



A New Recipe for American Pie

■ Middlebury Teen Is a Playwright and Activist

BY MARTI M. BACKUS

Cindy Marcelle is 18 years old and a senior at Middlebury Union High School. She is also the author of *Pie*, a one-act play about a teenager coming out to less-than-receptive parents. Part of an evening of student productions, the clever, dark 10-minute comedy was enthusiastically received during performances at the Addison Repertory Theater on December 17 and 18.

I met with Cindy on December 18th. She is an attractive, petite blonde. Her energy is palpable. She has a clever, wry wit that falls just short of being edgy and sharp and she is keenly intelligent and personable in the manner of one who is used to having to accommodate the limitations in those around her. Our conversation follows:

OITM: When did you write the play?

CM: Oh, about three weeks ago. Honestly, I had a time crunch and had to come up with something. I thought, 'This is 40

percent of my grade.' So the play was mostly written in about 15 minutes. (laughs)

OITM: What program are you in at school?

CM: The A.R.T. program — the Addison Repertory Theater. This is my second year in the program. The performances consist basically of 11 one-act plays that are written by students. Two of them are on more serious subjects, one about teen suicide and mine — about coming out.

OITM: Did the folks at school express any concern about the content of your play?

CM: No. They were very supportive.

OITM: Would you tell me a little about your play?

CM: Yeah, sure. There are three characters. The parents are Wally and June. They were given those names for obvious reasons. You know, the father is in this suit, and the mother is in a dress and her little apron. It was sort of a combination of the Cleavers (i.e. Leave it to Beaver) and Pleasantville. The daughter's name is Kat. I just like that name. It's funny, but in kind of a horri-

ble way — black humor. I mean, people are laughing, but at the same time saying, "Those parents shouldn't be saying those horrible things to their daughter."

entertainers, Melissa Etheridge, Ellen Degeneres, RuPaul, but they don't get it. So finally she stands on a chair and shouts, "Mom, Dad — I'm gay."

CM: Well, they end up kicking Kat out. The father does this lion tamer thing with a chair, like "Back, back," but they never really say it's because she's gay. The play ends with the parents slumping in their chairs eating the apple pie.

OITM: I made an assumption that you were a gay student, who had written a play about a lesbian who is coming out. Some of our e-mail or phone conversation led me to believe that you don't necessarily identify as 'lesbian' per se.

CM: No, I consider myself bi.

OITM: What does that mean to you?

CM: Uh-h-h-h, that I am attracted to both males and females.

OITM: Okay, because sometimes being bisexual has different connotations to different people. I'll ask you more about that in a minute. Can you tell me something about yourself?

CM: Well, I was adopted. I was in foster care as a baby. My biological mother was, like, 12 or

She comes out of the closet holding a toaster oven. I think that's funny. Nobody else gets it.

OITM: What horrible things?

CM: Well, here is the character of Kat, trying to tell them something

important, and they keep interrupting her, changing the subject, trying to make her eat pie — apple pie. You know, all-American apple pie? They never let her finish.

OITM: What is the first line of the play?

CM: (laughs) "Princess it's time to come out of the closet." She comes out of the closet holding a toaster oven. I think that's funny. Nobody else gets it. She tries to hint around by telling them that she's doing a report on

OITM: How do the parents react?

CM: They try to make it another problem. They say "Are you sick?" "Are you pregnant?" She tells them again that she's not sick, she's not pregnant, she's gay. They start marching around saying it's all their fault because she wasn't breastfed or whatever.

OITM: What happens when they finally get it?

CM: Well, I don't know if they really 'get it,' but the mother says, "We can't tell Gramma. It would kill her." Then Kat says, "Gramma already knows. I told her two months ago."

OITM: So how does it turn out?

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