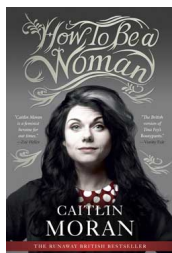


Brilliant author needs mouth washed out with soap, but nails women's issues

Written by BY TERRY MATHEWS, News-Telegram Arts Editor
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I first heard about Caitlin Moran's bestselling book, "How to Be a Woman" on National Public Radio. The British columnist was being interviewed by Terri Gross on "Fresh Air."

It was one of those driveway moments when you arrive home, but stay in your car until the program you're listening to is over.

Moran grew up on the wrong side of London, one of too many mouths for her hippie parents to feed.

"I am 13 years old, I am 13 stone [184 pounds], I have no money, no friends, and boys throw gravel at me," she writes. "It's my birthday, and I went to bed at 7.15 p.m."

She eventually lost weight, found a job as a columnist. She had a lot of randy sex before she married, had two children and made the decision to have an abortion when she found out she was pregnant for the third time.

Her sister had a more practical approach to being a mother.

"I don't want children anyway," Caz says. "So I am getting nothing out of this whatsoever. I want my entire reproductive system taken out and replaced with spare lungs, for when I start smoking. I want that option. This is pointless."

For all her xxx-rated language, Moran does a good job examining the juggling act all women must perfect – and despite the adult subjects she tackles, she is fearless when shedding light on how far women have yet to go before we find a level playing field at home – and in the workplace.

☐☐☐ *Warning: This book contains adult situations, sometimes over-the-line graphic in nature, and language. I'm from the 1960s but Moran left me slack-jawed. On the other hand, parts made me laugh so loudly, Mr. Mathews and Maggie the dog came into the room to see what had happened.*