

Colorful Metaphors

(A Short Play)

Warning! Contains Excessive Swearing

By Christine Williamson

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Synopsis

An exploration of the accepted effectiveness and excessive use of colorful metaphors in the dissemination of information.

Characters

SPEAKER 1	A Speaker with a Red cause
SPEAKER 2	A Speaker with a Green cause
SPEAKER 3	A Speaker with a Purple cause
SPEAKER 4	A Speaker with an Orange cause: Female
SPEAKER 5	A Speaker with a multi-colored cause
AUDIENCE x (4-10)	Members of the public listening to various Speakers

(All characters, except for Speaker 4, can be any age, gender, or nationality.)

Setting: Any place where public speaking could conceivably be allowed. Projecting an image of Speaker's Corner from London's Hyde Park for the background would give the playwright a warm, fuzzy feeling, as would recreating the Corner's arcing stone lines on the stage floor. If the lines are recreated, the forward-most arcs should include as much of the theatre's audience as possible.

Time: Any Time.

Approximate Running Time: ??? minutes

(If resources allow and Speaker's Corner has been recreated, slides of the brass plaques that describe the Corner's history, and its link to free speech, should be projected across the stage while the audience is being seated.)

(Whether or not a slide show is playing, the stage is revealed in its entirety from the beginning, albeit in a resting state, never concealed from the audience. If possible, various AUDIENCE actors should be sprinkled among the actual audience.)

(Slideshow ends and/or house closes. Lighting shifts, drawing attention to the stage. Then...)

Enter SPEAKER 1, carrying a Red soapbox and Red pamphlets.

SPEAKER 1

(Looks around, chooses a spot, and puts down soapbox.)

Enter SPEAKER 2, carrying a Green soapbox and Green pamphlets.

SPEAKER 2

(Sees SPEAKER 1. Looks around, chooses a spot, and puts down soapbox.)

SPEAKER 1

(Climbs up on soapbox. Gestures with pamphlets, addressing audience.)

Shit!

SPEAKER 2

(Climbs up on soapbox. Gestures with pamphlets, addressing audience.)

Fuck!

SPEAKER 1

(Eying SPEAKER 2 suspiciously.)

Shit!

Enter SPEAKER 3, carrying a Purple soapbox and Purple pamphlets.

SPEAKER 2

(Including SPEAKER 1 with audience)

Fuck!

SPEAKER 3

(Sees SPEAKER 1 and 2. Looks around, chooses a spot, and puts down soapbox.)

SPEAKER 1

Shit!

Fuck! SPEAKER 2

SPEAKER 3
*(Climbs up on soapbox. Gestures with pamphlets, addressing SPEAKERS
1 and 2.)*
Damn!

Shit! SPEAKER 1

Fuck! SPEAKER 2

Damn! SPEAKER 3
(Addressing everyone.)

Enter SPEAKER 4, carrying an Orange soapbox and Orange pamphlets.

Shit! SPEAKER 1

Fuck! SPEAKER 2

Damn! SPEAKER 3

SPEAKER 4
*(Watching SPEAKERS 1, 2, and 3, she chooses a spot and sets down
soapbox.)*

Shit! SPEAKER 1

Fuck! SPEAKER 2

Damn! SPEAKER 3

SPEAKER 4
(Climbs up on soapbox.)

...

SPEAKERS 1, 2, and 3
(Watch SPEAKER 4 expectantly...)

SPEAKER 4

...

Shit!

SPEAKER 2

Fuck!

SPEAKER 3

Damn!

SPEAKER 4

...

(Takes a deep breath, then, gesturing with pamphlets...)
CUNT!!!

SPEAKERS 1, 2, and 3
(Cheer SPEAKER 4)

Shit!

Fuck!

Damn!

CUNT!!!

SPEAKERS 1, 2, 3, and 4
(Start working the audience using their respective cuss words, clamoring for as much attention as they can get. While this is going on...)

AUDIENCE
(Begin to enter, 1 or 2 at a time. They drift from SPEAKER to SPEAKER as their attention is caught, agreeing with and listening to various expletives in turn. They laugh and cheer, repeating the swear words vigorously, but only infrequently referring to the colors associated with them.)

AUDIENCE-Continued

(AUDIENCE members seated among the actual audience begin whispering loudly and giggling with their neighbors, using only the 4 cuss words and their corresponding colors in various creative combinations. i.e. Red shit, shit Red, Green fuck, damn Purple, Orange cunt. As with non-seated AUDIENCE, their conversation should be dominated by the swears, containing relatively few colors.)

(While this is going on...)

Enter SPEAKER 5, carrying a multi-color soapbox and multi-color pamphlets.

SPEAKER 5

(Looks around. There's not much room left. Moves carefully around the stage, watching what's going on and choosing a space with care.)

SPEAKERS 1, 2, 3, and 4

(Try to get AUDIENCE to say the color words, rewarding them by swearing more loudly and vigorously than before.)

AUDIENCE

(Enjoying the sensational display, stops saying the colors entirely and begin swearing profusely to everyone, like the SPEAKERS.)

SPEAKER 5

(Finishes choosing a spot, sets down soapbox, and climbs up. Still watching...)

...

SPEAKERS 1, 2, 3, and 4

(Not paying attention to SPEAKER 5, they try to refocus AUDIENCE on themselves and their colors by getting even louder. Then...)

