

CULTURE CHANGES

Scene One

The stage to be divided into two identical living rooms, except that the one on the left has a radio on a table next to the master's chair and the one on the right has a full size TV.

When the actors on the left are interrupted by one of the actors on the right, and vice versa, the actors interrupted will freeze in position and remain silent until it is time for them to continue their dialogue. Timing of the interruption is to be so that it sounds to the audience that the actor on the other stage is completing the other's sentence or answering the other's questions. However, they are not to acknowledge the existence of the others. When doing this, the actors must speak distinctly so all the audience gets the humor of the interruption.

The setting of each half of the stage to be at least 50 years apart from the other, with the earlier characters on the left being designated with a big L, and the later characters being designated with a big R.

(L-Father is seated in his chair and trying to tune in the radio. L-Mother enters the room)

L-Mother: You still can't pick up the 5 o'clock news?

L-Father: No! This dang blasted thing never works right when you want it to. All I ever can get are some silly shows Like the one that is on right now called something like "the shadow knows". If he does know everything, I'm listening for a number to call so I can ask him why I can't get the 5 o'clock news on this thing they call a radio.

L-Mother: Well, at least we have the newspaper with lots of news in it.

L-Father: Yeah, but it being a morning paper, all that news is proximately a day old.

L-Mother: I heard some talk at my women's club the other day that someone has developed and is coming up with a radio with a screen attached where you can see the people doing the talking.

L-Father: Is that right? That would be amazing! If they do and the radio works as bad as this one, we will be able to read the speakers lips to find out what they are saying.

L-Mother: However, they say the pictures will be only in black and white but at least we will have a whole new view of what is going on.

L-Father: Sounds like a great idea. I hope it looks as good as it sounds. The idea that is. But I wonder what they will call it. Surely it won't be called a radio with screen attached..... I know, let's call it a _____.

R-Father: (*entering and followed by his teenage son*) Television? You got to be kidding. Watch television on a school night? Oh no, you're not! Don't you have any homework to do?

R-Son: Of course, but Mom always lets me watch a little TV before dinner.

R-Father: Well, you are lucky! Mom is not home from her work yet and you are stuck with me and I'm going to give you the opportunity to get your homework done before _____.

L-Father: Dinner? Or, supper, whatever you want to call it. What and when? Do I have time to get some news out of this blasted radio before we eat?

L-Mother: You will have time. My casserole from last night has another half hour to warm-up in the oven yet. But, is there some special news you are expecting to hear?

L-Father: Well, now that you brought the subject up, it would be nice to hear that someone has invented a way to warm-up left-overs quicker than an oven can do it. A guy could starve to death waiting for an oven to warm-up his _____.

R-Son: Dinner! Speaking of that. Am I stuck with you fixing our dinner, also? Or is Mom going to be home in time to save us from one of your dinners?

R-Father: She may not be, but don't panic. She told me, if she is not, there is her casserole from last night that we can warm-up in the microwave.

R-Son: Great! I will do it. Where did she put it, in the refrigerator?

R-Father: Where else, you dummy? Other than out on the back porch in the winter-time we have no other place to keep something cold than the _____.

L-Mother: Ice Box! That reminds me. Did you stop on the way home and get some more ice for our ice box like I asked you to.

L-Father: Yes, but I still don't know why we can't have the ice delivered to us like our milk is delivered every morning.

L-Mother: Maybe some day, _____

R-Father: But not yet. Your sister is not home yet.

CULTURE CHANGES

Scene One

The stage to be divided into two identical living rooms, except that the one on the left has a radio on a table next to the master's chair and the one on the right has a full size TV.

When the actors on the left are interrupted by one of the actors on the right, and vice versa, the actors interrupted will freeze in position and remain silent until it is time for them to continue their dialogue. Timing of the interruption is to be so that it sounds to the audience that the actor on the other stage is completing the other's sentence or answering the other's questions. However, they are not to acknowledge the existence of the others. When doing this, the actors must speak distinctly so all the audience gets the humor of the interruption.

The setting of each half of the stage to be at least 50 years apart from the other, with the earlier characters on the left being designated with a big L, and the later characters being designated with a big R.

(L-Father is seated in his chair and trying to tune in the radio. L-Mother enters the room)

L-Mother: You still can't pick up the 5 o'clock news?

L-Father: No! This dang blasted thing never works right when you want it to. All I ever can get are some silly shows Like the one that is on right now called something like "the shadow knows". If he does know everything, I'm listening for a number to call so I can ask him why I can't get the 5 o'clock news on this thing they call a radio.

L-Mother: Well, at least we have the newspaper with lots of news in it.

L-Father: Yeah, but it being a morning paper, all that news is proximately a day old.

