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Comic, moving insight into life of a fag-hag

Review:
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SEX is an ageless and all consuming beast, one to which we devote more time and energy in thought than in action. Sex is also great box office, and rarely better than with Penny Arcade's *Bitch Dyke Fag-Hag Whore* — and I don't just say that to all the shows.

Yes, this is a sex show. Yes, there are skimpily clad exotic male and female dancers. Yes, Miss Arcade gets her kits off at the end. But, while this is a show about sex, this is not a sex show.

The dancers are in chains and leather briefs (very brief). They dance but never strip. Like Penny, you become close to these charac-

ters. We enter their lives with tales of an Italian Mom straight from American gangster movies, the 'slut-ability' of certain popular makes of play dolls for girls and comic tirades against all forms of religion.

A young public packed into Cork's Everyman Palace to gain a comic, moving semi-autobiographical insight into the life of a woman foster-parented by gay men. She grew up to be a fag-hag, befriending the likes of Quentin Crisp and Andy Warhol.

We learn that the US Army and the Vatican are run by gay white homophobic men: "Who else would want to join them? The politicians are pulling the wool over our eyes — and it's 75% polyester — wast-

ing time on whether or not gay men should be allowed in the army. Gay men run the army," said Penny.

"The anti-gay soldiers talk about being afraid to drop soap in the shower, having to bend down to pick it up. Does make sense to you? Would you trust these men to hold onto a hand grenade when they can't even hold onto a bar of soap?"

The biggest criticism for the show has not actually come from the right wing, but from feminist groups who feel that Penny is degrading herself by revealing her body.

She said the right wing knows better than to speak out against the only show to pack theatres with anyone other than the usual 30 art students who will watch any old thing.

The truth is rather that this show is not pornographic or erotic. It does not shock; it touches us, teaches us about the sexuality of the majority through a gay minority we understand a little better on leaving. It is also hilarious.