



OLD VIC
NEW VOICES



INHERIT THE WIND

BY JEROME LAWRENCE
AND ROBERT E LEE

TEACHERS' RESOURCE PACK
RESEARCHED AND WRITTEN BY
SOPHIE-ADELE KIRK

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INHERIT THE WIND RESOURCE PACK CONTENTS

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TIMELINE

1925

John Scopes is put on trial in Tennessee for teaching evolutionary theory to his school students.

1942

Jerome Lawrence and Robert E Lee meet and form a writing partnership.

1950

Lawrence and Lee complete the script for *Inherit the Wind*. They struggle for several years to find a buyer for the script.

1954

Margo Jones, a producer from Dallas, agrees to produce the play at Theater '55.

1955

Inherit the Wind opens in January at Theater '55 with local actors. *Inherit the Wind* is produced and directed by Harold Shumlin at Broadway National Theater starring Paul Muni. The play wins the Donaldson Award for Best New Play, and the Variety Critics Poll Award in New York.

1960

A film version of the play starring Spencer Tracey and directed by Stanley Kramer premieres. The play wins the Variety Critics Poll Award in London.

1965

A television film starring Melvyn Douglas and directed by George Schaefer.

1988

A film version starring Kirk Douglas and directed by David Greene.

1999

A television film starring Jack Lemmon and directed by Daniel Petrie.

2009

Inherit the Wind opens at The Old Vic starring Kevin Spacey and David Troughton, directed by Trevor Nunn.

INHERIT THE WIND

A SYNOPSIS

As *Inherit the Wind* opens, Bertram Cates, having been arrested for teaching evolution to his sophomore science class, is in jail. Rachel Brown, his girlfriend and the daughter of Reverend Brown (the spiritual leader of Hillsboro) visits him. Rachel is confused and torn between the opposing beliefs held by Cates (academic freedom) and her father (fundamentalism) and her love for both of them. Desperately wanting to avoid the mounting controversy over his case, she pleads with Cates to admit he was wrong to teach evolution, and she is disappointed that Cates refuses. Cates is nervous and frightened because he has learned that Matthew Harrison Brady, three-time presidential candidate, Christian fundamentalist, and leader of the crusade against evolutionary theory, has volunteered to be the prosecuting attorney. He reveals to the bailiff, Mr Meeker, that he has sent a letter to the *Baltimore Herald* asking for an attorney to defend him.



To celebrate Brady's arrival, the townspeople of Hillsboro carry posters, hang banners, provide an enormous picnic lunch and parade through the town singing "Gimme that old-time religion." Brady basks in the adoration of his followers and vows to defend the people of Hillsboro against "Evil-ution." A cynical columnist for the *Baltimore Herald*, EK Hornbeck, also arrives in Hillsboro. He openly mocks Brady and is contemptuous of the bigotry and ignorance he observes in Hillsboro. He informs Brady's followers that Henry Drummond, an attorney famous for successfully defending underdogs, has been sent by the *Baltimore Herald* to defend Cates. Drummond arrives in Hillsboro later that evening. Upon his arrival, the only attention he receives is from Melinda, a young girl who screams that he's the devil.

When the trial begins, the courtroom is full. Both Brady and Drummond are self-assured: Brady, because he has the support of the spectators and is confident that his fundamentalist views are right and will prevail; Drummond, because he seeks the truth. After the first day in court, Reverend Brown holds a prayer meeting, at which he delivers a passionate sermon. Becoming overzealous, he prays that Cates be destroyed. When his daughter, Rachel, tries to stop him, he condemns her as well. Uncomfortable with the tenor of the prayer and afraid that Reverend Brown's actions may damage the support the townspeople have in him, Brady steps forward and curtails Reverend Brown's sermon by reciting the Wisdom of Solomon.

The following day, the trial proceeds and witnesses are called. Cates' students testify, and Rachel, whom Brady tricked into revealing confidential conversations she'd had with Cates, also testifies. The judge excludes Drummond's scientific witnesses claiming that evolution itself is not on trial. Determined to challenge the Butler Law, Drummond shrewdly switches his tactics and calls Brady to testify as an expert on the Bible. Brady arrogantly and ignorantly agrees to take the stand. Drummond's cross-examination of Brady, in which he exposes that Brady doesn't interpret the Bible literally and destroys Brady's credibility by questioning his status as a self-styled prophet, changes the course of the trial.

The jury finds Cates guilty, and he is fined \$100. Brady protests the minimal punishment. Although he won the case, his victory is a hollow one. The real triumph belongs to Drummond and Cates, who win a moral victory for freedom of thought. Brady insists on giving his closing speech, despite the fact that court had been adjourned and carnival atmosphere has intruded. Only a few of the faithful followers listen; the others who remain listen only grudgingly. Brady begins his speech, but he is unable to hold the crowd's attention. The final insult occurs when the radio announcer interrupts Brady to return the listeners to their regular scheduled broadcast. Brady collapses, is removed from the courtroom, and soon after dies. Rachel enters the courtroom, carrying a suitcase. She apologises to Cates for her lack of understanding and to Drummond for possibly offending him. She reveals that she has read Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*, and, although she doesn't like the premise of evolutionary theory, she now understands how important having the freedom to think is. She chooses to support Cates and leave her father.

Hornbeck continues to mock Brady after learning of his death, and Drummond defends Brady, angrily pointing out that "Brady had the same right as Cates: the right to be wrong!" Then Drummond leaves the courtroom with a Bible and a copy of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species*.

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE PLAYWRIGHTS

JEROME LAWRENCE

Lawrence was born on 14 July 1915 in Cleveland, Ohio. His father was Samuel Schwartz, a printer, and his mother was Sarah Rogen Schwartz, a poet. During his high school and university years, Lawrence was a prolific reader, reading a huge range of plays – from Greek drama to current comedies – in the Cleveland and Ohio State University libraries. Schwartz loved the theatre, but because actual production were not commonplace throughout the United States during the 1930s, he hitchhiked to New York to see plays.

Lawrence graduated from Ohio State University in 1937 with Bachelor of Arts degree. He worked briefly as a reporter and telegraph operator for the Wilmington News Journal and as an editor for the New Lexington Daily News. His work as a journalist supplied him with a great deal of writing material that he made use of in later years. Also in 1937, Lawrence moved to California and began work as an editor for KMPC radio station in Beverly Hills. In 1939, he accepted a position as a writer for Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) in Los Angeles and New York, and he attended the University of California, Los Angeles graduate school.

