By Kendra Kingsley THE BATTALION

Viewers be warned: "Rent' is not your old-fashioned Broadway production. Without shying away from contemporary issues such as AIDS and unbridled sexuality, "Rent" is at once shocking, energetic and enlightening.

Opening with roommates Mark (who has just been dumped by his lesbian girlfriend, Maureen) and Roger (a struggling musician reeling from his girlfriend's death) the plot unfolds through a series of energetic and contagious songs.

The roommates are in danger of being evicted by Benny, their new landlord - and ex-roommate - who inherited the apartment building and its next-door lot

With this newfound power, Benny plans to build a cyber-arts studio on the lot - which will ultimately mean

leaving its homeless occupants without a place to sleep. What follows is a series of plot twists conveyed through an energetic score of songs - notably "Tango: Maureen," "Over the Moon," and "La Vie Boheme."

While the plot is at times difficult to follow, the raw talent of the cast more than compensates. In particular, the vocal talents of Justin Rodriguez (Angel), Caissie Levy (Maureen)

and Kevin Spencer (Roger) could easily put Britney or the Backstreet Boys out of business.

striking about "Rent" sion – and not simply the socially acceptable kind takes place between tw sexual lovers.

Instead, the play exp relationships of HIV-p homosexual men, emoti aggressive lesbians and ar S&M dancer and her traus

tized lover. In short, "Rent" doesn appoint. Instead, it delive energy and an unflinching sage to live, in the word

box office before tickets

NEWS IN BRIEF

Richmond City Council votes to honor slave who plotted revolt

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) - The City Council in this former capital of the Confederacy voted unanimously to honor a slave who plotted a revolt.

The resolution calling Gabriel Prosser an "American patriot and freedom fighter" commemorates the 202nd anniversary of his hanging on Oct. 10, 1800, in Richmond. Dozens of conspirators also were executed after two slaves told their masters of the

"This resolution seeks to correct an error in history whereby Gabriel has been seen by many as a criminal, as opposed to a patriot and a freedom fighter," Councilman Sa'ad El-Amin told the council Monday.

The resolution was opposed by Ron Doggett, Virginia president of the European American Unity and Rights Organization.

"When you honor Gabriel, you honor his planned intentions. And his planned intentions were mass murder and terror," Doggett said. Prosser's plot called for killing whites with weapons made from farm tools. The slaves planned to set fires, commandeer the city arsenal, take Gov. James Monroe hostage and then negotiate their

Call for more family concern sparks debate among feminist groups

NEW YORK (AP) - A call for a "motherhood movement" proved controversial Tuesday as feminists - including the author of a book about high-achieving, childless women - sparred over issues of work and family.

Sylvia Ann Hewlett, whose Creating a Life: Professional Women and the Quest for Children landed her on "Oprah" and the cover of Time, said that American women face "painful, difficult trade-offs."

"It turns out that almost uniquely in the world, in this country somewhere between a third and a half of women in professional careers will end up leading lives without children,"

Kim Gandy, president National Organizatio Women,

Gandy said that an analy census data by the Eco Policy Institute found that 's ried high-achieving wome exactly as likely to have had by ages 36 to 40 as all other ried women working full time percent in both groups."

The two women spoke symposium sponsored Barnard College and the Inst for American Values

"For much of the second the 20th century, moth and the concerns of m were outside the mainstr the women's movement the organizers, a consorti women's groups seeking to oncile feminism and m

"That simply is not a fact true statement," said Gandy said feminists have fough family-friendly policies like parental leave.

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