

# Review #41 : *The More The Merrier* (1943)

Jean Arthur and Joel McCrea

## TRAILER

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ebqivnHyunA&list=PLE5448184AB222F3F>



With *The More The Merrier* George Stevens made a comedy based on wartime housing conditions in Washington. In this sparkling, warm and refreshing screwball comedy about the trials of living in a nation's overcrowded capital, a Washington girl rents half of her four-room apartment to a daffy old gentleman, who in turn rents half of his half to an eligible young man. And thereupon starts a succession of mad and confusing incidents. The young lady is a stickler for system. She is also half-heartedly engaged to the assistant regional coordinator of something known as the OPL. But after a week of living in a four-room apartment with the two gentlemen, she is not exactly willing to get married with him. I leave you to guess why...

**Four writers prepared the script** and theirs — to judge by the product — is a genuine labor of love. The situations are not especially novel but the approach is joyous and their dialogues have the **spontaneity of impromptu and unrehearsed wit**. George Stevens has brilliantly directed in the same **off-hand and impulsive style**.



**Miss Arthur plays with spirit and with charm as the sorely put-upon little lady.** Her indignation then nervous submission to the advances of Joel McCrea are a tickling delight. Mc Crea plays the young man with amusing and irresistible bumptiousness. But it is Charles Coburn who really is the comical crux of the film and he handles the job in fine fettle. You'll love his Benjamin Dingle if you have a heart in your breast. And you'll love *The More The Merrier* because it is so fun and spirited. A five-star production ! +++