

Teens 'N' Theater
Omaha Theater Company for Young People
2001 Farnam St.
Omaha, NE 68102

The Best of
PRIDE PLAYERS

**a collection of skits, parodies, scenes, and true monologues about being
a gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or straight allied teen**

created through improvisation by the teen actors of Pride Players 1-5

edited by Brian Guehring and Tracy Iwersen

Pride Players is an ensemble of open minded high school aged teenagers in Omaha, Nebraska that spends 6 weeks each year researching, brainstorming, improvising, rehearsing and performing a collection of skits, scenes, parodies, poetry and monologues exploring the issues facing gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and straight allied teens.

The Best of Pride Players is a collection of the most meaningful, poignant, hilarious, moving, silly, and representative scenes and monologues from the first five years of performances of **Pride Players**.

***Winner of a 2006 National Education Association Human and Civil Rights Award**

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Omaha Theater Company

The Best of **PRIDE PLAYERS**

Pride Players is an ensemble of open minded high school aged teenagers in Omaha, Nebraska that uses improvisation to create skits, scenes, parodies, and monologues exploring the issues facing gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and straight allied teens. The troupe first performed in 1999 in the Teens N Theater program at the Omaha Theater Company for Young People. The group continued to grow and expand through its first five years. By the summer of 2004, Pride Players had:

- included 71 teen creators (including 30 teens who were members for multiple years) from 21 different Omaha area schools.
- created and performed over 104 scenes and skits
- performed 28 true story monologues
- performed 18 times at the Rose Blumkin Performing Arts Center for over 2,250 (plus summer numbers) teens, parents, teachers, counselors, family and adults (including many sold out performances)
- toured to the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, PFLAG meetings, the Nebraskans for Peace conference, a national theater and education conference, and 3 area high schools for over 750 audience members
- helped raise over \$10,000 for local chapters of GLSEN and PFLAG through benefit performances
- earned a prestigious Performing and Community Transformation National Grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

To honor the 5 years of performances by the **Pride Players**, the Omaha Theater Company for Young People decided to perform **The Best of Pride Players**. Tracy Iwersen and Brian Guehring, the professional theater educators who founded and directed the troupe, reviewed the 5 productions to determine the best scenes and monologues. In the summer of 2004, all alumni of previous Pride Player productions were invited to work on **The Best of Pride Players**. These teens improvised, rehearsed, fine-tuned and performed these skits in August of 2004.

Pride Players has been an amazing experience. The group has helped countless teens find a an accepting group and a second home. This has helped the teen performers learn to express themselves and to become activists in their home, school, and community.

The Best of **PRIDE PLAYERS**

a collection of skits and monologues about being a LGBT or straight allied teen

1. CJ's Story Monologue about coming out 1 actor
This is a true story monologue performed by CJ about his coming out experience.
2. History Channel 3000 Homophobic Slurs Skit 4 actors
This idea was created through improvisation and then scripted by teen member Josh Mitchell.
3. Every Seven Seconds AIDS scene ensemble
This was created through improvisation and based on information provided by a presentation from the Nebraska AIDS Project.
4. Sarah's story Monologue about being lesbian 1 actor
This is a true story about being lesbian first performed
5. Happy and You Know It Transgender scene Ensemble
This is a scene created through improvisation
6. We are the Pride Players Group Poem Ensemble
Each ensemble creates a group poem expressing what Pride Players means to them. This poem was compiled from the first 5 poems

1. CJ's Story

This is CJ's true story.

My story starts in the beginning of last year. In ninth grade I was popular. I was in the school band. I was in JROTC. Everyone thought I was funny, people would listen to what I would say. I was making new friends left and right. I was really popular and nothing could get me down. Life was a beautiful rose, but even roses have their thorns.

One hot August afternoon, I was at a band competition that was like 2 hours away from my school. At the competition, I came out to a couple of my so called friends telling them I was bisexual. At first they stared at me, waiting for me to start cracking up saying, "Nah, I'm playin. I was just foolin." But I didn't. The expressions on their faces changed once they realized I was serious and they said nothing. But they told everyone. By the end of the night the whole band knew.

There is this one kid named Justin. He was sitting in the stands a couple seats down from me and he yells (and remember that every other band from every school in the district is there for the competition so they heard this) he yells "HEY CJ! ARE YOU BI?!!!!!!!"

I couldn't believe him. I just wanted to kill him, then shrink away into nothing. My mind started racing. What was one second seemed like 20 days. Should I lie? Should I tell him the truth? I just didn't know what to do. So I yelled back at him "Yes I'm bisexual."

