

MOABIRTHC (Or a PSA about ~~Birthday Parties~~ Meth-addled Clowns)

By Colleen O'Doherty

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Bio

Colleen O'Doherty is a playwright and educator based out of Omaha, NE. Her short plays have seen productions all over the United States: *Bold Dorothy, Retired* was in Renaissance Theaterworks' 2017 Br!NK Briefs festival, *Elevated* and *Swipe Right at the Bar* were in Cone Man Running's 2017 Five Minute Mile, *Northern Bound* was in Cleveland Public Theater's 2018 Station Hope and *Meet Puberty* is set to be part of Funky Little Theater Company's Spectrum festival in July 2018. She is receiving her MFA in play and screenwriting from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

*****Note:** Double/Triple cast as needed. This is meant to be a crazy-weird piece.

(Open with a cake in the middle of the stage that can be smashed. Or the PSA announcer, aka DIANE DOWNER, popping a balloon or five. Or she tears up a "Happy Birthday" sign. Then into speech.)

DIANE DOWNER:

Good evening. My name is Diane Downer. I'm here to talk you about a silent killer. Birthday parties. Many cultures healthfully celebrate birthdays by ignoring them. In the United States, we take the deadly and unhealthy path of celebrating them. I am the president of Mothers Against Birthday Celebrations, or MOABIRTHC *(Say acronym in whatever ways sounds most ridiculous. Or make it MOABC. Or MOTHAGBIC. If projections/shirts/signs can be used with acronym, all the better. A la DARE or MADD.)*.

We at MOABIRTHC want to help fellow mothers make sound choices when it comes to putting a positive spin on the day their bodies became vessels of a parasitic entity that made a bloody massacre of their vaginas then went on to mutate their breasts to udders and hence successfully made every erogenous zone a war zone of tortured nerves and decimated skin. *(Pause.)* More importantly, birthday parties are one of the top killers of children ages 12 1/2 and under. Don't bother looking it up. It's a cause of death so insidious that the CDC doesn't even keep records. We at MOABIRTHC are dedicated to educating the nation about the dangers posed. Our lackadaisical attitudes are killing our youth.

Have you ever been this mother?

(Lights on THIS MOTHER. THIS MOTHER and THIS MOTHER can wear signs or something if that works.)

THIS MOTHER

I'd rather have them eat birthday cake at my house. Better at my house, supervised, than at a restaurant, right?

DIANE DOWNER

Or *this* mother?

THIS MOTHER

What's wrong with huffing a little helium? All kids get curious and experiment. Right?

DIANE DOWNER

Or *that* mother?

THAT MOTHER

I trusted that clown.

DIANE DOWNER

You probably have been this, this or that mother. You probably still are her. Or them. Maybe this scenario looks all too familiar.

(BIRTHDAY GIRL is a girl played by an obviously grown-ass woman. Or man. Actually, a man would be great.)

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Oh dang. I am so, so excited to be turning 10. It is gonna be soooooooooooooo lit.

(BIRTHDAY GIRL'S MOTHER enters.)

BG MOTHER

Oh, my little girl. You are growing up so fast.

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Oh. EM. GEE. Mom. I want a birthday party.

BG MOTHER

That could cost a pretty penny.

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Mom. Don't be un-lit. Please. I totally need this party. All my friends get one.

BG MOTHER

Well shoot, why not? Whatever could go wrong with a birthday party?

(Freeze on this scene. DIANE DOWNER steps in.)

DIANE DOWNER

That little girl is now dead. From helium poisoning. Imagine if the mother had been responsible. Let's see what she should have done.

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Oh dang. I am so, so excited to be turning 10. It is gonna be soooooooooooooo lit.

(BIRTHDAY GIRL'S MOTHER enters.)

BG MOTHER

Oh, my little girl. You are growing up so fast.

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Oh. EM. GEE. Mom. I want a birthday party.

BG MOTHER

What did you just say to me?

BIRTHDAY GIRL

Mom. Don't be un-lit. Please. I totally need this party. All my friends get one.

BG MOTHER

All your friends will end up dead by 12 ½. Is that what you want, you little ingrate? To end up in a diabetic coma from cake? In some opiate den, cracked out on helium? No party. Hell no. Thanks, MOABIRTHC.

(BIRTHDAY GIRL is speechless.)

DIANE DOWNER

Let's look at another scenario. This little boy is at a friend's death trap celebration.

(BIRTHDAY Boy's bestie, HUMPER enters.)

HUMPER

I am at the birthday party of my best friend in the world. How coool.

(BIRTHDAY BOY enters.)

BIRTHDAY BOY

Look at all this cake. Let's eat too much of it. And my mom got a clown.

(BIRTHDAY BOY's MOM enters. CLOWN enters.)

BIRTHDAY BOY'S MOM

Yes. I bought all the exciting components of a party. We have a cake with candles, gifts, balloons, and a clown.

DIANE DOWNER

What started off as "innocent," ended like this.

(BIRTHDAY BOY and HUMPER create birthday carnage. They are destroying the cake, huffing helium, humping the clown's leg, etc.)

BIRTHDAY BOY'S MOM

God, god, god, make it stop! Why didn't I listen to MOABIRTHC?

CLOWN

(To the humper.) Kid, stop. Really not okay. *(HUMPER humps harder.)*

BIRTHDAY BOY

Ahhhh, maaaaan. This helium is better than Adderall. Then Imma eat all this cake I swearing to freaking Christ. *(He eats so much cake. He gnaws the candles.)*

(CLOWN finally frees himself of HUMPER. HUMPER chases clown. CLOWN grabs candles from BIRTHDAY BOY, lights them tries to use them to ward off HUMPER. When this doesn't work, there is a piñata bat.)

BIRTHDAY BOY'S MOM

Parties were never like this before. Never.

DIANE DOWNER

As you can see, the horrors of birthday celebrations have grown-

BIRTHDAY BOY'S MOM

No. Stop. Seriously. Before MOABIRTHC became a thing, birthday parties were fun. This is just like how DARE made me wanna try heroine and abstinence-only education makes kids want to have sex without a rubber.

DIANE DOWNER

What? What, no. That's not true.

CLOWN

Nah. That's real. I literally got hooked on meth because of graduating from DARE. *(To Audience.)* For those who didn't attend school in the 90s, DARE was a school program aimed at stopping childhood drug use.

DIANE DOWNER

I cannot believe what I'm hearing. MOABIRTHC has saved millions of lives.

(Pause. Kids are still running around. CLOWN and MOM exchange looks.)

BIRTHDAY BOY'S MOM

Do you have any kind of statistics on that?

DIANE DOWNER

(Pause.) Many. I have many.

CLOWN

Well. I need money for meth. So.

(CLOWN grabs a bunch of gifts. He snatches birthday cards, because they have money. He runs away. HUMPER chases after him.)

BIRTHDAY BOY'S MOM

That meth-addled clown has opened my eyes. I think you should just go, Diane. Takes your MOABIRTHC propaganda and your hatred of fun with you.

(Pause. Lights down on all but DIANE DOWNER, who does a quick-change of sorts. PSA restarts.)

DIANE DOWNER

Good evening. My name is Diane Downer. I'm here to talk you about a silent killer. Meth-addled clowns.

End of Play.