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THE BULLY SHOW!

an interactive play about bullies for a cast of 2m/1f
by Brian Guehring

Draft # 6.33

2011 Omaha (with cyber) production draft

The Bully Show starts with the audience arriving at the live taping of the pilot episode of a new game show. The host, though, has made some last minute changes to the show to the surprise of the assistants. Audience members are chosen to become contestants as they play games where they have to identify who could be a bully or have to identify which scenes show bullying. As the game show progresses, the host pushes around one of the assistants in order to entertain the crowd. Eventually the host pushes too far and the whole game show grinds to a halt as the three characters confront their problems.

The Bully Show is a Theatre In Education (TIE) play. Theatre In Education combines theatrical elements with interactive moments in which audience participants work with actor-teachers towards an educational or social goal, using tools of theatre in service of this goal. The production of *The Bully Show* and its accompanying educational materials hope to challenge upper elementary and middle school students to reconsider some of their assumptions about bullies and victims, to realize some of the consequences of bullying, and to stimulate further discussions of this issue. *The Bully Show* is geared to uniquely augment the bullying programs already being lead by school counselors and teachers. *The Bully Show* runs about 55 minutes.

Cast of Characters:

JOHNNY	smarmy TV quiz show host
CAROLE	perky game show assistant
FREDERICO	intelligent game show assistant

Audience is in role as studio audience for game show and contestants in the show. The actors playing Carole and Frederico act as the bullies, victims, and spectators for the role-playing within the show.

**selected by the Kennedy Center for the
2002 New Visions/New Voices National Forum for Works in Progress**
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This play was developed through improvisation and presented as a staged reading in May 2002, at the Kennedy Center, as part of **New Visions/New Voices 2002**, a national forum on works in progress for theater for young audiences, with the following production team:

director: Kevin Ehrhart
dramaturg: Michael Rupert stage manager: Scooter Krattenmakery
JOHNNY: Michael Jerome Johnson
VANNA: Elizabeth Pringle
FREDERICO: Ian Le Valley
discussion leader: Todd Lundon

The Bully Show was first produced by the Omaha Theater Company as a touring show into the schools in the winter of 2003 with the following cast and production team:

director: Kevin Ehrhart
dramaturg: Michael Miller set designer: Eric Voecks
costume design: Helen Humble sound design: Kevin Ehrhart
JOHNNY: Kevin Barratt
CAROLE: Amanda Kibler
FREDERICO: Brian Guehring

The Bully Show was subsequently produced by the Omaha Theater Company as a touring show into the schools and a public show at the Rose Blumkin Performing Arts Center in the winter of 2004 and 2005 with the following cast:

director: Kevin Ehrhart
assistant director: Janeve West
JOHNNY: Michael Wilhelm
CAROLE: Amanda Kibler
FREDERICO: Brian Guehring

The Bully Show was then produced by the South Carolina Children's Theater (Executive Director Debbie Bell) in the winter of 2005 and then again in the fall of 2005 with high school actors performing for an audience of 6th graders.

The Bully Show!

Introduction

(As the audience enters the playing space, they see the big flat background of a game show {this background also serves as a cover to create a backstage for the prop storage and costume changes}. The show logo is hidden when the audience enters. Three contestant podiums {with wipe on/wipe off boards and markers} and the host podium are set up in front of the set. Cheesy game show music is playing as audience enters.

CAROLE and FREDERICO are putting the final touches on getting ready for the show. CAROLE and FREDERICO introduce themselves in role and improvise conversations with groups of audience members to help them enter into role as the studio audience. For example:

CAROLE:

Welcome to our studio audience! Has anyone ever been to the taping of a television game show? Today we're taping a pilot of the new game show. A pilot is the first episode ever for a show. We'll then try to sell it to a major network for next season. Today will be exciting, because we choose all the contestants from the studio audience. Who would like to be a contestant today? Well good luck and enjoy the show.

FREDERICO:

Thanks for coming here today. Do you like game shows? What are your favorite game shows? Well today we're trying out a new game show that we hope gets picked up by a major television network. Its fabulous. What will really help us with the taping is if you guys can be really enthusiastic. Can you do it? Let's practice cheering really loudly . Great! Keep up that enthusiasm!