L-Mother: I heard some talk at my women's club the other day that someone has developed and is coming up with a radio with a screen attached where you can see the people doing the talking.

L-Father: Is that right? That would be amazing! If they do and the radio works as bad as this one, we will be able to read the speakers lips to find out what they are saying.

L-Mother: However, they say the pictures will be only in black and white but at least we will have a whole new view of what is going on.

L-Father: Sounds like a great idea. I hope it looks as good as it sounds. The idea that is. But I wonder what they will call it. Surely it won't be called a radio with screen attached..... I know, let's call it a _____.

R-Father: *(entering and followed by his teenage son)* Television? You got to be kidding. Watch television on a school night? Oh no, you're not! Don't you have any homework to do?

R-Son: Of course, but Mom always lets me watch a little TV before dinner.

R-Father: Well, you are lucky! Mom is not home from her work yet and you are stuck with me and I'm going to give you the opportunity to get your homework done before _____.

L-Father: Dinner? Or, supper, whatever you want to call it. What and when? Do I have time to get some news out of this blasted radio before we eat?

L-Mother: You will have time. My casserole from last night has another half hour to warm-up in the oven yet. But, is there some special news you are expecting to hear?

L-Father: Well, now that you brought the subject up, it would be nice to hear that someone has invented a way to warm-up left-overs quicker than an oven can do it. A guy could starve to death waiting for an oven to warm-up his _____.

R-Son: Dinner! Speaking of that. Am I stuck with you fixing our dinner, also? Or is Mom going to be home in time to save us from one of your dinners?

R-Father: She may not be, but don't panic. She told me, if she is not, there is her casserole from last night that we can warm-up in the microwave.

R-Son: Great! I will do it. Where did she put it, in the refrigerator?

R-Father: Where else, you dummy? Other than out on the back porch in the winter-time we have no other place to keep something cold than the _____.

L-Mother: Ice Box! That reminds me. Did you stop on the way home and get some more ice for our ice box like I asked you to.

L-Father: Yes, but I still don't know why we can't have the ice delivered to us like our milk is delivered every morning.

L-Mother: Maybe some day, _____

R-Father: But not yet. Your sister is not home yet.

R-Son: So....Since when do we have to all sit down together as a family. That custom went out years ago, didn't it?

R-Father: You won't starve if you wait another hour or so. Besides, how about your homework? Don't you have basketball practice at school tonight?

L-Father: Speaking of that. Where are the kids? Outside playing with the neighborhood kids I suppose, as they do every afternoon after school. I'll go call them.

L-Mother: You do that. I know how dirty they can get playing in the street and it will take them an hour to clean up for dinner.

L-Father: (heading for the door) And, I don't want them to be late. We have, as a family, some important items to discuss tonight.

R-Son: Nah, no basketball practice tonight, but we do have a game. Are you and mom going to be able to make it to my game this time?

R-Father: Game, tonight? This is the first I have heard of that. I thought you had a game just two nights ago. Don't tell me your coach has scheduled games for twice a week. Hell, my favorite TV show is on tonight. *(Picking up the phone)* But I'll call your mother on her cell phone and see what she has planned for tonight.

R-Son: *(now sitting at the table with his school book open in front of him)* And, please Dad, while you are at it, give Sis a call on her cell phone and ask her to hurry home. Mom's last night casserole is going to look better to me than this homework assignment, I am thinking.

L-Father: *(stopping and turning before reaching the door)* On second thought! I'll be danged if I am going to run up the street and call the kids every night for dinner. The exercise they are getting is good for them but it surely is not good for me at my age. They know when it is time to stop playing and when it is time to wash up for and sit down to the great meals you prepare every night for them.

L-Mother: Now, Dad! You know how involved they get in their play after school. If you had bought Jack that watch he wanted for his birthday, he would be better able to tell when it is time for dinner. Besides, the exercise in walking up the street a couple of blocks and then back is good for you. You sit at a desk all day at your office and sit around here all night reading a book, you are getting to be _____.

R-Mother: *(entering through the door with her teenage daughter)* Fat! Surely you don't think that. I know you do not have the advantages I had to stay thin and trim, when I was your age, such as being able to walk to school and not bussed to and from, but still you are not what I would call fat. Dad, what do you think? Doesn't your daughter here have a beautiful trim figure?

R-Father: Yes, she does! That is why I have been telling her, over and over again, that she has to do a better job of covering it up. Her skirts are too short. Her neckline on some of her dresses are too low. Her jeans are too tight. Yes she does have a beautiful trim figure, but

grandstanding it like she does before boys, is just going to get her in trouble. Mark my words.

R-Daughter: Now Dad. Don't burst a blood vessel over what I wear. All the girls today dress like I do and they all do not get into trouble, as you call it. I'll bet, back in your day when you were a teenager, the girls with their modest dress wear, but no sex education, got in more trouble, as you call it, then we do today.

