

BIG GEORGE

By Jon Jory

Song by Peter Ekstrom

Copyright © 2022 by Jon Jory and Peter Ekstrom, All rights reserved.
ISBN: 978-1-64479-178-3

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers LLC.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

BROOKLYN PUBLISHERS LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (888) 473-8521 • FAX (319) 368-8011

BIG GEORGE

By Jon Jory

Song by Peter Ekstrom

*A docu-whatsit of George Washington's life
in a rag-tag, razzmatazz style with songs, in a half hour or so.*

SYNOPSIS: A President's Day plot that will keep teens fact-checking history till the end! This play-within-a-play follows a bossy, self-appointed high school stage director as a new musical about the life of George Washington is rehearsed. Deftly combines larger-than-life myths of the country's first President with facts about the American Revolution and its aftermath. In the words of George Washington, "To encourage literature and the arts is a duty which every good citizen owes their country."

DURATION: 40 minutes.

TIME: Present.

SETTING: School stage.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 females, 14 either)

LULU (f).....	(44 lines)
JOLENE (f).....	(81 lines)
TINA (f).....	(8 lines)
ANTONIO (m/f).....	(11 lines)
FLAME (m/f).....	(19 lines)
AUDIENCE MEMBER (m/f).....	(13 lines)
ALEXANDRA (f).....	(14 lines)
WANDA (m/f).....	(24 lines)
MARTIN (m/f).....	(60 lines)
MIRANDA (m/f)	(5 lines)
KAYLA (m/f)	(6 lines)
DENNY (m/f)	(8 lines)
JEN (m/f)	(8 lines)
SARAH (m/f).....	(8 lines)
PETE (m/f).....	(14 lines)

ADORA (m/f) (6 lines)

BETTS (m/f) (8 lines)

CAST NOTE: *Jolene plays only George Washington, others play more than one role.*

CASTING FLEXIBILITY

The original thought is 14 women and 4 men. However, you may change the name of characters and pronouns if you wish to rebalance the gender balance with the following exceptions:

- Lulu must be female
- Jolene must be female
- Tina must be female
- Alexandra must be female

COSTUMES: Contemporary clothes with period hats, sashes, gloves, etc.

SET: None is crucial. You may create any background or series of platforms you wish.

AT START: *An open stage. On it are six wooden boxes painted one bright color. They can be put together in various combinations. When the lights come up, we see the full cast, except LULU, doing stuff you could see at any school during a lunch break. There's a football being passed, a group here and there are talking. Off to the left, a cast member sits alone reading. A group might be practicing a cheerleading routine. After about thirty seconds, LULU, who seems to be the head theatre-nerd, pushes on a clothing rack with various costume pieces to be used in the play.*

LULU: *(High energy.)* All right, all right, all right. We gotta get going we're running a little late. Actually, it's my fault I forgot it.

DENNY: *(The guy reading a book.)* Lulu, c'mon, give us a break, we're exhausted.

ALEXANDRA: Can we just eat lunch in peace?

LULU: Are you kidding, this is February 27th!

MIRANDA: Look, this started out as a good idea—

TINA: But you're killing us!

LULU: This is February 27th!

WANDA: *(Starting to exit.)* I have to study, Lulu.

LULU: Stop right there!

WANDA does.

LULU: This isn't just anybody's birthday...

ALL CAST: *(Very negative.)* Whose birthday is it?

LULU: George Washington!

ALL CAST collapses on the ground.

LULU: Come on, the guy is the father of our country.

MARTIN: *(Getting up.)* Lulu, you're like obsessed. I mean it was cool when we started, but it's taking over our lives like an octopus. We have other things to do, Lulu. No mas.

LULU: (*Pointing at the audience.*) But they're out there. The nice old lady from next door who knits doormats. Willy, the mailman, two fire people. Kat, the cop. The mayor, she's here. They give up their lunch to come over to the school and watch us. Republicans, Democrats, vegetarians, two Socialists... look there's even a Libertarian.

MARTIN: Where?

