

ALICE IN ROTC-LAND

by Jeffrey M. Blum and Marc A. Weiss

Note: This play was originally performed at Stanford University during April and May of 1970.

SCENE 1

RABBIT (*Gini Holmes*): (hopping by) WorkStudyGet AheadKill .ALICE (*Sigourney Weaver*): Where are you going?RABBIT: I'm late I'm late
For a very important date
Pitzer and Lyman are meeting at eight
I'm late I'm late I'm late

(RABBIT goes through door)

ALICE: Wait for me, Mr. Rabbit.

DOORS: (closing down) End of fatherhood deferments (closes a little)
End of occupational deferments (closes a little more)
End of student deferments (complete collapse)

ALICE: How can I get in?

(DOORS point to giant ROTC pill, ALICE bites the pill, DOORS begin shaking and opening up, smiling graciously)

SONG: (sung as DOOR is opening up) tune: here comes the sun

Here comes the war
Everybody's dying
People home are crying
Here comes the wargame

SCENE 2

(ROTC cadets enter running, run in a circle, ALICE stands to side bewildered)

COMMANDER (*Colin Bruce*): (with German accent) Hurry up! Get into formation! Over there! Hurry up! Round and round and round we go, where we stop, only Tricky Dicky knows!

(ALICE gets into the circle and runs)

SONG: *(Bill Graham, Manny Quintana, George Reinhardt)*
 I wanna be an airborne ranger
 I wanna live a life of danger
 I wanna go to Vietnam
 'cause I wanna kill a Charlie Cong
(repeat three times, getting progressively slower, draggy . . .)

ALICE: What are we doing?

Clank CADETS: We're running a race.

ALICE: Where are we going?

CADETS: Nowhere.

COMMANDER: Wrong!

CADETS: Everywhere.

ALICE: Who wins this race?

CADETS: No one.

ALICE: Well then, what is the purpose?

COMMANDER: (barks) Attention!

(circle splits into a line)

COMMANDER: What is the purpose of ROTC, men?

CADETS: The purpose of ROTC is to kill, sir.

COMMANDER: (louder) What is the purpose of ROTC, men?

CADETS: (louder) The purpose of ROTC is to kill, sir.

COMMANDER: Louder!

CADETS: To kill, sir!

COMMANDER: Mmm . . . You're my kind of boys!
 Back in formation, men.

(CADETS back in circle, run around ALICE once, and run off)

SCENE 3

(CHESIRE CAT appears on the side, purring, insanely grinning)

ALICE: (to audience) Who is this cat?

ALICE: (back in character) Who are you?

CHESIRE (*Greg Martinelli*): I'm special cheshire to the president. (pause) You want to get out of ROTC.

ALICE: How did you know?

CHESIRE: They all want that.

ALICE: Well, how can I do it?

CHESIRE: Go through the channels.

ALICE: Where do I start?

CHESIRE: Where do you want to start?

ALICE: Could the Commander let me out?

CHESIRE: That's as good as anything else.

(CHESHIRE points to the COMMANDER who has stepped out from opposite side)

SCENE 4

ALICE: How can I get out?

COMMANDER: (brusque) You can't.

ALICE: Why not?

COMMANDER: Punitive clause.

ALICE: What's that?

COMMANDER: The Punitive Clause
Is one of our laws
If you don't want to stay
You're drafted today.

(COMMANDER walks away. ALICE stands dejected)

SCENE 5

(ALICE walks back to the CHESHIRE CAT, who is still grinning)

CHESHIRE: Time to change the channel?

ALICE: What other channels are there?

CHESIRE: As many as we need. The Academic Council. The Board of Trustees. This year's Committee on ROTC. Last year's Committee on ROTC. The Student Senate. The Faculty Senate. The CUS. SES. SJC. (speeding up) SCLC. FCM. RMN. (getting menacing) CBS. SDS. LSD? DMT?

(ALICE gasps)

CHESIRE: (stops and smiles) Oh, you're confused

ALICE: There's so many. Which one can help me?

CHESIRE: That, my dear, is a question of power. (smiles) Now the administrators don't have the power. They say the faculty has the power. And the faculty does have the power . . . except for when the Trustees have the power.

ALICE: When is that?

CHESIRE: When they make the decisions.

ALICE: But then, how can the faculty have the power?