Lawrence met Robert E Lee in New York City in 1942, and their partnership, which was to prove long-lasting and successful, was formed. Lawrence joined the United States Army in the early 1940s and was co-founder of the Armed Forces Radio Service. Although the majority of Lawrence's work over the next five decades was in collaboration with Lee, he continued to write plays and books on his own, using his given name Jerome L Schwartz, Jerome Lawrence, and other pseudonyms. Lawrence wrote *Actor: The Life and Times of Paul Muni* (1974), which has been hailed one of the best theatre biographies of the twentieth century. In later life Lawrence spent his time teaching aspiring playwrights. He died on 29 February 2004, at his home in Malibu, California, from complications related to a stroke.

ROBERT E LEE

Lee was born on 15 October 1918 and grew up in Elyria, Ohio. His father was Claire Melvin Lee, an engineer, and his mother was Elvira Taft Lee, a teacher. Lee's involvement and experience in American theatre transcends the boundaries implied by his fame as a playwright. As co-founder of the American Playwrights Theater and the Margo Jones Award, Lee was involved with both academic and professional theatre communities, working as a director and teacher as well as a playwright. He married Janet Waldo, an actress, in 1948; together they had two children, Jonathan Barlow and Lucy Virginia.

Intent on becoming an astronomer, Lee attended Northwestern University in 1934 and then transferred to Ohio Wesleyan University, which (with Ohio State University) operated a giant telescope at Perkins Observatory. Interested in communications, Lee also immersed himself in broadcasting. He studied at Western Reserve University and Drake University in the late 1930s. Lee worked at the Perkins Observatory at Ohio Wesleyan while attending school there; then, while attending Western Reserve University, he worked for a radio station in Ohio.

In the late 1930s, Lee moved to New York City to join an advertising firm. Lee met Lawrence in 1942 and, like Lawrence, spent time in the United States Army in the early 1940s. He was co-founder of the Armed Forces Radio Service. After being discharged from the Army, Lee continued his work with Lawrence. Although he wrote on his own, Lee's most well known work was written in collaboration with Lawrence. Lee died on 8 July 1994, in Los Angeles.

LAWRENCE AND LEE'S WRITING PARTNERSHIP

Lawrence and Lee met in 1942 in New York City, where they formed a partnership to write and direct plays. Both men joined the army in 1942, temporarily suspending their professional collaboration. Their partnership resumed, however, after they returned home. Combining their talents, Lawrence and Lee wrote many plays and musicals, screenplays, radio plays, and scripts for radio and television programmes, as well as stories and articles for various publications, biographies, and textbooks. Their partnership proved fulfilling, successful, and enduring and lasted until Lee's death in 1998.

In their work, Lawrence and Lee wanted to make people think about mankind and react to the world around them. They were relentless in their determination to fight limitations placed on the individual mind – limitations such as censorship, fear of what others would think, and bigotry.

Lawrence and Lee's passion for the freedom to think and the freedom to experience life is reflected in their work. Their protagonists, whether funny or serious, embody this philosophy. Drummond, in *Inherit the Wind*, shows audiences that differing perspectives must and can be valued with an open mind. In *Auntie Mame*, Mame's curiosity enables her to live beyond the limitations that most women of that era faced. In *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*, Thoreau suffered the consequences for wilfully violating what he considers to be unjust laws.

Lawrence and Lee claim to have been influenced by playwrights such as Clifford Odets, Thornton Wilder, Lillian Hellman, Robert Sherwood, and others. Maxwell Anderson's work also had a significant impact on their work, particularly with *Inherit the Wind*. Anderson's play *Winterset* concerns the Sacco-Vanzetti trial in which two men are convicted of murder and sentenced to die, only to be found innocent after their executions. In *Winterset*, Anderson used dramatic license to add to the original case and to eliminate facts that he considered irrelevant to his play. He also made the conflict (social injustice) universal and timeless. Lawrence and Lee adapted this style when they wrote *Inherit the Wind*. Like Anderson, they used dramatic license to create a play based on a conflict that, at its heart, is both universal and timeless.

Together, Lawrence and Lee wrote an amazing amount of work. Many of their plays – *Inherit the Wind* (1955), *Auntie Mame* (1956) and *Mame* (1966) (the musical onstage version of *Auntie Mame*), *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail* (1970), and *First Monday in October*, (1975) – have been hailed as contemporary classics and been translated and performed in over thirty languages. Their work has received much critical acclaim and been honoured with numerous awards, including the following:

Two George Foster Peabody awards for distinguished achievement in broadcasting (1949 and 1952)

The Donaldson Award for best new play (1955) for *Inherit the Wind*

The Variety Critics Poll award, both in New York (1955) and London (1960), for *Inherit the Wind*

The Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Theater Association (1979)

The Writers Guild of America Valentine Davies Award (1984) for contributions to the entertainment industry that have brought honour and dignity to all writers

In 1990, Lawrence and Lee were inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame and received membership in the College of Fellows of the American Theater.

In addition to their great plays, Lawrence and Lee made numerous other contributions to the theatre. They were co-founders of the Margo Jones Award and American Playwrights Theater. Lawrence was a member of the Authors League of America and the Dramatists Guild, and Lee was a member of the Writers' Executive Committee of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences. Throughout the years, Lawrence and Lee shared a deep commitment to teaching, and taught and lectured extensively throughout the United States and abroad.

LAWRENCE AND LEE'S PRODUCED WORKS

Look Ma, I'm Dancin'. Composer Hugh Martin. Adelphi Theatre, New York. 1948. A backstage glimpse of a travelling ballet company backed by a beer heiress who insists on performing. The beer heiress becomes a comical "ballerina."

Inherit the Wind. National Theatre, New York. 1955. A fictionalised account of the Scopes' trial – a trial based on the importance of an individual's right to the freedom of thought.

Shangri-La. Composer Harry Warren. Winter Garden Theatre, New York. 1956. A musical based on *Lost Horizon* by James Hilton, in which three men and one woman are transported to Shangri-La, a mysterious utopia hidden in the mountains of Tibet. The story is a commentary on Western ideals of the 1930s.

Auntie Mame. Broadhurst Theater, New York. 1956. The story of a woman who lives life to the fullest.

The Gang's All Here. Ambassador Theater, New York. 1959. A fictionalised account of the corruption of the presidency of Warren G Harding.

Only in America. Cort Theater. New York. 1959. Race relations are explored in this play based in part on Harry Golden's life.

A Call on Kuprin. Broadhurst Theater, New York. 1961. Questions of patriotism and the role of the scientist in the modern world are explored using the competition between the American and Soviet space programmes.

Mame. Winter Garden Theater, New York. 1966. A musical version of *Auntie Mame*.

Sparks Fly Upward. Henry Miller's Theater (as Diamond Orchid), New York. 1956; McFarlin Auditorium, Dallas. 1967. The effects of societal oppression of individual development are explored in this fictionalized account of the life and death of Evita Peron.