R-Son: I'll attest to that. Despite my good looks and sexual attraction to the girls in my class, I haven't been able to score with any of them.

L-Mother: I don't believe it. (*looking at the audience but then looking down at a newspaper on the table*) Look! We're getting ourselves into another war.

L-Father: (*returning from the door*) What! Let me see that. (*Reads what she was reading*) You're right. But, it's to be expected with those war mongers in Washington in cahoots with the defense contractors. But, not to worry. In another 50 years or so, we will find a way to wage peace rather than waging more wars.

L-Mother: But, in the meantime, our son is rapidly approaching the age where he can be drafted into the military. I don't want him _____

R-Father: Scoring! I haven't heard illicit sex called that since I was a boy. Anyway, son, I suggest you restrict your efforts in scoring to the game of basketball. Let me tell you plainly. If you bring a child into this world before you are married and out of here, you will be out of here and on your own to bring up the little _____.

L-Father: Bastard! (*still reading the newspaper*) That bastard General What's His Name has done it again. He has ignored the latest cease fire line of demarcation and sent his troops farther into enemy territory. You are right. The result can only be the start-up of another war. (*putting down the paper and going over and turning off the radio*) Maybe it is just as well that we don't hear any news tonight. I will go call our children for dinner before our son gets drafted and placed in harms way.

R-Mother: Now father! There is no harm in our son enjoying the company of girls while he is still young and single. (*walking over to her son who is still sitting at the table and sitting next to him and directing the following question to him*) From all the comprehensive sex education your school, your father and I have given you, you do know how to have sex play with a girl without fathering a child. Don't you?

L-Son: (*Bursting through the door and followed closely by his sister*) Yes! I did it! I did it to Marie two houses down the street. I tagged her twice before she was able to kick the can. You all are looking at the new kick-the-can champion tagger.

L-Mother: That is fine son, but I hope you did not hurt Marie when tagging her twice. She is faster, but half your size.

R-Son: Yes, Mother, I know how to play safely with girls, if I ever find one who wants to play.

L-Daughter: How about me? I kicked the can once when you were it!

L-Son: Yeah, but you cheated.

L-Daughter: I did not cheat. Sitting down on the curb of the street, instead of hiding, and pretending I was not playing, when you were it, is not _____

R-Father: Cheating on your wife, when you get one, may be called sex play, but fooling around with girls at your age is not what I would call play. Whatever happened to the term intimately involved with a girl. Or making out with one.

L-Son: Call it whatever you want, but when you are sitting on the curb pretending you are not playing the game, then in fact you are not playing the game and you can't claim a score in kicking the can, before being tagged.

R-Mother: Let's get off this kick and I will go warm-up last nights casserole and we will have some dinner.

R-Son: That sounds good to me! I have to eat and run. I have a game tonight.

R-Daughter: Sounds good to me, too! I have to eat and run. Several of my girl friends from my class are meeting down at the mall at six for some wholesome Mall Time!

L-Mother: Good Time? Did you have a good time? That's what's important. Not who won or lost. Now, wash-up and help me set the table, for we will be eating soon.

L-Father: How about Jason? Is he well enough to join us at dinner tonight?

L-Mother: Yes. The doctor was here today to check-up on him and said his measles have pretty much cleared up and he is no longer under quarantine. Would you mind running upstairs and getting him out of his bed and dressed for dinner.

L-Father: (starting to walk off stage) I will, but do you mind if I walk up the stairs and not _____?

R-Father: Run? Why do you kids have to always eat and run? Whatever happened to the good old custom of the whole family sitting down for dinner together?

- R-Son: It is a good old custom, that's why. Your generation, when you were young, had nothing better to do but sit around and talk. We have organized sports, extra-curriculum activities, and malls we get committed to through our school and school friends.
- R-Father: So family is of secondary importance. Is that right?
- L-Mother: Yes, that's right, we don't want to put a strain on that overworked body of yours.
- L-Father: Now mother, don't be sarcastic. It's true my job is a sit down job but occasionally I do have to drive to customers I can't reach by phone and I told you that last month I gave up my close-by-the-office parking space and now have to walk nearly a whole block to where I now park my car.
- L-Daughter: Wow, a whole block! That's quite a change!
- R-Mother: No. It is a change from when we were young, but family is still of primary importance, isn't it kids? We just participate as a family in a different way.
- R-Son: Mom's got a good point there, Dad. Playing in sports would not be as much fun as it is, if you two were not in the stands cheering me on like you do.
- R-Daughter: And hanging out at the mall with my friends would be a real downer if I didn't have a loving family to come home to every evening. That includes you, Brother Dear.
- R-Son: And, when we are all home in the evening, at last, it is a great comfort to me to be surrounded by you even when each of us is doing their own thing. And that includes you, _____.
- L-Son: Sister Dear! It's best not to get involved when our dear parents are having one of their discussions. So Pop only has to walk a block to get to his car during the day, but Mom only has to walk from the kitchen into our attached garage when she needs to drive somewhere.
- L-Mother: (smiling) That's real cute of you, Son, but keep in mind that I get a lot more walking every day in picking up and cleaning up after you kids. I just read recently that the average housewife, which I am, walks an average of 5 miles a day and some of that is up and down stairs.
- L-Daughter: Yea, Brother Dear! Put that in your pipe and smoke it. And, add this! Women of today, which I am about to become one, are not going to be shackled to their homes. Already many have jobs outside the home.