LULU: The guy who's naked.

MARTIN: That's not a Libertarian, that's a nudist.

LULU: Sometimes it overlaps.

MARTIN: (*Stepping forward.*) Hi folks. Ummm... it's really nice for you to give up your lunch breaks and stuff...

Behind him, LULU is passing out scripts to the cast.

MARTIN: And drop by _____ [*Name of school presenting the play.*] To watch Lulu's little skits but...

LULU: It is not a skit, it's a celebration. If George Washington doesn't deserve a celebration who does?

MARTIN: But we have tests coming up in biology and Spanish and...

LULU: This is how we lose track of who we are and...

JEN: Lulu!

LULU: What?

JEN: We're hungry, we never get to eat lunch because we're always doing this... I've lost ten pounds I didn't want to lose. I'm a shadow of my former self... my doctor says I have to eat. I'm wasting away! My brother says I look like I'm in a Tim Burton film.

LULU: But this is February 27th, it's George Washington's...

ALL CAST: Birthday!

MARTIN: We know, Lulu. Yes. You're probably right it's...

SARAH: George Washington's birthday but...

WANDA: This month alone we did...

KAYLA: Benjamin Franklin.

ANTONIO: Martin Luther King.

FLAME: Andrew Jackson.

PETE: Paul Revere.

ADORA: Abigail Adams.

BETTS: Edith Wharton.

MARTIN: Al Capone.

ALEXANDRA: And Rob Zombie.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: *(From the audience.)* Who's Rob Zombie?

ALL CAST: You don't know who Rob Zombie is?

KAYLA: What's the matter with you?

PETE: You don't know his album –

WANDA: *Hellbilly Deluxe 2?*

ANTONIO: His new one is *Venomous Rat Regeneration Vendor*.

LULU: Can we please do George Washington!!

ALL CAST: Fine!

The entire group gathers as a chorus. They sing BIG GEORGE (sheet music at end of script.)

ONE PERSON: *(Spoken.)* One-two-three-Yeah!

ALL:

BIG GEORGE! BIG GEORGE!
BIG GEORGE! BIG GEORGE!
FROZE HIS TOES AT VALLEY FORGE
BUT OUR HERO ONWARD WENT
AND SOON BECAME OUR PRESIDENT!
PRESIDENT BIG GEORGE

SOLO #1:

HIS TEETH WERE WOODEN!

ALL:

PRESIDENT BIG GEORGE

SOLO #2:

HE WORE A HAIRPIECE!

ALL:

PRESIDENT BIG GEORGE

SOLO #3: *(Milk it!)*

ONE FOR MY MOTHER!

ALL: *(Bring it on home!)*

G—E—O—O—O—R—G—E—E—E—E

HELPED CREATE THE LAND OF THE FREE-EE_EE

HE COULD NOT LIE ABOUT THAT CHERRY TREE!

NOT GEORGE, *(Clap!)* OUR, *(Clap!)*

BIG, *(Clap)* BIG, *(Clap!)*

GEORGE!

ALL: *(Spoken.)* Yeah!

After the song is over the cast disperses around the stage. JOLENE goes over to LULU.

JOLENE: Hey Lulu.

LULU is moving around giving costume pieces to everyone from the rack she brought on.

LULU: What's up, Jolene?

JOLENE: Can I be George Washington?

LULU: How come?

JOLENE: I never get to play a big part.

LULU: You said you had stage fright.

JOLENE: Well, I do. But I have profound sympathy for George Washington.

LULU: Why?

JOLENE: He had really terrible teeth.

LULU: And you sympathize with that?

JOLENE: I've had seven root canals.

LULU: That's terrible.

JOLENE: It is. But they had to give George Washington wooden teeth.

LULU: Really?

JOLENE: They're in the Smithsonian.

DENNY: Actually they're not in the Smithsonian they're in Baltimore and they're not wooden, they're made of a lot of things including hippopotamus ivory.

JOLENE: Wow! Now I really want to play George Washington.

LULU: Okay.