The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail. Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. 1970; Arena Theater, Washington, DC. 1970. Thoreau is put in jail after refusing to pay taxes to the American government, which at the time was involved in what Thoreau considered an unjust war with Mexico (the Mexican-American War, 1846–48).

First Monday in October. Kennedy Center, Washington, DC. 1977; Majestic Theater, New York. 1978. Censorship is explored in this play about the first woman on the Supreme Court.

HISTORY OF THE PLAY

In 1925, schoolteacher John Scopes was put on trial in the state of Tennessee for teaching evolution to his school students. In the trial that followed in Dayton, Tennessee, the chaotic atmosphere and intense press coverage earned it the label “Monkey Trial”. There, former vice president William Jennings Bryan prosecuted Scopes for disobeying the law against teaching evolution, and famous intellectual Clarence Darrow served as the defence attorney. The trial was covered in the press by noted reporter HL Mencken.

Jerome Lawrence and Robert E Lee were familiar with the Scopes trial and the drama it contained. In the late 40s and early 50s, they recognised a parallel to the anti-intellectual fervour of the Southern opponents to evolution in the current American landscape. Senator Joseph McCarthy’s hearings to root out Communism in America, especially in the film and theatre communities, was seen by many as a witch hunt, leading friends and co-workers to turn each other in for suspected Communist leanings.

In response to the increasingly censorious climate of McCarthyism, playwright Arthur Miller wrote *The Crucible*, a play which explored the hysteria of the modern-day witch hunt through the historical guise of seventeenth century witch trials. Similarly, Lawrence and Lee chose an event from history, though more recent history, as a means of exploring the clash between fundamentalists and free-thinkers, believers and intellectuals. In the Scopes Monkey Trial and in the town of Hillsboro’s vehement condemnation of a man who dared to speak a belief contrary to their own, Lawrence and Lee found an allegory through which they could explore the condemnation of leftists and individualists in America as Communists.

To that end, Lawrence and Lee emphasise that *Inherit the Wind* is not meant to be taken as literal historical fact. Though they were familiar with and drew on the transcripts of the actual trial, their play is and is intended as a work of fiction. In fact, the play as printed includes a note from the playwrights reminding the reader that “*Inherit the Wind* is not history”; that the characters have names of their own separate from the historical figures on whom they are based; and that the play “does not pretend to be journalism.” Rather, they argue that “the issues of [Bryan and Darrow’s] conflict have acquired new dimension and meaning in the thirty years since they clashed at Rhea County Courthouse.” They do not set the play in 1925 but instead say that “It might have been yesterday. It could be tomorrow.” In the political climate in which the play was written and produced, those words function as a warning against repeating the wrongs of the past.

Though their play is fictional, Lawrence and Lee were quite familiar with the history surrounding the play. They credit the reporter Arthur Garfield Hays with granting them access to the “unwritten vividness” of the original trial through his recounted memories of what he saw there and offer thanks to the many reporters who provided them with information on which to base their play. From the original transcript of the trial, Lawrence and Lee took Darrow’s (in the play Drummond’s) condemnation of anti-intellectualism, an exchange between Darrow and the judge which earned him a citation for contempt, and parts of Darrow’s examination of Bryan (in the play Brady).



The playwrights give fictional names to the characters to emphasise that this is more fiction than literal history. Darrow becomes Drummond, Bryan becomes Brady, and Menckens becomes Hornbeck. Reverend Brown and his daughter Rachel are purely fictional characters. And many would argue that the ignorance of the townspeople and circus-like atmosphere of the trial are exaggerated far beyond reality.

Lawrence and Lee, in the midst of a busy career writing for radio and stage, had completed the script for *Inherit the Wind* by 1950. The play, however, did not open on the stage until five years later. For two years, between 1952 and 1954, their agent Harold Freedman could not find a buyer for the script. Finally, in 1954 Margo Jones, a producer from Dallas, agreed to produce the play at Theater '55. The time, in the midst of 1950s paranoia and McCarthyism, was right. The opening of the play on 10 January 1955, drew rave reviews.

New York producer-director Harold Shumlin heard about the Dallas production of *Inherit the Wind* and decided to bring it to Broadway, taking Margo Jones on as an associate producer. The star-studded cast included Paul Muni, a well-known stage and film actor who had been retired for six years but emerged from retirement to play Drummond. Ed Begley, well-known as a character actor, and Tony Randall played Hornbeck. Shumlin's direction and Muni's performance earned particular accolades, as did the power of the Lawrence and Lee's script. The play opened on 21 April 1955, at the National Theater in New York, and quickly became a box office success.

Despite Lawrence and Lee's intentions in the written text of the play, the producers and promotional people looking to draw audiences chose to capitalise on the play as dramatisation of historical fact. Many promotional materials emphasised the circus atmosphere of the real life Scopes Monkey Trial, with lines like "Carnival in the Courtroom" and "A Battle of Giants: The Greatest Verbal Boxing Match of the Century." In more recent days, the presentation of *Inherit the Wind* as fact rather than fiction has earned the ire of various groups, including people from the Southern States of America, offended by the degrading image presented by the ignorant people of Hillsboro.

Inherit the Wind is a play about the clash between Northern and Southern culture in the United States. Hornbeck's opinions about the closed-mindedness of Hillsboro residents and his desire to return to the city could be seen as insulting. However, cynical Hillsboro's confrontation with the play's true protagonist, Drummond, in the final scene demonstrates that the audience should not subscribe to Hornbeck's negative opinions. Nonetheless, the play depicts the clash of a Northern State intellectual, in the form of Drummond, who believes he knows best, with a small Southern town, who see him as an intruder. Davenport, the prosecutor from Hillsboro, even refers to Drummond repeatedly as "the gentleman from Chicago," marking him as an outsider.

In 1950s America, regional conflict was growing to be an increasing source of tension. After the conflicts became apparent during the Great Depression of the 1930s, when the uneasy relationship between Northern manufacturers and Southern agriculturalists was made evident, the clash of the two segments of the country seemed inevitable. An increased role of the federal government during WWII meant that the South, traditionally a bastion of States' rights and self-government, would feel intruded upon by outsiders. The conflict between North and South of the United States in *Inherit the Wind* functions as a harbinger of the greater conflict to come in the South during the 1960s. The line from Proverbs does not apply only to Brady, as Hillsboro – by condemning Cates – and the South are discriminating against many of its own citizens are troubling their own houses and thus inheriting the wind.