L-Father: Hold it! Who put that nonsense into your head? Women's place has always been and always will be in the home. (*everyone pauses ...then*)

R-Father: When they return from work, mothers have little time to participate in family stuff. If not warming up last night's casserole or cleaning up their kitchens after dinner, they have their housework to do. Besides, every night when you kids are not playing in an organized sport or hanging out at the mall with your friends, you are home here playing video games or surfing the internet on your lap top computers. Today there are just too many distractions

L-Daughter: If that is so, don't count on me getting married and having your grandchildren for you to play with in your old age. I am going to be a liberated woman and have a career of my own!

L-Son: (*with a smile*) That's good for I can't imagine any boy wanting to marry you. If you cheat at the game of kick-the-can, I am sure you would cheat at the game of marriage also.

L-Father: (*heading off stage*) Let's put a hold on this conversation until I bring Jason down. I am sure he will have something to add to it.

R-Son: Distractions? Dad, those aren't distractions. Those are the life blood of my generation. Without them we would be _____.

R-Mother: A lot more fun to have around. Your father also has made a good point. We need to do more together as a family.

R-Daughter: We have been known to watch television together, especially on the weekends, when we can get the remote away from the boys and change the station from their football or whatever to a good old romance movie.

R-Mother: That is not exactly what I had in mind. I read in the paper just the other day that a new health club is being built. Why don't we join it as a family and do something active together on the weekends? I can't swim, but I do have a great service in volley ball. (*demonstrating her service*)

R-Father: And I have been known to spike the ball for a point. (*reaching high and demonstrating his spiking of a ball*)

L-Mother: Good point....you made, Daughter. During this most recent war, with the young men off fighting it, women have replaced quite a few of them in the work place. But, unfortunately, the companies hiring them don't pay them as much as they did the boys.

L-Son: Of course not. Girls aren't worth as much as we boys.

L-Daughter: *(in the process of setting the dinner table and picking up a table knife)*
You aren't going to be worth anything once I get through with you!
(threatening him with the knife) Take that back _____.

R-Daughter: Or else, *(looking at the audience)*

R- Mother: Or else what?

L-Daughter: Or else, I will let the word get out that not only are we worth equal pay with you men, but actually we are worth more than you men.

L-Son: That will be the day.

L-Mother: Quit your squabbling now, and finish setting the table. Your father will be down in a minute with Jason and we can all sit down to eat, in peace, I hope.

R-Son: *(walking in with a plate of food and sitting down in front of the TV set and turning it on)* Sounds good to me, but don't forget I often have basketball practice on Saturdays.

R-Daughter: *(also walking out with a plate of food but sitting down with it at the table)* And, my glee club often has a couple of practices over a weekend.

R-Father: Well! Maybe we should, once a month or so, abandon all of our weekend distractions connected to school and this house, and go camping without cell phones and without telling anyone where we pitch our tent.

R-Mother: Sounds good to me. Now, dear, what kind of dressing do you want on your salad.

L-Father: *(entering with Jason)* Ranch?

R-Mother: I'll get it for you. *(she leaves and father sits down in front of the TV with a plate of food)*

L-Father: Mother, I do believe we are raising a future cowboy here. Jason just told me he wants a ranch for his birthday.

L-Mother: That is wonderful! That must mean he is feeling better. This morning all he wanted was to get out of bed. *(She gives Jason a hug and sits him at the table and everyone sits down)*

R-Son: *(getting up and putting his empty plate on the table)* Well, I'm out of here. I want to stop over at Shirley's before the game tonight and get some help on our crazy algebra assignment due tomorrow.

R-Daughter: (*getting up from the table*) I'm done with my dinner too and have to go. Brother, dear, can you drop me at the mall?

(*they both head out the door*)

L-Father: Yes! A fine dinner, Mother! Now, if everyone is through eating, as president I will call a family meeting to order. I believe we left off last night with discussing improvements in our house. Does anyone want to make a motion?

L-Son: Yes, I move we install a basketball hoop out in our driveway.

