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Someone Must Wash the Dishes: An Anti-Suffrage Satire

Sponsored by the Somerset Hills Branch of AAUW



The “Side-Splitting” Monologue That Helped Women Win the Ballot

March 12, 2019

6:30 for AAUW branch members, 7:00 for general public

Bernards Township Library - 32 S. Maple Ave., Basking Ridge NJ

**PRESENTED BY THE NEW JERSEY HUMANITIES COUNCIL’S
PUBLIC SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

American women won the right to vote in 1920—after 72 long years! As we near the 2020 centennial of Woman Suffrage and face the challenges that still remain, it’s astonishing—and fun—to look back at women’s arguments AGAINST voting.

Someone Must Wash the Dishes: An Anti-Suffrage Satire does just that:

“Woman suffrage is the reform against nature,” declares its unlikely, but irresistibly likable, heroine.

“Ladies, get what you want. Pound pillows. Make a scene. Make home a hell on earth—but do it in a *womanly* way! That is so much more dignified and refined than walking up to a ballot box and dropping in a piece of paper!”

Someone Must Wash the Dishes was written in 1912, by Marie Jenney Howe, a prominent *pro*-Suffragist and Unitarian minister. Howe satirizes arguments seen as accurate in their day, but laughable in ours. This fictional “Anti” sincerely believes being a “womanly woman” will keep the Home intact and rescue the Nation from anarchy. “She is charming, obsessed, oblivious—stylish in her wardrobe, but muddled in debate. What her husband tells her goes in one ear and out her mouth,” laughs her portrayer: professional actress **Michèle LaRue**.

Labeled “wicked” when it debuted in Manhattan, and “side-splitting” in Cape May, NJ,

Someone Must Wash the Dishes was directed by the late **Warren Kliewer**, producing artistic director of The East Lynne Company, which he founded to revive undeservedly lost works from America’s late-19th and early-20th centuries. **Dishes** has convulsed audiences from Connecticut to Texas to Washington State.

LaRue tours nationally with her repertoire of 30 different *Tales Well Told*—vibrant stories from America’s Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Her 400 sponsors have included libraries and historical societies; colleges and universities; women’s clubs, theatres, senior communities, military bases, private homes, and international conferences.

An Illinois native, long ago transplanted to New Jersey, **LaRue** is a member of Actors’ Equity Association and SAG-AFTRA. As a writer and editor, she has collaborated on several notable theatre books. For photos and information about booking her productions, visit <http://www.michelelarue.com>.

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