In 1960, a film adaptation of *Inherit the Wind* premiered on the silver screen. It starred Spencer Tracy as Drummond and Fredric March as Brady and like its theatrical predecessor earned positive reviews. Variety called it "a rousing and fascinating motion picture" and called Spencer and March's performances Oscar-calibre. The screen adaptation of the play, however, was not written by Lawrence and Lee but by Nathan Douglas and Harold Smith. In their version, the circus atmosphere was even more greatly intensified and points about theology and academics central to the original script were de-emphasised. A TV movie produced in 1988 was based on nearly the same script. Only a more recent 1999 made-for-cable adaptation of *Inherit the Wind* returned to the original text.

Not only on television but on the stage and in the classroom as well, *Inherit the Wind* remains one of the most popular American plays of all time. It has been translated into thirty languages, read and produced worldwide. To this day, it remains a favourite production for schools and colleges and a required-reading book for many school systems.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Bertram Cates

Bert Cates, aged 24, is a “pale, thin young man”, “quiet, shy, well-mannered, not particularly good-looking”. Cates is in jail at the beginning of the play, arrested and about to go on trial for teaching evolution to his students. Despite Rachel urging him to confess, Cates knows he did not do wrong. Unlike most of Hillsboro, he does not see things in black and white but understands that the world is complex. His intellectual musings, including the questions about the world he has whispered to Rachel, are turned against him by Brady who sees blasphemy in his questions and observations. A quiet, unassuming young man, Cates is the centre of a trial which labels him the destroyer of faith. He is terrified as the jurors return, fearful he will be imprisoned for years. His victory, in a town that no longer wants him, is only a partial victory, but he is proud when Drummond tells him that he has made the way easier for the next man. He is full of admiration for Rachel when she chooses to think, and the two leave happily together when he is released on bail paid by Hornbeck’s paper.

Rachel Brown

Twenty two years-old and “pretty, but not beautiful,” Rachel is a primary school teacher at Hillsboro Consolidated School. She is Bert Cates’ girlfriend and risks the wrath of her father, Reverend Brown, by visiting him at the jail and bringing him clothes for the trial. At first, she urges Bert to confess that he has broken the law and seek forgiveness. Brady calls her to testify against Cates and tries to twist her words to make Cates appear blasphemous. Rachel’s belief that Bert is a good person and her desire to be seen as good in the eyes of her townspeople clash, and while she is on the witness stand, her emotions render her speechless. Ultimately, Rachel realises that ideas, like children, have to be born. She overcomes her fear of thinking and reads *On the Origin of Species*. When Cates is released after the trial, she tells him she has decided to leave her father. She and Cates leave together on the train to start a new life.

Henry Drummond

A famous lawyer, known for his skilled legal defences, Drummond is hired by the *Baltimore Herald* to defend Cates. Reverend Brown describes him as a godless man, for his defences of the guilty, in which he twists the blame onto society and its perceptions. Drummond and Brady were once friends and maintain respect for each other, but each see the other as in the wrong on this case. Drummond believes Brady has moved away from him simply by standing still, by not progressing with the world. Brady says that for forty years, where Brady fights, headlines follow and sees him as a worthy opponent. Physically, he is hunched over, with a head that juts forward, making Melinda mistake him for the devil when he first appears. Drummond’s strongest showing in the courtroom stems from desperation, when the court disallows any testimony on evolution and calls Brady as an expert on the Bible. Drummond’s belief in the sanctity of ideas and freedom of thought, as well as his knowledge of Brady’s weaknesses, allows him to successfully defend Cates’ for speaking his thoughts aloud. In the end, he is an atheist who believes in God, as Hornbeck calls him, because of his respect for Brady’s convictions and ideals.



Matthew Harrison Brady

A three-time Presidential candidate and famous politician worshipped by the people of Hillsboro. He is grey-haired, “balding, paunchy, an indeterminate sixty-five,” Brady basks in the cheers and admiration of the people. “A benign giant of a man,” he is always in the spotlight, speaking in the loud voice of a great orator. Brady strongly believes he is defending the faith of the world and is zealous in his efforts to do what he believes is right, whether that means stopping Reverend Brown from condemning his own daughter or prosecuting Cates to the full extent of the law. He has the full support of the town behind him until Drummond puts him on the witness stand and reveals his excessive pride and illogical beliefs. Brady is so proud he reveals that he believes himself to be, in effect, a prophet of God, who hears God’s will and enforces it in the world. Brady, whose ambitions to be a great man were never fully recognised because of his three failures to be elected president, cannot stand the humiliation. He frequently indulges his misery and appetite with overeating. His death, which comes at the height of his humiliation, when Cates is given a joke of a sentence and the courtroom and radio man leave before the conclusion of his speech, causes a breakdown and ultimately his death.

Mrs Brady

A “pretty, fashionably dressed” Second Lady. She is content to support her husband and always be in his shadow. She mothers her husband, making sure he is well fed, clothed, comfortable. When Brady breaks down, humiliated on the witness stand, she is revealed to be strong, rocking and comforting the once great man. His implosion after the trial shocks her so much she screams. We last see her when she goes off, as Brady is brought to the doctor’s, where he dies.

Reverend Jeremiah Brown

“A gaunt, thin-lipped man,” Reverend Brown is the father of Rachel and the religious leader of Hillsboro. His is a controlling, fear-inducing Christianity. In the past, he preached that a young boy who died without being baptised is burning in hell. At a prayer meeting in support of the trial, he calls upon the wrath of an Old Testament God upon Cates and upon anyone, including Brown’s own daughter, who dare support him. Rachel later reveals her father to be a heartless, frightening man, who frightened her more than the nightmares that she experienced as a child. He tries to control his daughter, making her testify, but ultimately she breaks away from him.

EK Hornbeck

A reporter from the *Baltimore Herald*. He is “a newspaperman in his middle thirties, who sneers politely at everything, including himself.” His city origins are reflected in his clothes and his cynical attitude, especially when he enters during the preparations for Brady’s arrival. The Herald has sent him to report on the trial and Drummond to defend Cates. Hornbeck is very critical of the town, mocking their ignorance, making jokes about the organ grinder’s monkey as father of us all. He sees Brady only as a closed-minded coward, a man who cried over himself and delivered his own eulogy. He lashes out at Drummond when he shows any sentimentality and is upset at the religion Drummond shows. He leaves angrily at the end of the play, disappointed in Drummond for going soft and seeing Brady as a great man.

Tom Davenport

Hillsboro’s prosecutor. “A crisp, business-like young man,” he is impressed that he will, alongside Brady, be facing Drummond in court. He is a smart, ambitious attorney but rather conventional in his approaches. He is not the great orator that Brady is, nor the swift legal mind that Drummond is. Unlike Brady, who sees the trial as a war for faith, he is more concerned with enforcing the letter of the law. In the courtroom, he is for the most part overshadowed by Brady. Though he objects to the unorthodox move of putting Brady on the witness stand for the defence, his objections cannot keep Brady’s excessive pride and Drummond’s questions from destroying the prosecution’s case.