L-Father: That's a novel idea. I will give that some serious thought. Anyone else have a motion.

Jason: I move we take the attic and put it into the basement and put the basement up into the attic.

L-Father: Motion denied! As your president, I am exercising my executive privilege to ignore any suggestion that would require an extraordinary amount of work on my part.

L-Daughter: In that case, I move we elect a new president.

R-Father: (*still sitting and pointing at the TV screen*) Now that's what I call a good idea. Mother, look, they now have made and are selling automatic dishwashers. Since both of your dishwashers just walked out the door, let's buy one and you can pop these dirty dishes into it and sit down with me to watch our evening news program.

R--Mother: Sounds like a good move! But, until we do, how about you moving into the kitchen with me and helping me with these dirty dishes.

L-Father: Motion denied! Do I hear a motion to adjourn this family meeting?

R-Father: I'll so move, if you agree we buy one of those machine washers before another dish gets dirty. (*getting up and heading towards the kitchen*)

L-Mother: Agreed! Now who's turn is it to help with the dishes?

L-Daughter: Not mine, I helped last night.

L-Son: Not mine, I have lot's of homework to do.

L-Father: That's Great. For that leaves Jason as the only one left to help and he's too small to reach the sink. Why don't you both help your mother and it will be half the work and half the time for both of you?

L-Mother: Never mind! I will take care of them myself. (*the three children head up stairs*)

R-Father: *(returning from the kitchen and followed by wife)* That's good! No sense in over-doing them. If we spend the time in getting them too clean, we will miss some good program on the _____.

L-Father: *(sitting back down with the radio)* Television? That would be a good improvement over this blasted radio. In the meantime, maybe I can get some good talk show for this evening entertainment. *(he keeps turning the dial)* Not that! Never that! What I need is something that can give me some good laughs. A comedy program where I can just sit back and have some good laughs. Maybe they could call them _____.

R-Father: Sit Coms. *(working the TV remote)* That's all you can get anymore. Oh well, they are better than some of the news we have been getting dished out to us lately.

(Both sets of parents sit down together on the couch and at the same time let out an audible AMEN. This ends scene ONE.)

SCENE 2

Stage left is a front porch. Stage right is a garage. Both father and mother of each stage are sitting on chairs sipping drinks.

Father-L: Our neighbors should be coming over and _____

Father-R: Joining us soon.

Mother-L: What time is it?

Mother-R: *(looking at her watch)* Nuts! I forgot to change the time on my watch to daylight savings time. Al and Lois should be over soon, I would think.

Father-R: You need a watch like mine, where the hour hand is moved forward automatically by the U. S. Atomic Clock.

Father-L: *(digging into his pocket)* I can never remember my pocket watch. But since the sky is starting to darken, I would say it is about time for our neighbors to join us.

Both Couples L & R: Well hello! *(as a neighbor couple enters on L's porch and another neighbor couple enters R's garage.)*

N-Couple R: And how are you?

Father-R: How are we, you ask? Do you want the truth or the lie?

L Mother and Father: The truth___is we were just talking about you. (*On the right they greet each other with hugs. On the left they greet each other with just the wave of their hands*)

N-Father-L: You do have something Mom and I can sip on. Our cupboard is completely bare.

Mother-L: Yes, we do. (*getting up*) What will you have? How about _____

Father-R: A beer or glass of wine? (*getting up*)

N-Father-L: We will just take _____

N-Father-R: Our usual, if you don't mind.

R-Son: So....Since when do we have to all sit down together as a family. That custom went out years ago, didn't it?

R-Father: You won't starve if you wait another hour or so. Besides, how about your homework? Don't you have basketball practice at school tonight?

L-Father: Speaking of that. Where are the kids? Outside playing with the neighborhood kids I suppose, as they do every afternoon after school. I'll go call them.

L-Mother: You do that. I know how dirty they can get playing in the street and it will take them an hour to clean up for dinner.

L-Father: (*heading for the door*) And, I don't want them to be late. We have, as a family, some important items to discuss tonight.

R-Son: Nah, no basketball practice tonight, but we do have a game. Are you and mom going to be able to make it to my game this time?

R-Father: Game, tonight? This is the first I have heard of that. I thought you had a game just two nights ago. Don't tell me your coach has scheduled games for twice a week. Hell, my favorite TV show is on tonight. (*Picking up the phone*) But I'll call your mother on her cell phone and see what she has planned for tonight.

R-Son: (*now sitting at the table with his school book open in front of him*) And, please Dad, while you are at it, give Sis a call on her cell phone and ask her to hurry home. Mom's last night casserole is going to look better to me than this homework assignment, I am thinking.