When all the students arrive , the game show assistants return to the set:

FREDERICO

Greetings everyone! For those of you that I didn't meet, my name is Frederico and this is Carole. We're just about ready to start and we're excited that you will be our first audience to see our game show. We will need your help during today's taping. Whenever Carol or I raise this sign (CAROLE raises applause sign) we need you to applaud as loudly as you can. But when this sign is raised, (CAROLE flips sign to read Quiet on the Set side) we need you to be as quiet as you can so the microphones can pick up the dialogue. Let's practice again(CAROLE raises applause sign. Audience applauds. CAROLE switches sign to Quiet sign. Audience gets quiet.) Excellent work, studio audience.

Our producer has just signaled me that we are ready to begin. Carole are you ready?

CAROLE

I'm ready.

FREDERICO

Studio audience are you ready? (*Studio audience shouts yes*). Great. We're starting in 5, 4, 3.....

(*FREDERICO mimes the last 2 numbers and then the theme music starts.*

The announcer is heard:

ANNOUNCER:

Do you want to be popular? Do you want to have lots of power? Do you like having control? Well this is the game show for you! Let's see who in the audience is ready to win this game! Here's our host: Johnny Jameson (*applause sign*)

JOHNNY

Thank you, thank you! I see some wonderful contestants out there! Some potential winners in our audience today, yes sirree. Are you ready to play? (*audience reacts*) Great! Let's go to Carole to learn the rules for our show!

CAROLE

Thank you, Johnny. For today's game show, we're going to play 3 sections. For each section, we're going to choose 3 contestants from the audience to join us on stage. The contestants will play the games until they hear this sound (*BUZZER sounds*) At that moment the section is over, and the contestant with the highest score will become a finalist. A total of 9 contestants today will vie for one of three places in our championship round and a chance to win our grand prize.

JOHNNY

And what is our grand prize, Rico?

FREDERICO (*to JOHNNY*)

Actually, I go by whole name, Frederico.

JOHNNY

Relax. Don't take yourself so seriously, Rico. Now, tell the audience about our grand prize.

FREDERICO

Today's grand prize will be year off from school, an all expense paid vacation, and a new home!

(Applause Sign)

SECTION 1

JOHNNY

I have a question for our studio audience. Who likes to win? Raise your hands high. You know it feels better than losing. Keep your hands in the air. These students already have an important quality to succeed in this show. Carole and Rico, choose our first three contestants from the students raising their hands.

FREDERICO

Don't you think it would be better to tell them what the show is about, first?

(JOHNNY glares at FREDERICO and clears his throat. CAROLE takes FREDERICO's arm and leads him away from JOHNNY. THEY select 3 contestants from the audience)

CAROLE

The contestants for section 1 are ready!

JOHNNY

Let's meet our contestants. At podium number 1, what's your name? *(contestant response)*. Would you like to have more power in your life? *(contestant response)*. I thought so. Welcome to my show. Contestant number 2, what's your name? *(contestant response)*. And would you to be famous with lots of fans? *(contestant response)*. I bet you would. Contestant number 3, congratulations on being selected. Tell our audience your name. *(contestant response)*. Do you think you are going to win? *(contestant response)*. Good luck to you. Lets give a big round of applause for our first three brave contestants! *(audience reaction)*.

I think we're ready! Let's start, for the first time ever:

(FREDERICO and CAROLE unveil the show logo as ALL announce different titles).

CAROLE and FREDERICO
The Bully Show!

JOHNNY
You Wanna Be a Bully!

(The logo says YOU WANNA BE A BULLY!)

JOHNNY *(repeating his title)*

You Wanna Be a Bully!

FREDERICO

Uh, Johnny, that's not the title we talked about in production meetings. When did the title change?

JOHNNY

It's my show. What I say, goes.

FREDERICO

What if one of these contestants doesn't want to be a bully?

JOHNNY

Are you kidding? Sure they do. They already said they want power and attention. Besides they don't have a choice anymore. *(laugh track)*

FREDERICO

But, that's not what we're trying to do...

CAROLE

Frederico, hey, Johnny hired us. He's in charge of the show. It's ok. Let's get ready for our first scenes.

(FREDERICO returns to CAROLE)

SECTION 1, Game 1: How to be a Bully?