Judge

A “humourless” man who “has a nervous habit of flashing a smile after every ruling.” The judge clearly leans toward the prosecution, even announcing Reverend Brown’s prayer meeting in the court. He adheres very closely to the beliefs of the town and letter of the law, not even allowing expert testimony about evolution. He is closed-minded and will not see Drummond’s point of view, the need to explore whether or not the law under which Cates was charged is right or wrong. Ultimately, he is pragmatic and when the mayor tells him about the wire from the statehouse warning about the effect of the verdict on upcoming elections, he sentences Cates only to a minor fine.



CAST PHOTOS

Director
Costume Designer
Company Manager
Designer/Costumes

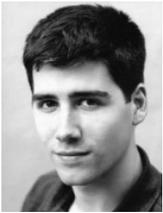
Trevor Nunn
Irene Bohan
Jane Semark
Rob Howell

Assistant Director
Stage Manager
Lighting
Props Supervisor

Michael Oakley
Katy de Main
Howard Harrison
Kirsten Shiell

DSM
Sound
ASM
ASM

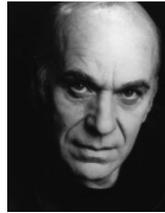
Lorna Earl
Fergus O'Hare
Rebecca Grey
Kerry Lynch



Paris Arrowsmith
Phil / Reuters Man



Paul Birchard
Mayor



Ken Bones
Rev. Jeremiah Brown



Adam Booth
Mr Dunlap



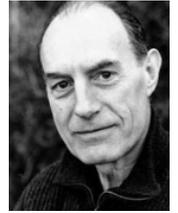
David Burrows
Hot Dog Man / Photographer / Radio Man



Sonya Cassidy
Rachel Brown



Ian Conningham
Meeker



Sam Cox
Elijah



Branwell Donaghey
Sillers



Mark Dexter
EK Hornbeck



Mary Doherty
Mrs Loomis



Janine Duvitski
Mrs Krebbs



Sarah Ingram
Mrs Blair



Nicholas Jones
Judge



Simon Lee Phillips
Cooper / Newspaper Man / Vendor



Sid Livingstone
Mr Bannister



Sam Phillips
Bertram Cates



Vincent Pirillo
Mr Goodfellow



Christopher Ragland
Tom Davenport



Kevin Spacey
Henry Drummond



Susan Tracy
Mrs Brady



David Troughton
Matthew Harrison Brady



Janet Whiteside
Mrs McLain



Branagh Crealock
Howard



Shea Davis
Howard



Richard Linnell
Howard



Katie Buchholz
Melinda



Imogen Byron
Melinda



Elizabeth Carter
Melinda

MAJOR THEMES

When considering the themes of *Inherit the Wind*, it is important to keep in mind that the play was first published in 1955, not 1925 when the Scopes trial took place. During the early 1950s, known as the McCarthy era, actors and writers were blacklisted – that is, refused work because they had been accused of having some connection to Communism.

During this period, people stopped expressing their thoughts, beliefs, or ideas, afraid they would lose their livelihood or worse. Being writers, Lawrence and Lee became aware of the dangerous situation created when laws are passed limiting the freedom to think and speak. When writing *Inherit the Wind*, the playwrights were not simply concerned with the controversy between evolution and creation, the focus of the Scopes trial. Instead, they were concerned with the censoring or limiting of an individual's freedom to think. The authors used the issue of evolution as a metaphor for control over an individual's thoughts or beliefs. *Inherit the Wind*, then, is Lawrence and Lee's response to the McCarthy era.

The Danger of Having a Limited Perspective

The town of Hillsboro is extremely homogenous. The citizens attend the same church, hold the same beliefs, and join together to condemn Bert Cates, a man who dared express an opinion different from theirs. In that sense, a limited perspective is dangerous to others, for anyone who the town deems different or an outsider is at risk for their very freedom. But a person with a limited perspective can damage themselves most of all. On the witness stand, Brady refuses to give consideration to any of Drummond's questions about the inconsistencies in the Bible, finally saying "I do not think about things... that I do not think about." Brady's inability to consider different perspectives, to simply accept Christianity as it has been presented to him, makes him look ridiculous and results in his humiliation in the trial. It takes outsiders, like Drummond and Hornbeck, who hold different perspectives, to bring to light some of the unconsidered assumptions of the townspeople. The people of Hillsboro, with their limited perspective, are trapped in a world in which others' opinions are paramount. This is why Rachel urges Cates to confess, because the other townspeople all believe him to be wrong. Only when she searches outside of herself, looking for a perspective different from her previous assumptions, does she gain self-confidence and freedom.

Intellectualism vs Religious Fundamentalism

Brady and the people of Hillsboro are fundamentalists in the religious sense; they take the Bible literally. As Brady says, "everything in the Bible should be accepted, exactly as it's given there". For Brady, then, fundamentalism means not only literal interpretation but also complete acceptance. Questioning the Bible or seeking new interpretations of it, for him, is unthinkable. In that sense, then, fundamentalism is at odds with intellectualism. Brady's fundamentalism means shutting down his mind, forcing himself not to undergo the natural human process of wondering at that which does not make sense. In choosing to interpret, or accept, the Bible as he does, he chooses not to think. Drummond, on the other hand, promotes intellectualism, finding the human mind sacred and arguing as the freedom of thought as a basic right. His intellectualism does not eschew spirituality by saying Brady looks for God too far away, he admits there may be a God somewhere else, closer by, but rather eschews a religious tradition that does not celebrate thinking and questioning. Whereas a fundamentalist system condemns Cates' questions about God as blasphemous, Drummond's intellectualism sees his questioning as part of an ongoing process. This intellectualism, unlike Hornbeck's harsh cynicism, celebrates though for the possibilities it creates for understanding and for life in the world, even at the cost of the safety one feels with an unquestioned faith. It does not condemn religion, per se, but only the fundamentalist system of thought which does not admit to any perspectives beyond itself.

What Is Holy?

For Brady and for the residents of Hillsboro, including Reverend Brown, the answer is simple and orthodox. That which the Bible says is holy, is holy: the prophets, the recounted miracles, the book itself. Brady's recitation of the books of the Old Testament at the conclusion of his testimony is an obstinate example of this dogmatic approach to religion. To him, what is holy is a finite body of words and stories. For Drummond, however, the capacity for human thought is holy, more holy than any cathedral. He sees miracles in the progress of human knowledge, while Brady looks for them too far away and long ago. Drummond's conception of holiness is more of spirituality than religion, a belief in the sanctity of human thought rather than religious writings assembled long ago. When Brady asks Drummond if anything is holy to him, his conception of "holy" means "off-limits," "beyond reproach," "unquestionable." For Drummond, holiness, however, is magnificence. That which is holy should be continually examined rather than locked away from human eyes.