JOLENE: Where did he find a hippopotamus?

LULU: Enough. You're George Washington.

JOLENE: (*Astounded.*) I'm George Washington?

LULU nods.

JOLENE: I'm George Washington! (*Does a dance of sheer joy.*)

LULU: Wear this hat.

JOLENE: That's all it takes?

LULU: We do what we can.

DENNY: (*Resigned.*) All right, let's do this thing.

Everybody assembles behind LULU.

LULU: (*Putting on a top hat.*) Ladies and gentlemen! And those that are gender fluid! The Lulu Lunchtime Players present...

MARTIN: (*Interrupting, hands in air.*) Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! Hold it.

LULU: What?

MARTIN: This is not the Lulu Lunchtime Players. We all do this.

LULU: But I invented it.

MARTIN: But you can't do it without us.

LULU: Fine. (*To the audience.*) Ladies and gentlemen, the Lunchtime Players present, from an original story idea by Lulu...

MARTIN: That works.

ALL CAST: Big George!

ALL hold their scripts for a while, but put them down over the next five minutes and act without them.

WANDA: (*Takes a naked baby doll and tosses it across the stage where it is caught by PETE who hands it to TINA, who plays George's mom. ANTONIO stands beside her playing George's dad, Augustine.*) Heads up.

TINA: (*As Mary Washington.*) Pretty baby, pretty baby, coo, coo, coo! Georgie, Georgie.

ALEXANDRA: February 2nd, 1732.

MARTIN: (*As George's dad.*) Big George is born to...

TINA: *(As Mary Washington.)* Mary Ball Washington.

Throws the baby offstage.

TINA: *(As Mary Washington.)* All I got from my father was fifteen head of cattle, three slaves, and a sack full of feathers to make a feather bed.

MARTIN: She was, well...

ALL CAST: Bossy.

TINA: *(As Mary Washington. Sticking a pipe in her mouth.)* Gimme a light.

KAYLA mimes lighting her pipe.

TINA: *(As Mary Washington.)* All rightie. Let's get this dump cleaned up!

The cast mimes sweeping.

TINA: *(As Mary Washington.)* How much did we pay for the cherry brandy?

FLAME whispers in her ear.

TINA: *(As Mary Washington.)* Too much! You think we're made of money?

TINA stalks off. AUGUSTINE steps forward.

ANTONIO: *(As Augustine Washington.)* How ya doin'? I'm Augustine Washington, George's dad. I located the family on my 2,500 acres of forest at Little Hunting Creek on the Potomac in Virginia.

FLAME: *(Pulling at him.)* Time to go, Augustine.

ANTONIO: *(As Augustine Washington. Breaking away.)* History almost completely ignores me which really frosts my cherries.

FLAME: C'mon. Augustine.

ANTONIO: (*As Augustine Washington.*) I was like a terrific businessman, but all anybody remembers... (*He mimes lifting something very heavy.*)

KAYLA: He could lift the back end of a wagon with one hand.

ANTONIO: (*As Augustine Washington.*) Forget it. I'm done.

ANTONIO exits. TINA (As Mary Washington) crosses the stage followed by JOLENE taking notes.

TINA: (*As Mary Washington.*) I want the haystacks moved to the south field. Clean out the attic and have a yard sale. No day off this Sunday. (*She's gone.*)

MARTIN: Definitely bossy.

BETTS: (*Speaking to the audience.*) Of the mother, I was more afraid than of my own parents but she awed me with her kindness, for she was truly kind. She was, however, unbending in money matters.

JOLENE: (*As George.*) I'm eight now. (*Mimes chopping down a cherry tree. Steps back.*) Timber!!

TINA: (*As Mary Washington. Entering.*) George?

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Yes, Mom.

TINA: (*As Mary Washington.*) Somebody chopped down the cherry tree. Do you have any idea who?

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Well, Mom, I cannot tell a lie, it was moi.

JEN: (*Enters with cymbals. Crashes them together.*) Hold it!

JOLENE: (*As George.*) What?

