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# 'Annie Get Your Gun' Is Proof There's No Biz Like Show Biz

By WALTER LAZENBY

It was about time for a revival of "Annie Get Your Gun." This thirty-year-old musical comedy has at least half a dozen eminently singable Irving Berlin tunes in it, as well as two or three other songs that are more interesting musically; and one of its hits, "There's No Business Like Show Business," has become all entertainers' theme song.

What's more, it is dated enough to seem quaint when set alongside current ideas and attitudes. Its story of a proud markswoman's success and her romantic entanglement with a male

chauvinist cannot help echoing protests arising within the Women's Liberation Movement. It now seems more appropriate to smile ruefully than to cheer when Sitting Bull advises Annie Oakley to play dumb and helpless; and the ending, originally intended to be a happy one, can only be disappointing to those who see her capitulation as a defeat.

The thrust of many of the songs has also changed. The anti-intellectual ditty "Doin' What Comes Natur'lly" only went along with popular Hollywood attitudes about hillbillies in 1946; now it chimes in with the philosophy of the "Do your own thing"

school.

Back then, "The Girl That I Marry" seemed like a simple waltz conveying a man's

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dream of the ideal girl; now its lyrics convict him of sexist bias for wanting to limit women's roles too narrowly.

In suggesting that simple things are enough, "I Got the Sun in the Morning" seems to reflect a recent casualness about material things, and without sounding Pollyannaish. "Anything You Can Do" cutely carries on the war between the sexes, but "They Say It's Wonderful" is only an old-fashioned romantic ballad.

But of course I don't advise sitting reflectively through the lively production being staged at Eastern as the closing show of the summer season. You'll miss too many appealing details.

Sparing no effort, Director Gerald Sullivan has taken every opportunity to give the script full embodiment in

visual effects (sets, costumes) and dynamic movement (singers' pantomimes, dancers' routines). The Wild West Pitch-Dance, designed by choreographer Alice Stoughton, has real sparkle and succeeds in creating atmosphere. Jacqueline Smith's backdrop for the ballroom scene attains the right impression of grandeur. And Delbert Simon's larger-than-usual orchestra sounds so good you'll think you're in a Forty-Second Street Theatre when the overture <sup>begins</sup>

Though it is fitting to notice that Peggy Burke gives a spunky performance as Annie, using clear diction and a very expressive face; and that Jim Kleckner effectively portrays Frank Butler's petulance and self-centeredness; and that Michael Boyll gives an energetic performance as Charlie Davenport, the important point is that from first to last this is an ensemble success. The entire cast seem to be doing their very best to entertain, seemingly convinced that there really is no business like show business.

## 'Annie' Extended

The run of "Annie Get Your Gun" has been extended. In addition to the regularly scheduled performances Friday and Saturday evenings at 8 and Sunday afternoon at 2, an extra performance will be given Thursday evening August 1