Like a stone falling out of the sky, my popularity plunged to the abyss never to be seen again. The ride back to school was even worse. It felt like everyone was staring at me. Word got around school pretty fast and most of my friends stopped talking to me. Even those that I've known since my elementary days stopped talking to me. They would avoid me like I had this contagious disease and no one wanted to

catch it. I had people that I didn't even know that would just come up and ask "Hey are you that CJ dude who's bi?"

But it was not all bad. I joined the GSA and met new people. Make new friends and I was proud to be out of the closet. To tell you the truth, after a while you just stop caring about what other people think about you. And that's where I am now. This experience showed me those who were my friends and those who weren't and I love it.

In fact I wouldn't exchange it for anything in the world.

2 History Channel 3000 written by Josh Mitchell

(A History Channel Special set in 3000. Cameras focus on the host, EMILY)

EMILY

Hello and welcome to the History Channel, year 3000. I am your host, Emily McTate. Tonight, let us take a look back at the year 2004. And in particular, the treatment of people of sexual minorities. What was it like for people back then? Although nearly all of the records from that time period have been destroyed, what we do know has been pieced together from ancient relics, such as taped episodes of MTV Cribs and the plastic toys that come in cereal boxes.

Tonight we will explore the heterosexual prowess over gays and lesbians during this year. And to help us we have invited Professor Greenberg. Professor?

PROFESSOR

Thank you. It must be said that in the year 2004, citizens did not have greater forms of intellect. To demonstrate, I bring you a heterosexual couple from the year 2004, brought to you by modern travel of space and time. For those of you at home, these scenes may be frightening and barbaric.

(ADAM and KATIE enter)

KATIE

Hi, teddy bear, that assignment in chemistry was so gay.

EMILY

How archaic. What does this mean, professor?

PROFESSOR

Ah, you see Emily, the use of homosexual words such as "gay" were used to describe something that was bad, or unfavorable. So the sentence "That assignment was so gay" can be loosely be translated to the sentence "That assignment was unfavorable to me."

ADAM

Yeah, gum drop, our teacher is a fag.

EMILY

Why would he say that?

PROFESSOR

You see, here is where we come to another confusing subject. It was widespread for a person to use a word associated with gay people, such as “fag”, to describe a person that may not have been homosexual at all, as if to say “I do not like this person. Because homosexuality is bad, I will associate everything I do not like with it.”

KATIE

School is so queer.

PROFESSOR

School is so unfamiliar to me.

ADAM

Our principal is a homo.

PROFESSOR

Our principal is a scoundrel.

KATIE

And he’s married to a lesbo.

PROFESSOR

The principal, whom we just referred to as a homosexual a few moments earlier, is happily married, and I am jealous.

(BEAT)

ADAM

We’ve run out of words for gay people!
(ADAM and KATIE are distressed)

PROFESSOR

And this lack of oppressive words makes me uncomfortable and confused.

EMILY

Thank you very much, Professor, for bringing in your Neanderthals, I mean subjects, for this refreshing lesson in history. Tomorrow night we will take you on a journey, where we hope to find out another one of 2004’s most interesting questions: How did they come up with flavored dental floss?

3. Every Seven Seconds

(Ensemble enters stage. They hold their hands over their hearts.)

ALL *(patting their hearts)*

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

(All actors point to one person in the audience)
You have HIV.
(ACTORS move closer and spread out amongst the audience)

ALL *(patting their hearts)*
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
(All actors point to one person in the audience)
You have HIV.

ALL *(patting their hearts)*
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
(All actors point to one person in the audience)
You have HIV.
(ACTORS continue to pat their heart silently.)

MOLLY
Every 7 heartbeats someone is infected with HIV. Count with us.
(ACTORS encourage audience to join in)

ALL *(patting their hearts)*
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
(All actors point to one person in the audience)
You have HIV.

SETH
In less than 18 minutes, everyone in this theater could have been infected with HIV.

SARAH
Why is everyone being so silent?

FERRIS
Because 1 in 3 doesn't know they have it.

ALL *(patting their hearts)*
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.
(All actors open palm to entire audience)
You have HIV.

4. I am lesbian A true story monologue written by Sarah Alston

This is Sarah's true story.
When I look at myself, do you know what I think? How I identify and define myself? What the first thing that pops into my head is?

My name.

But, after that, I think LESBIAN. When I was coming out I never referred to

myself as a lesbian. I always said “I’m gay” or “queer” because anything sounds better than being a lesbian, but I didn’t know why. I felt this intense aversion to saying, quite simply, “I am a lesbian.”

When my parents confronted me about it, nobody used the “L” word. They kept repeating the word “choice” to describe what I was feeling. In fact they said they would love me no matter what I chose, which knocked the air out of my lungs.

But was this a choice? Was I choosing to do this?

Some part of my mind stated, as my mother had, “maybe you’re just lonely.” What a kicker. That was a little below the belt.

But I considered it. Was this a choice?