L-Father: (*stopping and turning before reaching the door*) On second thought! I'll be danged if I am going to run up the street and call the kids every night for dinner. The exercise they are getting is good for them but it surely is not good for me at my age. They know when it is time to stop

playing and when it is time to wash up for and sit down to the great meals you prepare every night for them.

L-Mother: Now, Dad! You know how involved they get in their play after school. If you had bought Jack that watch he wanted for his birthday, he would be better able to tell when it is time for dinner. Besides, the exercise in walking up the street a couple of blocks and then back is good for you. You sit at a desk all day at your office and sit around here all night reading a book, you are getting to be _____.

R-Mother: *(entering through the door with her teenage daughter)* Fat! Surely you don't think that. I know you do not have the advantages I had to stay thin and trim, when I was your age, such as being able to walk to school and not bussed to and from, but still you are not what I would call fat. Dad, what do you think? Doesn't your daughter here have a beautiful trim figure?

R-Father: Yes, she does! That is why I have been telling her, over and over again, that she has to do a better job of covering it up. Her skirts are too short. Her neckline on some of her dresses are too low. Her jeans are too tight. Yes she does have a beautiful trim figure, but grandstanding it like she does before boys, is just going to get her in trouble. Mark my words.

R-Daughter: Now Dad. Don't burst a blood vessel over what I wear. All the girls today dress like I do and they all do not get into trouble, as you call it. I'll bet, back in your day when you were a teenager, the girls with their modest dress wear, but no sex education, got in more trouble, as you call it, then we do today.

R-Son: I'll attest to that. Despite my good looks and sexual attraction to the girls in my class, I haven't been able to score with any of them.

L-Mother: I don't believe it. *(looking at the audience but then looking down at a newspaper on the table)* Look! We're getting ourselves into another war.

L-Father: *(returning from the door)* What! Let me see that. *(Reads what she was reading)* You're right. But, it's to be expected with those war mongers in Washington in cahoots with the defense contractors. But, not to worry. In another 50 years or so, we will find a way to wage peace rather than waging more wars.

L-Mother: But, in the meantime, our son is rapidly approaching the age where he can be drafted into the military. I don't want him _____

R-Father: Scoring! I haven't heard illicit sex called that since I was a boy. Anyway, son, I suggest you restrict your efforts in scoring to the game of basketball. Let me tell you plainly. If you bring a child into this world

before you are married and out of here, you will be out of here and on your own to bring up the little _____.

L-Father: Bastard! *(still reading the newspaper)* That bastard General What's His Name has done it again. He has ignored the latest cease fire line of demarcation and sent his troops farther into enemy territory. You are right. The result can only be the start-up of another war. *(putting down the paper and going over and turning off the radio)* Maybe it is just as well that we don't hear any news tonight. I will go call our children for dinner before our son gets drafted and placed in harms way.

R-Mother: Now father! There is no harm in our son enjoying the company of girls while he is still young and single. *(walking over to her son who is still sitting at the table and sitting next to him and directing the following question to him)* From all the comprehensive sex education your school, your father and I have given you, you do know how to have sex play with a girl without fathering a child. Don't you?

L-Son: *(Bursting through the door and followed closely by his sister)* Yes! I did it! I did it to Marie two houses down the street. I tagged her twice before she was able to kick the can. You all are looking at the new kick-the-can champion tagger.

L-Mother: That is fine son, but I hope you did not hurt Marie when tagging her twice. She is faster, but half your size.

R-Son: Yes, Mother, I know how to play safely with girls, if I ever find one who wants to play.

L-Daughter: How about me? I kicked the can once when you were it!

L-Son: Yeah, but you cheated.

L-Daughter: I did not cheat. Sitting down on the curb of the street, instead of hiding, and pretending I was not playing, when you were it, is not _____

R-Father: Cheating on your wife, when you get one, may be called sex play, but fooling around with girls at your age is not what I would call play. Whatever happened to the term intimately involved with a girl. Or making out with one.

L-Son: Call it whatever you want, but when you are sitting on the curb pretending you are not playing the game, then in fact you are not playing the game and you can't claim a score in kicking the can, before being tagged.

R-Mother: Let's get off this kick and I will go warm-up last nights casserole and we will have some dinner.

R-Son: That sounds good to me! I have to eat and run. I have a game tonight.

R-Daughter: Sounds good to me, too! I have to eat and run. Several of my girl friends from my class are meeting down at the mall at six for some wholesome Mall Time!

L-Mother: Good Time? Did you have a good time? That's what's important. Not who won or lost. Now, wash-up and help me set the table, for we will be eating soon.

L-Father: How about Jason? Is he well enough to join us at dinner tonight?

L-Mother: Yes. The doctor was here today to check-up on him and said his measles have pretty much cleared up and he is no longer under quarantine. Would you mind running upstairs and getting him out of his bed and dressed for dinner.