JEN: That is a completely tall tale.

JOLENE: (*As George.*) But my dad said...

ANTONIO (As Augustine) rushes on.

ANTONIO: (*As Augustine Washington.*) George, my boy, your honesty is worth more than a thousand trees.

JEN: (*A cymbal crash.*) Never happened. Completely false.

ANTONIO: (*As Augustine Washington.*) Oh well. (*Exits.*)

JOLENE: (*As George. Mimes throwing something out over the audience's head.*) Hah! Threw that silver dollar completely across the Potomac River.

JEN: (*Cymbal crash.*) Completely made up. First of all, there were no silver dollars yet and secondly, it's impossible. (*Crashes the cymbals again and exits.*)

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Sheesh. Well, I did throw a rock three hundred feet, there were witnesses.

ALL CAST: Moving right along!

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Okay. I liked swimming. I liked riding. I liked cockfights. I liked school.

JEN crashes the cymbals.

JEN: Absolutely true. (*Exits.*)

JOLENE: (*As George.*) I'm fifteen now. I became a surveyor.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What exactly is a surveyor?

MARTIN: Who knows? We don't have time for that.

JOLENE: (*As George. Looking through an imaginary surveying glass.*)

Fifty-eight feet to the elm tree, seventy-six feet to the rock that looks like Justin Bieber, ninety-four feet to the outhouse.

MARTIN: That's a surveyor.

JOLENE (As George) starts wildly scratching.

MARTIN: Washington slept in some real dives.

JOLENE: (*As George. Writing a letter.*) Dear mom: The bed was nothing but a little straw matted together without sheets but only a thread bare blanket with double its weight in fleas, lice, and spiders.

MARTIN: By the time he was eighteen, he polished himself up for Virginia social life.

JOLENE: (*As George. Looking in an imaginary closet.*) So, what have I got? Nine cotton shirts, six linen waistcoats, four neck cloths and seven caps.

ADORA: (*Being cute.*) He was a very bashful young man, I often wished he would talk more.

JOLENE: (*As George. Working out.*) Who needs to talk, I'm six foot, 175 and I have terrific abs.

MARTIN: (*Checking his phone.*) That's enough cute stories. We only got thirty-five minutes here. Flame!

FLAME moves beside him.

FLAME: What's up, buttercup?

MARTIN: We gotta get George Washington through the French and Indian War.

FLAME: But that is so boring!

MARTIN: Has to be done.

FLAME: *(To the audience.)* Do not let people find out you're organized, bam! They'll have you doing all the boring stuff, nobody wants to do. It is sooo not sexy!

MARTIN: French and Indian War, go!

FLAME talks really fast.

FLAME: They also called it the seven years war though it actually went on for nine years. So this was in the United States before there was a United States.

ALL CAST: Rock out!

FLAME: The colonies of British America fighting the colonies of French America. The French had sixty thousand colonists, the Brits had two million. The British were supported by Iroquois, Catawba, and Cherokee tribes. The French by the Algonquin, Ojibwa, Shawnee and some others I forget. George Washington was a British Colonial officer.

BETTS: *(Rushing forward.)* George Washington was a British officer?

FLAME: Yeah, more or less.

BETTS: That just blows my mind!

BETTS faints. FLAME pays no attention.

FLAME: At the battle of somewhere or other, George, commanding a bunch of militiamen ambushed a French patrol!

ALL CAST: Goooo, Georgie!

FLAME: He also fought the French in a couple of battles where he didn't do very well, but we won't talk about that. Anyway, the French lost and George ended up a little pissed off the English didn't promote him enough. However, he got battle experience.

JOLENE: (*As George.*) I heard bullets whistle and believe me, there is something charming in the sound. Wanna hear a story?

ALL CAST: Oh yeah!

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Well on July 3rd, 1754, the French were within four miles of our camp. Man, it was raining cats and dogs! There was so much water in the ditches around our fortifications, guys had to swim out. At the end of the battle the place was a swamp. Our men dead everywhere. They even butchered every cow, horse, and dog in sight. Some people say we lost but I'm calling it a draw. Personally, I was terrific. I surrendered, but we won't talk about that.