No. This was who I am. A part of who I am. But why did I still have trouble calling myself a lesbian?

I couldn’t figure it out. I was talking to my girlfriend about it, and she said, “When I first came out, I never said ‘I’m a lesbian’ because it makes it sound like a thing. I said ‘I am lesbian’ just like someone would say ‘I am gay.’ I didn’t like the way ‘I’m a lesbian’ singled me out.”

That made so much sense. The idea of calling myself simple lesbian was a revelation. Of course, she had no idea that she had just stated this groundbreaking information, so she continued to do as she does, leaving me to face the aftershock all alone in the passenger seat.

Holy hell, I thought. I’m lesbian.

5. HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT

(Scene opens with the actors acting like pre-school students. Their teacher enters)

TEACHER

OK, class, if you can hear me, touch your nose.

(STUDENTS touch their nose. HELIO puts his finger up his nose. KIDS react)

TEACHER

Put your finger on the outside of your nose. Alright class, it’s song time. Is everybody ready?

(STUDENTS cheer excitedly)

TEACHER *(with STUDENTS joining in)*

IF YOU’RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT, CLAP YOUR HANDS *(all clap)*

IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT, CLAP YOUR HANDS *(all clap)*
IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT, THEN YOUR FACE WILL SURELY
SHOW IT
IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT, CLAP YOUR HANDS *(all clap)*

IF YOU'RE A BOY AND YOU KNOW IT, STOMP YOUR FEET
(ALL BOYS but DANNY stomp their feet)
IF YOU'RE A BOY AND YOU KNOW IT, STOMP YOUR FEET
*(ALL BOYS but DANNY stomp their feet. HALEY tries to get DANNY to
stomp his feet. He won't)*
IF YOU'RE A BOY AND YOU KNOW IT, THEN YOUR FACE WILL SURELY
SHOW IT
IF YOU'RE A BOY AND YOU KNOW IT, STOMP YOUR FEET
*(ALL BOYS but DANNY stomp their feet. Many in the class notice that
DANNY isn't stomping his feet)*

IF YOU'RE A GIRL AND YOU KNOW IT, RUB YOUR BELLY!
(ALL GIRLS rub their belly. DANNY rubs his belly very tentatively)
IF YOU'RE A GIRL AND YOU KNOW IT, RUB YOUR BELLY!
(ALL GIRLS rub their belly DANNY does too.)
IF YOU'RE A GIRL AND YOU KNOW IT, THEN YOUR FACE WILL SURELY
SHOW IT
IF YOU'RE A GIRL AND YOU KNOW IT, RUB YOUR BELLY!
(ALL GIRLS and DANNY rub their belly. Everyone notices DANNY)

HALEY

Teacher, teacher, Danny is didn't do the boy part, but he did do the girl part

CHELSEA

Yea, he did it all wrong.

TEACHER

Come here, Danny.

(DANNY sits next to teacher)

TEACHER

You know class, here at Pride Player Pre-school we love and accept everyone for who they are. Danny can do what ever part he wants to.

KIDS

Oh.

TEACHER

Danny is very special and unique person. You all are.

KIDS

Yea!!!!

TEACHER (with KIDS joining in)
IF YOU'RE SPECIAL AND YOU KNOW IT, SHOUT HURRAY!
(*ALL shout Hurray!*)
IF YOU'RE SPECIAL AND YOU KNOW IT, SHOUT HURRAY!
(*ALL shout Hurray!*)
IF YOU'RE SPECIAL AND YOU KNOW IT, THEN YOUR FACE WILL SURELY
SHOW IT
IF YOU'RE SPECIAL AND YOU KNOW IT, SHOUT HURRAY
(*ALL shout Hurray! and hug each other*)

6 We are the Pride Players Group Poem

(*The cast performs this poem. Each individual says one line. Some lines are said by all .*)

We are the Pride Players. Deal with us!

The Pride Players are united individuals:

We are original!

And we are strong in our unity to embrace diversity.

Acceptance, Acceptance, Acceptance.

We are here to be a voice, be seen, just be;

To give ourselves a place to breathe.

For friendship, education, hope,

To grow, to teach,

To achieve world peace.

Listen up, people: Hate is NOT an option!

I feel like I've bullshitted my way through high school
and I wanted to feel like I accomplished something.

We know that if we speak our minds

We can broaden people's paradigms,

Because we are dedicated to what *really* matters:

Making a difference, and improving people's lives;

Working for a brighter future where acceptance is the norm,

Where everyone already knows its okay to be yourself.

Just like here, with Pride Players, where there's

Safety, comfort, courage, and it feels like home.

We're here to have fun – and to kick some homophobic butt!

By sharing our stories and ourselves,
We are forever here to further the evolution of peace among human-kind.
Together, with our pride, we will change the world!