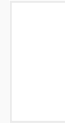




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Status, Provisional
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The Theatregoer How To Make A Woman at the Caravan Theatre every Friday and Saturday through Nov. 1

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By **Jill Curtis**,
October 2, 1969

"WELL. I can wash out forty-four pairs of socks and hang'em on the line, Y'know I can wash and iron two dozen shirts 'fore you can count from one to nine. I can slip up a great drip off along from a drinnin's can. Throw it in the skillet. do the shoppin'. and be back before it melts

traditionalism. For those of you are still une
Caravan Theatre and find out how downtrod
envied: thrust at birth into a machine which
toward that great goal of FEMININITY. At tl
tortured into curls, and a body either Nutran
prepared to find her niche.



choice involved. One may be seduced by the security of a haven into a life of bored housewifery. Or if power is your game, you may choose the emasculating Big Mama costume. If neither of these appeals, you can give up both power and security with the "loose broad" approach. Even the "enlightened" wife who keeps her career finds that her husband's work takes precedence over hers and winds up completely frustrated and unsatisfied. Russian Roulette with six bullets is not much of a game.

The villains of the piece are the wily, arrogant, and ego-tripping males. They want a home, a Mother, and sex, and they get them at the cost of violating the individuality of their women. Though they try to rationalize their selfish actions, the admission of selfishness is more valid to them than that of weakness. "I've opened up a whole new world of instinctual pleasures for you," says The Hunter to his bride whom he has just raped. When she remains moaning on the floor, he comes back with, "Well, you'll learn to like it... as I do."

I don't quite buy it. The men in the play have as little dimension as its women and are faced with equally bleak alternatives. There is no intrinsic reason why a man should enjoy supporting a bored wife or being dominated by an emasculating one. Though he may not have to stagnate in his home, there are millions of jobs he could get which are as stultifying as housekeeping. And we are back again to the overworked villain-society.

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In spite of what we hear from the Women's Liberation Front, men do not have absolute control over the direction in which society grows. The female population is large: if they did not at least tacitly support the status quo, it would evolve into something different. It is impossible to write off the propaganda about "a woman's place" as a male conspiracy. The next time you happen to

choice, and perpetuate the system by passing the same alternatives on to their children. For a playwright to berate society for its failures is generally futile-but less futile than choosing an illegitimate scapegoat.

IN SPITE of this criticism, *How To Make A Woman* raises undeniably important questions in an intelligent way. And playwright Stan Edelson has come up with a script which is genuinely entertaining while dealing with topics which generally affect an audience like ether.



mechanical mass production of women is conceivable. Aili Singer and Barbara Fleischman lead a fine cast, all of whom turn in assured performances in difficult roles.

Director Bobbi Edelson has constructed a symbolic drama whose characters are representations with whom one identifies on an intellectual rather than emotional level. She has emphasized the ritualized aspects of becoming a woman, where each step toward role "choice" is predetermined. In this light, the girls' bewildered resistance hasn't a chance against the system.

The most intriguing comment of the evening was made in the discussion after the play. Someone had asked a chick from the Women's Liberation Front exactly what the goal of the Movement is. Do they want equality with men? "No," she said, "it would be pretty stupid to settle for a deal that lousy."

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