

Playbill, Play Ball

By Linda Howard Cooke

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DEDICATION

*To stage moms, drama dads and student thespians everywhere:
Keep fighting the good fight.*

STORY OF THE PLAY

Courtney Hanson, high school junior and avid protester, claims that her high school has turned athletics into a religion, violating the separation of church and state. After numerous meetings with the hapless school principal Courtney and her mother have decided to sue the school district. The characters interact in a series of scenes at the school, at a sports fundraiser, and at a PTO meeting. Some say Courtney has finally gone around the bend, while others say it's high time someone stood up for academics and the arts. Either way, it's all anyone is talking about, and that's exactly how Courtney likes it.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

A ten-minute version of this play was performed through the Angels Theatre Collective in Lincoln, NE, in July of 2019. The cast featured Kali Maytum as Courtney, Madi Pavlik as Georgia, Braxton Balton as the school principal, and Tyler Thieman as the Hansons' attorney. It was directed by Tami Maytum.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(13 - 24 total. 2 m; 5 w; 6 - 17 flexible with doubling.)

PRINCIPAL CARLSON: Hapless administrator.

GEORGIA MALLORY: (W) Timid but frustrated mom. She becomes obsessed with power.

COURTNEY HANSON: (W) Georgia's obnoxious daughter. She turns into a decent sort.

MITCH FAULTER: Attorney for Courtney and Georgia. Can double as CALLER 1/GRAD 1.

BRITTANY: (W) Courtney's good-humored friend, torn over lawsuit. Can double as CALLER 2.

GUSTAVO: (M) Dating Courtney, but unsure how to deal with her. Can double as PARENT 1.

MRS. CLAWSON: Substitute teacher. Can double as GRAD 2.

JAMISON: (M) Typical dumb jock. Can double as PARENT 3.

MRS. ADELMAN: Elderly alumna. Can double as KENT the school board president.

CINDY: (W) Brittany's mom and an avid sports team booster. Can double as GRAD 1.

SHERRIE: (W) Another booster mom at the bake sale. Can double as GRAD 4.

KENT: The school board president. Can double as MRS. ADELMAN.

TYSON or TANIA: Podcast student journalist. Can double as GRAD 3.

BRANDON or BRANDI: Podcast student journalist. Can double as PARENT 2.

EXTRAS: As a tech person, students and parents, callers to a podcast, and the audience at a PTO meeting.

SETS

PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE: desk & chair, 2 guest chairs, filing cabinet, and multi-line phone (Scene 1, Scene 6)

MATH CLASSROOM: student desks, whiteboard or chalkboard (Scene 2)

BAKE SALE: long table, paper plates of "baked goods" wrapped in plastic (Scene 3)

JOURNALISM CLASSROOM: table, 6 chairs, mics, and multi-line phone (Scene 4)

AUDITORIUM: folding chairs, 2 microphone stands (Scene 5)

PROPS

flip chart

pointer

thick file folder

notes

backpack with big chain and padlock

purse(s) and wallet(s)

tacky lamp

baked goods

ten-dollar bill

shopping basket

five-dollar bill

2 microphone stands

SOUND EFFECTS

school bell

musical tone for announcements

knock on door

ringing phone

Scene 1

(AT RISE: LIGHTS up on principal's office. PRINCIPAL CARLSON is doing something silly, that would be embarrassing if anyone saw it – trimming his nose hair, dancing to the radio, etc. Timidly, GEORGIA pokes her head around the door and catches him. Embarrassed, he drops what he's doing.)

GEORGIA: Mr. Carlson? Are you busy? You look busy. I could leave and come back or leave and not come back.
(SHE starts to back out.)

CARLSON: *(Ushers HER back in.)* Don't be silly, Mrs. ... um....

(HE gestures at her to be seated. SHE inches toward the chair.)

GEORGIA: Mallory. I'm sorry to barge in like this, but you've cancelled twice already.

CARLSON: I'm sorry about that. Nice to finally meet you.

GEORGIA: But we have met before, several times.

CARLSON: I do apologize. Was it at a volleyball game?

GEORGIA: No.

CARLSON: Track team fundraiser?

GEORGIA: No.

CARLSON: Sports booster club meeting?

GEORGIA: No.

CARLSON: Then I'm stumped.

GEORGIA: National Honor Society induction.

CARLSON: Are we still doing NHS?

GEORGIA: And the school orchestra concert.

CARLSON: *(Snaps his fingers, remembering.)* Yeah, I was awake for some of that.

GEORGIA: And also, I've met with you here in your office before. Twice.

CARLSON: Oh, wait a minute, you're not ... is your daughter—?

(CARLSON moves to block the door, but he's too late. COURTNEY bursts in, with flip chart and pointer.)

COURTNEY: Good afternoon, Mr. Carlson.

CARLSON: It was. Well, let's get down to it: What's got you ticked off today, Courtney?

COURTNEY: Mr. Carlson, why must you insinuate that I'm some sort of malcontent?

CARLSON: *(Moves to his filing cabinet and pulls out a thick folder of documents recording his dealings with Courtney and drops it heavily on his desk.)* Only because you've found fault with the school calendar, the teachers, the curriculum, the materials and the class schedule. And that's just this academic year. *(Sits at his desk, opens the file folder and reads from the documents.)*

GEORGIA: I understand what you're saying, Mr. Carlson, but we're only trying to—

CARLSON: Exhibit A: Last year, in a fit of political correctness run amok, you complained that your social studies unit wasn't presenting Black or Latino perspectives on the historical events being studied.

GEORGIA: Well now, ethnic diversity is certainly—

CARLSON: It was a unit on the French revolution!

COURTNEY: It was the content itself that should be under indictment!

CARLSON: Exhibit B: This year you insisted that in lieu of an algebra final, you be allowed to present your mastery of the subject ... through interpretive modern dance.

COURTNEY: Would it kill you to support the arts?

CARLSON: Just tell me what the complaint of the day is, so I can get out of here. I've got a volleyball game to get to.

COURTNEY: Actually, Mr. Carlson, this time I'm not here to complain, but to take action.

CARLSON: Going to chain yourself to something again, are you?

COURTNEY: As soon as he gets here, I'll let my lawyer explain. *(Melodramatically.)* This time, Mr. Carlson, we're suing.

CARLSON: On what grounds, I'd like to know?

End of Freeview

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