SPEAKER 1

SHIT!!! SHIT, shit, shit shit, SHIT! Red Shit! RED! SHIT SHIT! RED!!!

AUDIENCE

(Having wonderful fun...)

SHIT!!!

SPEAKER 1

(Tosses pamphlets aside and sits on soapbox, giving up.)

SPEAKER 2

FUCK!!! Fuckity FUCK fuck! FUCK! Green Fuckity FUCK GREEN FUCK!! GREEN! GREEN!!!

AUDIENCE

(Having wonderful fun...)

FUCK!!!

SPEAKER 2

(Tosses pamphlets aside and sits on soapbox, giving up.)

SPEAKER 3

DAMN!!! DAMNITY DAMN, PURPLE, damn, PURPLE! Purple, purple, Purple, Damn, Purple! DAMN! DAMN!!!

AUDIENCE

(Having wonderful fun...)

DAMN!!!

SPEAKER 3

(Tosses pamphlets aside and sits on soapbox, giving up.)

SPEAKER 4

...

SPEAKERS 1, 2, 3, 5, and AUDIENCE

(Watch SPEAKER 4 expectantly.)

SPEAKER 4

...

(Takes a deep breath, bracing herself. Then, fully committed...)

GOD FUCKING DAMMIT, CUNT!!! ORANGE BABY-RAPING CUNTWAD!!! MOTHER-FUCKIN', ASSWHIPING DICK-FACED, COCK-SUCKER! SKULL-FUCKING ASSHOLE FUCKING SHIT-FACED CRETIN-LOVING, CUUUUUUUUNNNNNNNNNNTTTTTTTTT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! ORANGE!

(Breathing heavily, but satisfied.)

Cunt.

(Shocked silence as EVERYONE stares at SPEAKER 4.)

SPEAKER 4

Cunt? ...Orange...?

(Awkward silence as EVERYONE shifts uncomfortably. Then...)

SPEAKER 5

(Quietly, offering nearby AUDIENCE pamphlets.)

Aqua... ...Maroon. Silver. Apricot. Aubergine. Tan. Melon, yellow, ochre. Periwinkle. Turquoise. Sapphire. Burgundy. Mauve...

AUDIENCE

(Watches SPEAKER 5, listening attentively and slowly moving so 5 becomes the center of attention.)

SPEAKER 5

Mauve. Aqua. Scarlet. Ebony... Gold, pink, salmon. Saffron. Topaz. Violet. Emerald... Peridot. Peach. Lemon yellow...

SPEAKERS 1, 2, and 3

(Watching AUDIENCE's response, they stand slowly, and, one by one, join AUDIENCE in watching SPEAKER 5.)

AUDIENCE

(Slowly begin nodding, examining the pamphlets and quietly repeating SPEAKER 5's colors. NO swears are heard at all.)

SPEAKER 5

Azure... Copper. Silver. Opaline. Turquoise. Melon. Periwinkle, Saffron. Apricot. Aubergine...

SPEAKER 4

(Clutching pamphlets, joins EVERYONE listening to SPEAKER 5.)

SPEAKER 5

Sapphire. Silver. Coral. Burgund—

(Leans too far out and slips off soapbox, bruising shin. Gasps painfully.)

Ow!! Shit!

(Claps hand over mouth, horrified.)

(Silence. Then...)

AUDIENCE 1

SHIT!

AUDIENCE 2

SHIT!

AUDIENCE All

(Exuberantly! The party has started again!)

Shit, shit, shit, shit, SHIT!

(Laugh and mingle with SPEAKERS 1, 2, 3, and 4.)

SHIT!!!

SPEAKER 5

(Stares hopelessly as AUDIENCE disperses, swearing and joking. Deflating with every swear. Then...)

AUDIENCE 1

Aqua. Shit. Aqua shit, shit. Aqua.
(Chuckles.)

AUDIENCE 2

Mauve, shit. Mauve.

AUDIENCE 3

Mauve, Puce! Shit!

AUDIENCE 4

Puce!? Puce... Oooo...

AUDIENCE 2

Puce, shit. Shit! Shit, Apricot!

AUDIENCE 4

Aubergine...

AUDIENCE 1

Silver, Aubergine. Shit...

AUDIENCE 3

Shit, Silver. Shit. Melon, shit. Aqua...

SPEAKER 5

(Watching with humble astonishment.)

AUDIENCE

*(Slowly begin exiting, discussing and referring to the pamphlets
SPEAKER 5 handed out. Again, their conversation consists entirely of colors and 'shit'.)*

SPEAKERS 1, 2, 3, and 4

*(Watch as AUDIENCE leaves. Then go over to shake SPEAKER 5's
hand.)*

SPEAKER 1

Shit.

SPEAKER 2

Fuck.

SPEAKER 3

Damn.

EXIT SPEAKER 1, 2, and 3

SPEAKER 4

(Takes one of SPEAKER 5's pamphlets. Gives 5 an Orange pamphlet.)

Orange... Cunt.

(Shakes SPEAKER 5's hand and leaves.)

Exit SPEAKER 4

SPEAKER 5

(Stares after SPEAKERS and AUDIENCE for a moment. Then sits on soapbox, contemplating remaining pamphlets.)

...

(Out to actual audience.)

Well, I'll be damned.

(Lighting/Scene: Fade to black, highlighting SPEAKER 5 'til the end...)

Finis