ALL CAST: We still love you, George!

JOLENE: You have not heard the last of George Washington—maybe.

ALL CAST: And on top of everything else he got dysentery.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: What's dysentery?

MARTIN: Look it up on your phone.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Pretty please.

MARTIN: You're not going to like this.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I like everything about George Washington.

MARTIN: Dysentery is an infection of the digestive system resulting in bloody diarrhea, often producing terrible hemorrhoids.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm sorry I asked.

MARTIN: He had to strap cushions on his backside to ride his horse.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Now that image is burned into my memory.

FLAME: (*Interrupting.*) Anyway! While George's record in the French Indian War was a little lackluster, it made him the most experienced native born battle commander in Colonial America.

MARTIN: Faint praise.

FLAME: (*Exiting.*) Eat dead cockroaches on moldy toast.

MARTIN: She's a fan.

FLAME stops and turns.

FLAME: Poor George! By the time he was twenty-six, the poor guy had had dysentery, malaria, smallpox, and pleurisy plus he really needed his teeth cleaned.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Did he floss?

MARTIN: (*Exiting.*) I can't take this anymore. Somebody take over.

MARTIN'S gone. WANDA steps forward.

WANDA: Ummm, hi. (*Turning to the CAST.*) What do I do now?

ALL CAST: You narrate.

WANDA: Wow. Okay. Ummm, hi, I'm Wanda Westbrook. This is a little weird, right? I've tried out for eleven plays in a row and this is the first one I ever got into. So, ummm, don't expect too much, okay?

ALL CAST: Narrate, Wanda!

WANDA: Ummmm...

ALL CAST: In 1758, George met Martha.

WANDA: She was a really good dancer.

WANDA races back into the crowd. JOLENE and ALEXANDRA meet downstage.

ALEXANDRA: (*As Martha.*) You're a big cheese, George. All the girls know it. You own Mount Vernon, you've bought thousands of acres, you fought the French, you're good looking, except for that nose. You wear cool clothes, you've got good manners, what's not to like?

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Oh.

ALEXANDRA: (*As Martha.*) But, see, that's the problem, George, you're way too quiet. You're either stuck up or shy, nobody knows which.

JOLENE: (*As George.*) I see.

ALEXANDRA: (*As Martha.*) Well, that's two words. Things are looking up.

JOLENE: (*As George.*) You're a remarkable dancer.

ALEXANDRA: (*As Martha. A curtsy.*) Thank you, kind sir.

A pause.

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Wanna dance?

ALEXANDRA: (*As Martha.*) No thank you, George, I'd rather get married.

JOLENE: (*As George.*) Married to me?

ALEXANDRA: (*As Martha.*) Three words. If I stand here long enough you'll say a full sentence. (*A pause.*) Yes, you. You're a catch,

George, six feet tall, athletic, semi-rich. Except for the nose, what's not to like?

JOLENE: (As George.) Ummm. That's very nice.

ALEXANDRA: (As Martha.) That's four words if you count "ummm". I'm twenty-seven. I was married to Daniel Curtis at eighteen. If he had a brain I couldn't find it. He was twenty years older than me and rolling in dough. We had four kids, two still living. He died last year, George, and in case you're interested, he left me 17,500 acres, five plantations, three hundred slaves, and piles of cash. I'm used to running things, George. I'll run you and you definitely need running. Thick or thin, I'll stick like glue. Now it's time to propose.

JOLENE: (As George.) Martha, will you marry me?

ALEXANDRA: (As Martha.) Well, we're up to five words so the answer is yes.

JOLENE: (As George.) Cool beans.

ALEXANDRA: (As Martha.) Let's rock out.

They waltz off. WANDA moves down.

***Thank you for reading this free excerpt from
BIG GEORGE by Jon Jory & Peter Ekstrom. For
performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script,
please contact us at:***

Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011

www.brookpub.com