed it. It was a public service announcement, information session and theatre performance all in one.