L-Father: (starting to walk off stage) I will, but do you mind if I walk up the stairs and not _____?

R-Father: Run? Why do you kids have to always eat and run? Whatever happened to the good old custom of the whole family sitting down for dinner together?

R-Son: It is a good old custom, that's why. Your generation, when you were young, had nothing better to do but sit around and talk. We have organized sports, extra-curriculum activities, and malls we get committed to through our school and school friends.

R-Father: So family is of secondary importance. Is that right?

L-Mother: Yes, that's right, we don't want to put a strain on that overworked body of yours.

L-Father: Now mother, don't be sarcastic. It's true my job is a sit down job but occasionally I do have to drive to customers I can't reach by phone and I told you that last month I gave up my close-by-the-office parking space and now have to walk nearly a whole block to where I now park my car.

L-Daughter: Wow, a whole block! That's quite a change!

R-Mother: No. It is a change from when we were young, but family is still of primary importance, isn't it kids? We just participate as a family in a different way.

R-Son: Mom's got a good point there, Dad. Playing in sports would not be as much fun as it is, if you two were not in the stands cheering me on like you do.

R-Daughter: And hanging out at the mall with my friends would be a real downer if I didn't have a loving family to come home to every evening. That includes you, Brother Dear.

R-Son: And, when we are all home in the evening, at last, it is a great comfort to me to be surrounded by you even when each of us is doing their own thing. And that includes you, _____.

L-Son: Sister Dear! It's best not to get involved when our dear parents are having one of their discussions. So Pop only has to walk a block to get to his car during the day, but Mom only has to walk from the kitchen into our attached garage when she needs to drive somewhere.

L-Mother: (smiling) That's real cute of you, Son, but keep in mind that I get a lot more walking every day in picking up and cleaning up after you kids. I just read recently that the average housewife, which I am, walks an average of 5 miles a day and some of that is up and down stairs.

L-Daughter: Yea, Brother Dear! Put that in your pipe and smoke it. And, add this! Women of today, which I am about to become one, are not going to be shackled to their homes. Already many have jobs outside the home.

L-Father: Hold it! Who put that nonsense into your head? Women's place has always been and always will be in the home. (*everyone pauses ...then*)

R-Father: When they return from work, mothers have little time to participate in family stuff. If not warming up last night's casserole or cleaning up their kitchens after dinner, they have their housework to do. Besides, every night when you kids are not playing in an organized sport or hanging out at the mall with your friends, you are home here playing video games or surfing the internet on your lap top computers. Today there are just too many distractions

L-Daughter: If that is so, don't count on me getting married and having your grandchildren for you to play with in your old age. I am going to be a liberated woman and have a career of my own!

L-Son: (*with a smile*) That's good for I can't imagine any boy wanting to marry you. If you cheat at the game of kick-the-can, I am sure you would cheat at the game of marriage also.

L-Father: (*heading off stage*) Let's put a hold on this conversation until I bring Jason down. I am sure he will have something to add to it.

R-Son: Distractions? Dad, those aren't distractions. Those are the life blood of my generation. Without them we would be _____.

R=Mother: A lot more fun to have around. Your father also has made a good point. We need to do more together as a family.

R-Daughter: We have been known to watch television together, especially on the weekends, when we can get the remote away from the boys and change the station from their football or whatever to a good old romance movie.

R-Mother: That is not exactly what I had in mind. I read in the paper just the other day that a new health club is being built. Why don't we join it as a family and do something active together on the weekends? I can't swim, but I do have a great service in volley ball. *(demonstrating her service)*

R-Father: And I have been known to spike the ball for a point. *(reaching high and demonstrating his spiking of a ball)*

L-Mother: Good point....you made, Daughter. During this most recent war, with the young men off fighting it, women have replaced quite a few of them in the work place. But, unfortunately, the companies hiring them don't pay them as much as they did the boys.

L-Son: Of course not. Girls aren't worth as much as we boys.

L-Daughter: *(in the process of setting the dinner table and picking up a table knife)* You aren't going to be worth anything once I get through with you! *(threatening him with the knife)* Take that back _____.

R-Daughter: Or else, *(looking at the audience)*

R- Mother: Or else what?

L-Daughter: Or else, I will let the word get out that not only are we worth equal pay with you men, but actually we are worth more than you men.

L-Son: That will be the day.

L-Mother: Quit your squabbling now, and finish setting the table. Your father will be down in a minute with Jason and we can all sit down to eat, in peace, I hope.

R-Son: *(walking in with a plate of food and sitting down in front of the TV set and turning it on)* Sounds good to me, but don't forget I often have basketball practice on Saturdays.

R-Daughter: *(also walking out with a plate of food but sitting down with it at the table)* And, my glee club often has a couple of practices over a weekend.