JOHNNY

Our first game will be "How to be a bully?" *(applause sign)* Obviously, to be a successful bully, you will need a wide variety of techniques. To be the best bully, you have to know all the ways to be a bully. Contestants you are going to see five scenes and you have to decide which ones show bullying. After each scene, mark your board if you thought it showed bullying. Lets see scene 1.

(FREDERICO walks on as a tough guy. CAROLE acts as a neutral student .

The emphasis is on the bully)

FREDERICO

(threateningly) Hey, give me your lunch money or I'll beat you up.

(CAROLE gives up lunch money)

JOHNNY

Scene. (*CAROLE and FREDERICO pop out of character*) Great. Short, simple, and to the point. Was that bullying? Mark your board if you thought so. Let's see if scene 2 shows bullying?

(*CAROLE walks on as bully with FREDERICO as victim*)

CAROLE

Do you want to go to the mall with us? (*FREDERICO nods and gets hopeful*) Oh, I'm sorry, you can't go if you're wearing those shoes again. I told you yesterday and the day before that and the day before that, your shoes are so last year. Don't you have any taste at all? (*looking at his shirt*) Oops, I guess not. (*CAROLE laughs*) Oh, come on. Can't you take a joke? I was just joking. You are too sensitive. (*FREDERICO gains a little hope*) You're worse than a little girl. (*CAROLE laughs*) No wonder you don't have any friends. (*to off-stage friends*) He actually thought we were inviting him to the mall with us.

(*CAROLE laughs and walks off*)

JOHNNY

Scene. (*CAROLE and FREDERICO pop out of character*) That was interesting. She wasn't very nice, but there was no physical contact, right?

FREDERICO

She didn't touch me.

JOHNNY

Great. What did you think contestants? Did that scene show bullying? Lets see the third scene.

(*FREDERICO walks up to CAROLE*)

FREDERICO

Hey, have you gone on to Lincoln Loser.com? It's this great website where students can vote on the biggest loser in our school. Everybody in school knows about it. Oh, that reminds me...

(*FREDERICO takes a photo of her with his cell phone*)

I need to upload your photo. You're totally winning the vote! Congrats!

JOHNNY

Scene. (*CAROLE and FREDERICO pop out of character*) He is helping her win a contest. Contestants mark your boards if you thought that was bullying. Let's move on to scene 4.

(*CAROLE is standing at the locker. FREDERICO walks up*)

FREDERICO

Hey, how are you doing? (*CAROLE doesn't answer and in fact turns away. FREDERICO walks around to the other side of her*). Did you see American Idol last night? (*CAROLE looks at him icily and turns away*). Aren't you talking to me? (*FREDERICO taps CAROLE on the shoulder. SHE ignores it*). I thought we were friends. Did I do something wrong? (*CAROLE shrugs her shoulders and smiles*) What's going on today? Everyone is ignoring me today. Did you tell everyone to ignore me? Why? (*CAROLE smirks and crosses her arms. FREDERICO exits*)

JOHNNY

Scene. (*CAROLE and FREDERICO pop out of character*) Interesting. (*to the audience*) Let's get some help from the audience on that scene. How many in the audience think that silent treatment shows bullying? How many people think that wasn't bullying? Contestants take that into consideration. And now our last scene, #5.

(*FREDERICO and CAROLE enter as good friends. They laugh and smile during this scene*)

FREDERICO

Hey, goofy.

CAROLE

Good afternoon, string bean.

FREDERICO

Nice job during gym today. I liked how you completely missed the soccer ball when you tried to kick it.

CAROLE

At least I didn't trip every other time up the field.

FREDERICO

I know, I'm such a klutz.

CAROLE

I guess we shouldn't count on making our fortunes in professional sports.

JOHNNY

Scene. (*CAROLE and FREDERICO pop out of character*) Contestants, check your board for your final answer. For that ends game 1.

(CAROLE and FREDERICO return to their podium)

JOHNNY

Let's see who you voted for. Hold up your boards. Contestant 1 voted for scenes ____ (*JOHNNY reads answers out loud*) Interesting. Contestant 2 thought scenes ____ & ____ showed bullying (*JOHNNY reads answers from Contestant 2 out loud*). Contestant 3 identified scenes __, __, & ____ (*JOHNNY reads Contestant 3's answers*).

(if there is no disagreement, JOHNNY says: Are you sure about scene number 4?)