CHESIRE: The faculty implements the decisions. And you know, my dear, that the power to obey is greater than the power to command. (gestures toward the faculty) The Mad Fackle-Tea Party. (disappears)

SCENE 6

(ALICE on side, FACULTY members carousing, don't see her) (*Colin, Gini, Bill, Louise, George, Rick King*)
MOCK MANCALL (*Manny*) enters

F.M. #1: Listen! (Carousing stops abruptly, all turn to stare) That's the Mock Mancall crying.
(to MOCK MANCALL) Why are you so upset?

MOCK MANCALL: (sobbing away) It's so atrocious. The mindlessness of it all is intolerable. I knew it would happen. Emotion has triumphed over reason. What has happened to rational dialogue? It's all passion and no objective concern.

F.M. #2: Cheer up. Today is Un-Moratorium Day; you don't have to have any kind of concern at all.

MOCK MANCALL: Un-Moratorium Day?

Chum
F.M.'s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: Once a month we protest war
Then thirty days we care no more . . .
(start wildly singing Happy Un-Moratorium Day song and jumping around)

(ALICE walks up during song)

F.M.'s 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: No room! No room!

ALICE: There's plenty of room!

F.M. #4: To stay in here you must pass your orals.

#1: When is freedom the same as slavery?

ALICE: In 1984?

#2: No, when it's academic.

(all dance and laugh and freak around)

#3: What's progressive and liberal and red all over?

ALICE: The Stanford Daily?

#4: No, President Pitzer after dinner at Grove House.

(MOCK MANCALL groans and sobs as others laugh)

ALICE: I'm tired of riddles. Can't you talk straight?

(FM #1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 form a circle)

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: You mean rational dialogue? (circle rotates after answering each of ALICE's questions)

ALICE: How can I get out of ROTC?

#1: Simple. End the war.

ALICE: How do we end the war?

#2: Simple. You build up our great humanistic university.

ALICE: How do you do that?

#3: Simple. You get money.

ALICE: Where do you get it?

#4: Simple. From the Defense Department.

ALICE: How do they get it?

#5: Simple. By making wars.

ALICE: How do they make wars?

#6: Simple. By having soldiers.

ALICE: Where do they get the soldiers?

#1: Simple. From ROTC.

Chuck

ALICE: Isn't this where we began?

#1: Sure, but isn't this a fun game? (all laugh and jump around, breaking up circle)

ALICE: Isn't there anything I can do?

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6: Have a Referendum! (they all start cackling, shrieking "Referendum", insanely laughing, run off leaving MOCK MANCALL facing audience crying)

SCENE 7

(PAT-SHEA-DEE and PAT-SHEA-DUM are walking by arm in arm, with silly grins . . .)

ALICE: (taps PAT-SHEA-DEE on the shoulder) Excuse me please?

PAT-SHEA-DEE (*Marc Weiss*) and PAT-SHEA-DUM (*Jeff Blum*): (stop and speak in unison) Yessssss!

ALICE: Where can I find a referendum?

PSDEE: You couldn't have come to a better place. Why, he's head ASShole this year. (points to PSDUM)

PSDUM: And he's head ASShole last year. (points to PSDEE) Pat-Shea-Dee

PSDEE: (points back) and Pat-Shea-Dum.

ALICE: Will you help me?

PSDEE: Of course.

PSDUM: Of course.

(DEE and DUM turn to each other)

PSDEE: Now, to have a referendum you must have two sides. Why don't I be for and you be against?

PSDUM: No, I'll be for and you be against.

PSDEE: No, I'm for and you're against.

PSDUM: No, I'm for and you're against.

ALICE: Wait. You don't even know the issue.

PSDEE: What does that matter? We'll campaign around you.

PSDUM: I'll campaign clockwise and you campaign counter-clockwise.

(They circle around her with computer paper about three times and stop)

PSDEE: Well, we've buried that issue!

(They smile, brush off their hands and dance off together)

(ALICE remains with computer paper all over her)

RABBIT: (hops by again) Work . . . Study . . . Get Ahead . . . Kill

(ALICE makes an angry face)

SCENE 8

(RADICAL BEATLES -- Four people wearing masks and bell bottoms walk on) (*Colin, George, John, Rick*)

ALICE: Help!

BEATLE #1: She needs somebody.

ALICE: Help!

unk BEATLE #2: Not just anybody.

ALICE: HELP! (prolonged) (They begin unwrapping her)

BEATLE #3: What happened to you?

ALICE: I got caught up in a referendum.

BEATLE #4: Oh, that bullshit.

ALICE: What happens now?