The Importance of Free Thought

According to Drummond, what is on trial in Hillsboro is a man's right to think. In their law against the teaching of evolution, the people of Hillsboro have not only dismissed a scientific theory but have in effect stated that they don't want to even consider and dismiss it for themselves. The judge's refusal to allow any expert testimony about evolution from the defence makes this clear; the people of Hillsboro do not want to even think about evolution. They are afraid of thinking about it. Rachel is a prime example of this fear of thought. At the beginning of the play, she does not want to worry about whether Cates' actions were right or wrong, she simply wants him to do what the rest of the town thinks is right. Only by the end, when she reads Darwin and makes the decision on her own to leave her father's house, does she realise the power of thinking. Neither she nor Howard is sure they accept Darwin, they need to think more about it, thus disproving the town's fear of hearing the unfamiliar and thus being converted to a different way of thinking. Only by thinking for herself can Rachel escape the control of her father and create a life for herself. From her, it is clear that free thought is not only important from an intellectual standpoint or because of the First Amendment, but because it is necessary and valuable in human life. Without it, as Drummond says, no progress would ever be made not only in technology, but emotionally as well.



The Inevitability of, and Need for, Progress

When Brady asks his former friend Drummond how he has moved so far away from him, so that they stand apart on an issue of great importance, Drummond replies, "Perhaps it is you who have moved by standing still". Certainly, Brady with his enormous voice and great oratory is suited to a past era, speaking in town squares rather than on the new technology of the radio. Brady's inability to adapt to the radio in the courtroom – so much that the radio man has to push him bodily in the right direction – metaphorically reveals him to be ill-equipped for life in this new era. Drummond, in contrast, recognises the benefits the increased audience of radio will bring to those like Cates who are ideological "outsiders" in small homogenous towns. But progress here also means progress of thought. Whereas Brady has learned the Bible and accepted it, for Cates thought and understanding of the complex world around is an ongoing process. Drummond makes clear the value of minds like Cates', without which all manner of progress, from the telephone to women's suffrage, would never have been accomplished. To hold to one position without ever reconsidering or moving forward, as Brady does, is defeatist.

The Relationship Between Self-Conception and Self-Worth

In many ways, and certainly in the way it was publicised, *Inherit the Wind* is a clash of personalities, of individuals with strong conceptions of themselves and how they are perceived by others. Brady, for example, depends on his role as a "great man" and famous American, organising photo ops with the mayor and minister as soon as he gets off the train and with a speech prepared for every occasion. Hornbeck, however, relishes his role as a cynic, even when his sympathetic writing about Cates reveals to Rachel that his cynicism is very much an assumed role. Drummond, too, relishes his role as defender of right, taking a case not for the money but for the issues and ideals at stake. In contrast to them is someone like Rachel, who has little conception of herself beyond what others tell her, and even Cates, who needs to be reassured that he is doing something good by standing up for what he has taught. Only when she begins to think on her own, arriving at an understanding of herself, can Rachel gain enough self-worth to act autonomously. When the need to accord self-conception with self-worth is unsuccessful, however, the results can be bad. Brady's half-conscious recitation of the Inaugural Address he never used reveals the effect being an also-ran, in effect a perpetual electoral loser, has had on his self-worth. When his conception of himself as the most powerful man in the room begins to crumble when the crowd talks and radio man leaves during his speech Brady's fears about his self-worth are revealed.

The Importance of Allowing Multiple Perspectives

At the end of the play, Hornbeck condemns the now-dead Brady for his bigotry and closed-mindedness. Drummond, however, is less quick to dismiss Brady's values and opinions. He alone realises that the ideal for which he has been fighting free speech and thought requires that all be allowed to express their opinions, however much one might disagree with them. Hornbeck's liberal certainty is in effect as bigoted as Brady's fundamentalist railings. Any person or community that entertains only a single possibility risks discriminating against anyone who disagrees with them. Certainly, the people of Hillsboro's refusal to hear any perspectives on evolution beyond their own is destructive to Cates.

CONFLICTS

The themes of *Inherit the Wind* – the necessity of freedom of thought and the value of seeking the truth – are revealed through the many conflicts in the play. The obvious conflict, that between Drummond and Brady, most obviously highlights these themes, but Lawrence and Lee include other conflicts, both external and internal, as well. The conflicts that their characters face in *Inherit the Wind* give the audience an appreciation for the value of ideas, the need for mutual respect regarding differing perspectives, and the importance of the freedom to think.

The focus of *Inherit the Wind* is the external conflict between Brady and Drummond. The conflict has been referred to as “the legal battle of the [twentieth] century.” Brady, the prosecuting attorney, is on the side of creationism. He is fighting in favour of the Butler Law, which prohibits teaching evolutionary theory in public classrooms in Tennessee. Drummond, Cates’ defence attorney, is on the side of evolutionism. He is opposed to the Butler Law because the freedom to think is jeopardised when knowledge is censored.

Long ago, Brady and Drummond had been good friends. They admired and understood each other until their opposing beliefs caused them to become adversaries. The conflict between Brady and Drummond is resolved in the play. Brady wins the trial, and Drummond wins a moral victory. Because Cates stood up for what he believed – that it is right to teach evolutionary theory to students – a dubious law was exposed as flawed and Cates has “helped the next fella” who decides to stand up and fight.

The conflict between Brady and Drummond is not just a conflict between two men and their beliefs. Their battle represents conflicts that exist within American society – the continuing conflict between evolutionism and creationism, modernists versus fundamentalists, church versus state, and agnosticism versus faith. Conflicts arise when people do not value or respect differing beliefs. Lawrence and Lee use the conflict between Brady and Drummond to convey the need to fight for the freedom to think and the need to respect differing perspectives.



Lawrence and Lee also bring awareness to cultural conflicts by presenting the differing perspectives between the North and South and between cosmopolitan and rural areas through the external conflict faced by Hornbeck. Hornbeck, a sophisticated newspaper columnist from the city, detests being in Hillsboro, “The buckle on the Bible Belt.” He can’t wait to get back to civilisation (Baltimore, in the North of the United States). Even his clothes “contrast sharply with the attire of the townspeople” who live in the rural south. Hornbeck continuously mocks rural Southern society for its ignorance and bigotry and, in contrast, comments on the progressive ideas and beliefs held by people living in cosmopolitan areas of the North.

The conflict Cates experiences is also external. He has violated the Butler law because he taught evolutionary theory to students in a public school in Tennessee. Cates is in jail and is fighting for his freedom and, ultimately, for the repeal of the Butler Law. Cates’ conflict is representative of the conflict that exists between collective versus individual rights – in this case, the government of the state of Tennessee versus Cates and his belief that the Butler Law is unjust because it violates his Constitutional rights.