(JOHNNY reminds the audience which scene that was about such as: That's the scene where Carole wouldn't talk to Frederico.) Let's see if the audience agrees. Interesting. Let's see who's right. Freddy, tell us which scenes showed bullying.

FREDERICO

The correct answers are scenes 1, 2, 3 and 4. Bullying can be threatening and physical like scene 1. Bullying can include incessant teasing and name-calling like scene 2. **Using websites or email to make fun of someone from scene 3 was also bullying.** Even the silent treatment in the fourth scene is bullying. Bullying is repeatedly hurting another person who has less power than you do.

The last scene wasn't bullying, though. Good natured teasing between friends is not bullying. The fifth scene showed two good friends who weren't trying to hurt each other.

CAROLE

So each contestant gets 10 points for each correct scene they voted for. And -10 points if they voted for scene 5. So the scores after game one are ____

(CAROLE marks the score tally on each podium as she announces the score.)

Section 1: Game 2: Spot the Bully!

JOHNNY

Looks like we have a close competition after the first game. Anyone can still win this section. Lets move on to our next game, "Spot the Bully!" (*applause sign*) Contestants, Freddie and Carole are going to do a little play acting and portray four different students. You have to choose who *could* be a bully. Now to help you out, I will ask questions so you can get to know these students better. Remember contestants, it always helps a budding bully if he has role models to look up to. Let's meet the first student.

A is an overly large 12 year old 5th grader who enjoys stepping on ants and watching wrestling.

(FREDERICO walks on as A, the stereotypical bully)

JOHNNY

Welcome, A.

A

Yea. Whatever.

JOHNNY

So tell us, who's in your family?

A

My dad and two stupid older brothers.

JOHNNY

Do you like school?

A

No. I hate school.

JOHNNY

Are you good at school?

A

What do you think?

JOHNNY

Do a lot of kids at school like you?

A

No. But a lot of 'em are scared of me.

JOHNNY

Do you like your life?

A

No, my life stinks.

JOHNNY

Do you wish you had more stuff?

A (smiling a little evilly)

Yea.

JOHNNY

Thank you A. Lets meet our next student.

(CAROLE walks on as B, a confident young lady who hangs out with people like her)

B is an impeccably dressed 11 year old who enjoys church picnics and wearing matching clothes with her friends. Could she be a bully?

Welcome.

B

Hi, I'm B, that's spelled with a b.

JOHNNY

Where do you go to school?

B

I go to a small school in the country. I know everybody there.

JOHNNY

Do you like school?

B

Sure. My teachers all love me. I never get in trouble with them. And all my friends go to school with me.

JOHNNY

Do you have lots of friends?

B

Yes. All of us have so much in common. We're like clones of each other.

JOHNNY

What's your family like?

B

I live with my mother, my father, and my two little sisters. We go to church every Sunday.

JOHNNY

Well this should be an easy decision. Thank you B. Lets meet our next student.

(FREDERICO walks on as C, rich confident leader)

C is a popular 13 year old who likes to read the Wall Street Journal and play tricks on his butler. Welcome, C.

C

Greetings and salutations.

JOHNNY

Where do you go to school?

C

I go to a private school. Its the best school in the city. My parents give me the best of everything.

JOHNNY

Do you like school?

C

Certainly. I get all A's, I have lots of friends, and I date the best looking girls in my class. I even just got elected president of the student council.

JOHNNY

What do you want to be when you grow up?

C

I want to run my own international corporation. And I'll do it too.

JOHNNY

Thank you C. Lets meet our final student.

(CAROLE walks on as D, a tough young lady)

D is a no nonsense 12 year old who is often seen hanging out with her friends or sleeping in class.

How are you, D?

D

Ok.

JOHNNY

Who's in your family?

D

I live with my mom and my 5 younger brothers and sisters.

JOHNNY

What does your mom do?

D

I don't know. She has two jobs, doing cleaning or something.

JOHNNY

She must be gone a lot.

D

Yea.

JOHNNY

Do you take care of your little brothers and sisters?

D

There's no one else to do it.

JOHNNY

Your mom must appreciate that. Do you get good grades at school?

D

No. But its not my fault. The teachers always get on my case.

JOHNNY

Why?

D

I don't know. Like for not doing my homework, being late, falling asleep in class. Stupid stuff like that.