R-Father: Well! Maybe we should, once a month or so, abandon all of our weekend distractions connected to school and this house, and go camping without cell phones and without telling anyone where we pitch our tent.

R-Mother: Sounds good to me. Now, dear, what kind of dressing do you want on your salad.

L-Father: *(entering with Jason)* Ranch?

R-Mother: I'll get it for you. *(she leaves and father sits down in front of the TV with a plate of food)*

L-Father: Mother, I do believe we are raising a future cowboy here. Jason just told me he wants a ranch for his birthday.

L-Mother: That is wonderful! That must mean he is feeling better. This morning all he wanted was to get out of bed. *(She gives Jason a hug and sits him at the table and everyone sits down)*

R-Son: *(getting up and putting his empty plate on the table)* Well, I'm out of here. I want to stop over at Shirley's before the game tonight and get some help on our crazy algebra assignment due tomorrow.

R-Daughter: *(getting up from the table)* I'm done with my dinner too and have to go. Brother, dear, can you drop me at the mall?

(they both head out the door)

L-Father: Yes! A fine dinner, Mother! Now, if everyone is through eating, as president I will call a family meeting to order. I believe we left off last night with discussing improvements in our house. Does anyone want to make a motion?

L-Son: Yes, I move we install a basketball hoop out in our driveway.

L-Father: That's a novel idea. I will give that some serious thought. Anyone else have a motion.

Jason: I move we take the attic and put it into the basement and put the basement up into the attic.

L-Father: Motion denied! As your president, I am exercising my executive privilege to ignore any suggestion that would require an extraordinary amount of work on my part.

L-Daughter: In that case, I move we elect a new president.

R-Father: *(still sitting and pointing at the TV screen)* Now that's what I call a good idea. Mother, look, they now have made and are selling automatic dishwashers. Since both of your dishwashers just walked out the door, let's buy one and you can pop these dirty dishes into it and sit down with me to watch our evening news program.

R--Mother: Sounds like a good move! But, until we do, how about you moving into the kitchen with me and helping me with these dirty dishes.

L-Father: Motion denied! Do I hear a motion to adjourn this family meeting?

R-Father: I'll so move, if you agree we buy one of those machine washers before another dish gets dirty. *(getting up and heading towards the kitchen)*

L-Mother: Agreed! Now who's turn is it to help with the dishes?

L-Daughter: Not mine, I helped last night.

L-Son: Not mine, I have lot's of homework to do.

L-Father: That's Great. For that leaves Jason as the only one left to help and he's too small to reach the sink. Why don't you both help your mother and it will be half the work and half the time for both of you?

L-Mother: Never mind! I will take care of them myself. *(the three children head up stairs)*

R-Father: *(returning from the kitchen and followed by wife)* That's good! No sense in over-doing them. If we spend the time in getting them too clean, we will miss some good program on the _____.

L-Father: *(sitting back down with the radio)* Television? That would be a good improvement over this blasted radio. In the meantime, maybe I can get some good talk show for this evening entertainment. *(he keeps turning the dial)* Not that! Never that! What I need is something that can give me some good laughs. A comedy program where I can just sit back and have some good laughs. Maybe they could call them _____.

R-Father: Sit Coms. *(working the TV remote)* That's all you can get anymore. Oh well, they are better than some of the news we have been getting dished out to us lately.

(Both sets of parents sit down together on the couch and at the same time let out an audible AMEN. This ends scene ONE.)

SCENE 2

Stage left is a front porch. Stage right is a garage. Both father and mother of each stage are sitting on chairs sipping drinks.

Father-L: Our neighbors should be coming over and _____

Father-R: Joining us soon.

Mother-L: What time is it?

Mother-R: *(looking at her watch)* Nuts! I forgot to change the time on my watch to daylight savings time. Al and Lois should be over soon, I would think.

Father-R: You need a watch like mine, where the hour hand is moved forward automatically by the U. S. Atomic Clock.

Father-L: *(digging into his pocket)* I can never remember my pocket watch. But since the sky is starting to darken, I would say it is about time for our neighbors to join us.

Both Couples L & R: Well hello! *(as a neighbor couple enters on L's porch and another neighbor couple enters R's garage.)*

N-Couple R: And how are you?

Father-R: How are we, you ask? Do you want the truth or the lie?

L Mother and Father: The truth___is we were just talking about you. *(On the right they greet each other with hugs. On the left they greet each other with just the wave of their hands)*

N-Father-L: You do have something Mom and I can sip on. Our cupboard is completely bare.

Mother-L: Yes, we do. *(getting up)* What will you have? How about _____

Father-R: A beer or glass of wine? *(getting up)*

N-Father-L: We will just take _____

N-Father-R: Our usual, if you don't mind.