Brady also experiences an internal conflict. He is a dynamic character who changes during the course of the play due to his experiences. When the play begins, Brady is self-involved and arrogant. He is leader of the common people, and he basks in his popularity. He is sure that creationism is right and evolutionism is wrong. As the trial progresses and Brady takes the witness stand to be cross-examined by Drummond, his character changes. He experiences inner conflict because he is forced to admit that he doesn’t interpret the Bible literally, which raises huge questions about why his interpretation should be more valid than that of Cates. His once loyal followers laugh at him and then ignore him as they turn their backs and walk away. Brady is transformed from a confident leader to a tragic character who later dies because of his ordeal.

Rachel’s internal conflict between creationism and evolutionism enables the authors to convey their belief in freedom of thought and the value of ideas. Raised a fundamentalist, Rachel loves her father and only knows one way to think. She also loves Cates, who believes in thinking and in wondering about the world. Rachel’s conflict involves her love for her father and her lifelong creationist beliefs and her love for Cates and his different thoughts on life and religion. After reading Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*, Rachel is enlightened. She chooses to think and recognises the value of ideas, whether right or wrong. As she tells Cates and Drummond, “I was always afraid of what I might think – so it seemed safer not to think at all ... But now I know ... A thought ... has to be born ... ideas have to come out.”



THE PROSECUTION

When William Jennings Bryan agreed to take part in the trial of John Scopes in Dayton, Tennessee, it was his first courtroom appearance in thirty years. For most of his career he had been a major player on the American political scene, gaining the Democratic Party's nomination for president three times, and becoming a fervent opponent of the idea of evolution.

Dubbed 'The Boy Orator' from an early age, he trained as a lawyer in Chicago, then married and settled in Nebraska. In 1890 at the age of thirty he exchanged the law for politics, and was elected to Congress. Just six years later he became the youngest person ever to be nominated for president, but lost out to the Republican Party's William McKinley. He was nominated again in 1900 and 1908. Known as 'The Great Commoner', he campaigned hard on progressive issues such as consumer protection, campaign finance reform and anti-imperialism, but was beaten again, first by McKinley, then by Howard Taft. When in 1912 the Democrat Woodrow Wilson became president, he made Bryan his secretary of state, but he resigned over Wilson's policy on America's involvement in the First World War.

He continued to be an advocate of social reforms, including women's suffrage. After the war, as a committed Christian, he became increasingly concerned about the teaching of evolution in schools. In 1921 he published his pamphlet *The Menace of Darwinism*, an attack on teachers who – under the pretence of teaching science – were 'undermining the religious faith of students by substituting belief in Darwinism for belief in the Bible'. He used humour and aphorism to season his speeches on the subject, remarking: 'When I want to read fiction, I don't turn to *The Arabian Nights*, I turn to works of biology,' and 'It is better to trust in the Rock of Ages than to know the ages of rock.'

He worked hard to get evolutionary theory being taught 'as fact' banned in public schools. In 1925 he spoke in Nashville on the question 'Is the Bible true?' Copies of his speech were circulated to the Tennessee General Assembly, which was considering introducing legislation. Within days of his speech, the Butler Act was passed, banning the teaching of evolution in the state's schools. Bryan told the state's governor: "The Christian parents of the state owe you a debt of gratitude for saving their children from the poisonous influence of an unproven hypothesis."

Having agreed at the request of the World Christian Fundamentals Association to join the prosecution for the Scopes trial, he declared that "the real issue is the right of the people, speaking through the legislature, to control the schools which they create and support". He warned the faithful to prepare to meet "a gigantic conspiracy among atheists and agnostics against the Christian religion". In Dayton he declared: "The contest between evolution and Christianity is a duel to the death. If evolution wins, Christianity goes."



THE DEFENCE

Clarence Darrow was the most influential trial lawyer in American history. Renowned as a defender of the poor and the underdog and for his libertarian views, at the height of his powers he appeared for the defence in three celebrated trials, during which he mounted devastating attacks on capital punishment, Christian fundamentalism and racism. He was born in Kinsman, Ohio in 1857. His father, an opponent of slavery, trained to be a minister but lost his faith, so his son was brought up an agnostic. He showed early evidence of oratorical skills, and was called to the Bar at twenty. After moving to Chicago he was made general attorney to the Chicago and North Western Railway. But his sympathy for the trade unions led him to defend several of their leaders arrested during industrial disputes.

In 1908, now seen as the best defence lawyer in the country, he declined William Jennings Bryan's request to help him in his campaign for the presidency. Four years later he himself was on trial, charged with bribing a juror. "I have committed one crime: I have stood for the weak and the poor," he declared. Although generally reckoned to be guilty, he was acquitted.

He was known for the power of his rhetoric, but also his wide learning. A voracious reader, and well-versed in philosophy, theology, poetry and literature, he became well-known in intellectual circles in Chicago, holding literary gatherings in his flat, where he read from Nietzsche, Tolstoy and Voltaire, and recited the poetry of Robert Burns and Walt Whitman.

During the First World War he represented several people charged with anti-war activities. In the space of two years in the 1920s he acted for the defence in three trials that would confirm his status as a great attorney. The first in 1924 was the notorious Leopold and Loeb 'thrill-killing' case, in which two wealthy young boys murdered another boy just for the experience. Darrow got them to plead guilty, then made a brilliant closing speech that prevented them from being hanged.

In 1926 he successfully defended a black family against a murder charge, after they had defended themselves with violence against a Ku Klux Klan mob trying to expel them from a white area in Detroit. Darrow was merciless in his exposure of racism over the course of two trials, and at the end of the second pleaded with the jury to return a verdict of Not Guilty "in the name of progress and the human race". They did so.

In between came the Scopes trial. For the first time in his career Darrow volunteered his services. In his opening statement he declared: "Scopes isn't on trial, civilisation is on trial." He argued that a ruling upholding the law would not just threaten the education of the state's children, but would lead to the suppression of free speech, and return society to "the glorious ages of the sixteenth century, when bigots lighted fagots to burn the men who dared to bring any intelligence and enlightenment and culture to the human mind".



IN CONVERSATION WITH TREVOR NUNN

The play made a stir in 1955, but why are you reviving it now?

It's not just that this year is the 200th anniversary of Charles Darwin's birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of *On the Origin of Species*, it's that the issue of the play is as alive as it was when it was written, and indeed as when the Scopes Monkey Trial took place in 1925. Just a few days ago I walked past a church in London, in front of which was a big poster that read: 'Origin of Species? God.'

So what is that issue?