JOHNNY

You have to admit...

D

They don't know me. They have no idea what else I have to do. Who cares about school.

JOHNNY

Interesting. (*D exits*). Contestants you must now vote on these students: A, B, C and D. Who could be a bully? Please mark your boards.

(contestants mark their wipe-on/wipe-off boards as Final Jeopardy esque music plays)

FREDERICO

Time's up. Put down your markers.

JOHNNY

Let's see who you voted for. Contestants show us your boards. Contestant 1 voted for students ____ (*JOHNNY reads the answers out loud*) Contestant 2 thought students __,__, and __ could be bullies (*JOHNNY reads the answers from Contestant 2 out loud*) Contestant 3 wrote down students __ and __. (*JOHNNY reads Contestant 3's answers*). Interesting. Freddy, tell us who could be a bully?

(FREDERICO winces at the nickname)

FREDERICO

The correct answers are A, B, C, and D. Bullies can be rich or poor. Bullies can have lots of problems and low self-esteem or be very confident and popular. Boys and girls both can be bullies.

JOHNNY

So no one should give up hope. You all have the potential to be powerful, popular, and in control. You all could be a bully!

CAROLE

So each contestant gets 10 points for each bully they named. So our scores after game 2 are ____

(CAROLE moves the score tally on each podium to call out the score)

(Buzzer goes off)

JOHNNY

Well, that signal means our time is up for this first section.

****If there is a tie in score act out this section. If not, skip this indented dialogue.****

JOHNNY:

Looks like we have a tie. We'll have to move on to our tie breaker question. Contestants, I want you to guess the number answer to the following question. The contestant whose number is closest to the correct answer wins this section. Carole, what is our tie breaking question?

CAROLE

How many students in America stay home each day from school out of fear of bullies?

JOHNNY

Contestants, mark your boards. How many students in America do you think stay home each day from school out of fear of bullies? You have 5 more seconds.

FREDERICO

Time's up. Put down your markers.

JOHNNY

Contestant #1, how many students do you think? *(Contestant #1 answers)*
Contestant #2, what is your guess? *(contestant #2 answers)* Rico, what is the answer.

FREDERICO

According to the National Education Association, 160,000 students stay home from school each day out of fear of bullies.

JOHNNY

So, Contestant #_ was closest and therefore wins this section.

JOHNNY

So the winner is Contestant #_. *(applause sign)*

CAROLE

You're the first contestant to make it to the championship round! Come this way to the waiting area.

JOHNNY

Which we like to refer to as our "detention area." Which, of course, bullies know all about.

(CAROLE leads winner to championship round waiting area)

JOHNNY

Looks like you two don't have what it takes today. *(sound effect of flushing)* Better luck next time.

(FREDERICO leads other two contestants back to audience)

FREDERICO

Don't worry about it. Its better not to be a bully, anyway.

(JOHNNY glares at FREDERICO and clears his throat)

FREDERICO

I mean, thanks for playing the game.

JOHNNY

Who wants to join me up here for the next game? *(audience reaction)* Well we'll choose 3 more contestants right after this commercial break.

(JOHNNY walks off-stage and yells at off-stage assistants)

Where is my coffee? I was supposed to have an almond latte at my podium, people.

(During break FREDERICO and CAROLE wipe off contestant boards)

FREDERICO

I hate it when he calls me those stupid nicknames.

CAROLE

Its not that big of a deal.

FREDERICO

It is to me.

CAROLE

Frederico, he thinks those nicknames will be catchier.

FREDERICO

I asked him to stop, though, and he keeps using them. He's doing it on purpose.

CAROLE

You're just being sensitive. He's just acting. Johnny's trying to be funny in front of the camera.

FREDERICO

That's a good point. Maybe now when he's off camera, he'll listen to me. Thanks, Carole

(JOHNNY enters)

JOHNNY (to offstage stagehands)

A cinnamon roll is not a danish!

FREDERICO

Johnny, would you mind calling me Frederico during the show?

JOHNNY

I am.

FREDERICO

You're not. You're calling me nicknames like Freddy or Rico.

JOHNNY

Same thing.

FREDERICO

It's not. Its just that growing up a lot of kids made fun of my name....

JOHNNY

Got it. Hit your spot.

(FREDERICO goes to his spot)