

 **TOP GIRLS** Caryl Churchill's 1982 masterpiece serves its dramatic dessert first, opening with a dreamy postmodern dinner party attended by notorious females plucked from the last 1,000 years. But serving this sweet isn't easy: it's painstaking work calculated to release the material's power most effectively. Churchill's one of that elite class of writers who make experimentation seem organic, catalyzing both immediate issues and broader associations with her portrait of Marlene, a businessworld warrior who's abandoned her child along with her proletarian roots. As such the play is as much about class and culture as feminism, intimating that modern womanhood can easily be the worst of all worlds. Director Elizabeth Schwan-Rosenwald and an excellent cast realize Churchill's deep characterizations and daring alienations perfectly. A triumph. --Brian Nemtusak Through 3/29: Thu-Sat 8 PM, Sun 7 PM, Live Bait Theater, 3914 N. Clark, 773-944-5692, \$15.