In broad terms, it's the problem of reconciling tested scientific truth with untestable religious belief. They aren't, as figures such as the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Pope have said, necessarily incompatible, if one accepts that much of the Bible is poetic, and therefore not to be examined scientifically. But a recent survey estimated that something like half the population of the USA today either reject Darwin's evolutionary explanation of species – including of homo sapiens – or think that at most it is a theory no more valid than any other theory. Hence legal challenges continue to occur in America, either to promote or forbid the Biblical account of creation in science classes, or to allow or disallow Intelligent Design to be taught to students as an equivalent alternative theory to Darwin's evolution.



So is the play a faithful account of the Scopes Monkey Trial?

The dramatists are very clear that this is a drama and not a documentary. They have changed the names of the characters, so the great Clarence Darrow becomes William Drummond, and the formidable William Jennings Bryan evolves – if you'll forgive the term – into Matthew Harrison Brady. But the play follows the events and conflicts of the original trial very closely. For example, the courtroom really was just tables and chairs, the temperature really was 97° Fahrenheit, a great journalist HL Mencken really did write his inimitable daily reports, and a monkey really did perform right outside the courthouse door.

Why did the writers decide on dramatising that trial thirty years after the event?

Because the other issue they perceived (as did the original defence lawyer Clarence Darrow) was a different fundamental, the right enshrined in the First Amendment of the American constitution of freedom of speech, including the unchallengeable decree that no law could be allowed that favoured or 'established' any religion. In 1955 the McCarthy trials were under way, and clearly Jerome Lawrence and Robert E Lee were pleading for freedom of speech and freedom of thought at that troubled and divisive time. McCarthyism is long gone, but the right of a population to free speech and thought is an issue that has never gone and will never go away.

How did you come across the play?

I was a student at university, wanting to find a really good scene to direct for an evening of auditions for would-be directors. As Drummond I cast a super-confident, dark-haired, dynamic student actor called Stephen Frears. I can't think why he didn't take up acting after university. He would have been quite famous by now.

And how did the play arrive at The Old Vic?

I wrote to Kevin Spacey about it, and my e-mail arrived when he was in Russia as a guest of honour at a Chekhov celebration. His hosts had asked him to perform something. He chose a speech made in court by one of his great heroes – you've guessed it – Clarence Darrow. The operation of coincidence is very potent, and feels to be much the same as fate. And anyway, I think deep down Kevin wants to be a defence attorney.

So is this the British premiere?

No. There was a production at the St Martin's back in 1960, with Andrew Cruickshank playing Darrow. The play is famous in America and frequently revived, but it's not surprising that it's not become part of the repertoire here. It was written for twenty-five or more actors plus twenty 'extras', and that's a very tall order for a West End producer. It's a tall order for us too, but The Old Vic has a community project and does outreach work, which has been vital to our getting this huge project on stage. But given The Old Vic's unique history as a great classical theatre, and then as the home of Olivier's National Theatre company, the scale of our ambition seems just right for this wonderful building.

IN CONVERSATION WITH DAVID FRIAS-ROBLES

Can you tell us a little about what your work on *Inherit the Wind* involves?

I play a combination of two roles in *Inherit the Wind*. For the first half of Act One, I play the role of a town mechanic before changing characters ready for the first courtroom scene, becoming a newspaper reporter from New York. Both characters involve contrasting physicality and movement as well as participating in large scene changes along with the rest of the *Inherit the Wind* Company.

How much did you know about the play before you started working on it?

I had no background knowledge of the play before commencing work on *Inherit the Wind*, however, upon being cast as a member of the Ensemble, I took it upon myself to research into the brief history of the play, along with its location, setting, dates and synopsis.

Why do you think *Inherit the Wind* is an important play?

Inherit the Wind is a vitally important play for a number of reasons. Firstly, it documents the real life event that took place back in 1925, the true story of the Scopes Monkey Trial with debates between lawyers Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan. Writers Lawrence and Lee alter the names slightly to help with artistic freedom in creating a thrilling play along with its darkly comic moments. Secondly, it seems important to highlight the importance of Darwin's work of *On the Origin of Species* on its 150th anniversary and the changing face of opinions and views from modern day right back to 1925 Tennessee.

Can you tell us a little about what it is like to work as part of such a large cast?

It is quite an experience working with such an extensive cast. It is fantastic opportunity to gain valuable knowledge of the industry from other professional actors. It is also great fun working with so many other actors as there are many different characters and personalities to enjoy socialising with.

What was the rehearsal process like for you?

Rehearsals proved to be hard work, moving quickly through specific scenes and being required to note any blocking, lines or movements with only one or two run throughs. But this was necessary due to the size of the cast and working with two separate Ensembles. I have complete respect for Sir Trevor Nunn for the way he efficiently dealt with all the company and the pace of rehearsals. Every single actor is fully included in the process and is treated with equal respect to his fellow performers.

Can you sum up the best things about working on *Inherit the Wind* so far?

It is truly inspirational to work alongside the greats of theatre such as Sir Trevor Nunn and Kevin Spacey. It is also fantastic to grace the stage of The Old Vic, especially with the knowledge of which actors have previously tread those famous boards.



A QUICK GUIDE TO...

McCARTHYISM

Senator Joseph McCarthy whipped up hysteria in America in the early 1950s on the issue of Communism. The American Heritage Dictionary defines McCarthyism as “the political practice of publicising accusations of disloyalty or subversion with insufficient regard to evidence”. Communism, in simple terms, is an economic system designed to equally benefit everyone in a society. The idea is that everyone contributes to the society and gets an equal share of property and goods. By the 1950s, Communism wasn’t exactly a new worry for the United States. In the aftermath of World War I, the country had experienced the First Red Scare, ‘red’ being a colloquial term for Communism. Russia had a new Communist government as a result of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and dictator Lenin had slaughtered approximately 9 million of his people for resisting his ideals. The First Red Scare was characterised by the ferocity with which the US government identified and attacked suspected Communists.

When McCarthy won a Senate seat in 1946, it was amidst a culture of rumours about high-ranking US government officials who were secret Communists. McCarthy took advantage of the mounting fear, but because it isn’t actually illegal to be a Communist, he started charging people with the act of subversion – the “systematic attempt to overthrow or undermine a government or political system by persons working from within”. Then he began prosecuting them for selling or giving American security secrets to Communist governments.

THE BUTLER ACT

The Butler Act was initiated in 1925 in Tennessee. The law banned teachers from denying the Biblical account of the beginnings of human life and the teaching of the evolution of humans from lower orders of animals in place of the Biblical account. However, the law did not prohibit the teaching of evolutionary theory for other species of plants or animals. It was enacted as Tennessee Code Annotated Title 49 (Education) Section 1922. The law stayed in place until 1967, when a teacher who had been fired complained that it violated his First Amendment right to free speech and the Tennessee government repealed the law.