

Naomi Ramage
ENGL 339 – Beckett and Pinter
Prof Hale
Play reviews – “Krapp’s Last Tape”

Tynan, Kenneth. Rev. of “Krapp’s Last Tape”, by Samuel Beckett. *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*. Ed. L. Graaver and R. Federman. London and New York: Routledge, 1979. 2 Nov. 1958: 189-192. Print. In this highly critical review of “Krapp’s Last Tape,” Kenneth Tynan writes a short parody of Beckett’s play entitled “Slamm’s Last Knock.” Tynan’s critiques of the play are scattered throughout this piece and embedded in the narration and dialogue of the fake play, such as on the crumpled pieces of paper that read “Just another dose of nightmare gibberish from the so-called author of ‘Waiting for Godot’” (190). Near the end, the supporting character Seck launches into longer segments of monologue-like dialogue that directly express Tynan’s views, such as “Unique, oblique, bleak experience, in other words, and would have had same effect if half the words were other words. Or any words” (191).

Brustein, Robert. Rev. of “Krapp’s Last Tape”, by Samuel Beckett. *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*. Ed. L. Graaver and R. Federman. London and New York: Routledge, 1979. 22 Feb. 1960: 192-193. Print. Drama critic and professor Robert Brustein highly praises “Krapp’s Last Tape” as being “very possibly [Beckett’s] best, dramatic poem about the old age of the world” (191). While still focused on such usual subjects of absurd theater as “the alienation, vacuity, and decay of life upon a planet devoid of God and hope,” the critic argues that this work is fresh in its “extraordinary economy of the writing, the absolute flawlessness of the form” (192). In fewer words, Brustein praises Beckett for two different kinds of uses of props on-stage. First, the tape recorder allows two different timelines to be portrayed simultaneously, cutting down the time of the play. Secondly, Beckett also manipulates props to demonstrate Krapp’s

aging self. For example, the visual clutter in Krapp's background represents the figurative and literal surrounds of his past that are encroaching upon his present life.

Aaron, Jules. Rev of *Krapp's Last Tape. Not I. Happy Days. Act without Words I* by Samuel. *Educational Theatre Journal* 25.1 1973: 102-104. Print. In this review, the critic mostly focuses on the certain adaptation of three of Beckett's plays, one of which being "Krapp's Last Tape." Before praising the director and the cast of this version, Jules Aaron credits the play as being about an "isolated man confronted by himself," both his past and future selves. The critic praises the implications and practicality of the cluttered background, the timing and details behind the stage directions, and the body language and physical portrayal of Krapp's character.