(The four look at each other, get into formation and song begins)

SONG: (to the tune of "All Together Now" from "Yellow Submarine")

1-2-3-4

We are bringing home the war

5-6-7-8-9

REV--olution

boom boom boom

Throw the rocks

Trash the pigs

Seize the quad

Shut it down

All together now (4 times)

1-2-3-4

We are bringing home the war

5-6-7-8-9

REV--olution

boom boom boom

Stop the war

Burn the banks

Smash the state

Coming soon

All together now (4 times)

(BEATLES dance off)

SCENE 9

(One TRUSTEE sneaks on)

TRUSTEE #1: It's okay now, Mrs. Charles. They're gone..

(5 TRUSTEES walk out in suits and ties)

MRS. CHARLES (*Louise*): Is everyone here?

TRUSTEE #2: I don't see Ernie Arbuckle.

TRUSTEE #3: And where's that old walrus Bill Hewlett?

TRUSTEE #4: They're both off on international business.

(Turn their backs frozen, or walk off)

SCENE 10

(WALRUS/Bill Hewlett and CARPENTER/Ernie Arbuckle back out of the bushes, coaxing. Sign on CARPENTER's briefcase: "Utah Construction.")

WALRUS (*Manny*): Come on, little oysters. We're here to invest.

CARPENTER (*Bill G.*): You can't join the free world without being open to our free market.

WALRUS: Open up; and we'll devour, uh, develop you . . .

(Group of OYSTERS are shyly and hesitatingly coming out of the bushes)

CARPENTER: (baby talk) Alright, tootsie Thailand, open wide and stick out your tungsten,

WALRUS: Hey now, Guatemala, we want your fruit. Stick out your banana or we'll kick you in the pearls.

(CAMBODIA remains separate from the others who are all joining hands and preparing to follow the first two)

Cluck CARPENTER: Come on, Cambodia, we need you too.

CAMBODIA (*Gini*): Ho.

WALRUS and CARPENTER to each other: Ho? No!

CAMBODIA: Ho Ho, Ho Chi Minh (runs by WALRUS and CARPENTER) get fucked!

SCENE 11

(TRUSTEES already meeting)
(WALRUS and CARPENTER walk in)

TRUSTEE #1: Did you finish your business abroad?

WALRUS: Mmmmmmm, yessss. (both smacking their lips)

Cluck CARPENTER: What have you talked about so far?

TRUSTEE #2: Dillingham.

WALRUS: What's next?

Yippee TRUSTEE #3: The trial of Alice.

TRUSTEE #4: Pitzer, swear her in. (PRESIDENT PITZER as a weak ineffectual lackey)

Cluck PITZER (*Rick*): Do you solemnly swear to agree that whatever we say was the truth, is the truth and always will be the truth, so help you God?

ALICE: (to audience) What is this shit?
(to PITZER) (shakes head bewilderedly): No!

MRS. CHARLES #3: (hits her) Didn't you learn to say 'yes' in your ROTC class?

ALICE: No, I won't learn that. I'm trying to get rid of ROTC.

TRUSTEE #2: Impossible. As long as reason prevails, ROTC shall remain.

ALICE: And the War, will it be here too?

TRUSTEES: Yes.

ALICE: and rational dialogue?

TRUSTEES: Yes!

ALICE: and academic freedom?

TRUSTEES: Yes!

ALICE: and the channels?

TRUSTEES: Yes! Yes!

ALICE: And that horrible Walrus? (as WALRUS approaches)

TRUSTEES: Yes!!

ALICE: Well, then I'm leaving!!

TRUSTEE #2: Oh no you're not -- you don't have enough units to graduate!

(followed by chaos, noises, monster faces,)

ALICE faints, TRUSTEES continue to circle and make noise and gradually dissipate.)

SCENE 12

RABBIT hops by saying "Work Study . . . Get Ahead . . . Kill . . . Work
Study . . . Get Ahead . . . Kill"

ALICE is on the ground sleeping. She wakes gradually while RABBIT is hopping around her. Once fully awake she stares at her as she hops by and says,

"Congratulations, you have just been accepted by Stanford University."

ALICE stands up and begins shaking, proceeds to shake more violently, pulls a "Chairman Mao" RED BOOK from her dress and throws it at the RABBIT. The book strikes the RABBIT at close range and it falls dead.

ALICE: (to audience) "All reactionaries are paper rabbits!"

Cast splits off stage and reassembles during applause for encore of "All Together Now, Revolution." (leads audience in song)

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