

# TUNED IN

By Kellie Mecleary, Production Dramaturg, and Matthew Buckley Smith

In *An Enemy of the People*, as we watch brothers battle over the fate of their town, it is worth noting the role that the town paper, *The People's Daily Messenger*, plays—the various ways in which it contributes to the machinations and outcome of the plot. The paper is a powerful tool, and its use in the play reflects the use of mass media in other times. In Arthur Miller's day, the media that was fast becoming a central part of American life was television: as it grew in scope and influence, it took on the role of both informing and reflecting American society and culture. These pages provide an overview of the late '50s and early '60s through the major shows and events that dominated the small screen at the time.

## I LOVE LUCY

For the dazzling, six-year run of the show, *I Love Lucy* would remain conservative in content and innovative in technique. Lucy, the scheming, ebullient housewife of Cuban bandleader Ricky Ricardo, never earns her own money but never stops following her dreams, however ridiculous. By the time Ball gave birth to her second child in 1953, the coinciding episode, "Lucy Goes to the Hospital," smashed records, drawing a bigger TV audience than any previous program at the time and beating Eisenhower's televised inauguration the next day by four percentage points. The show became the model for sitcoms to follow. Along with shows like *Leave It to Beaver* and *Father Knows Best*, *I Love Lucy* acted as a model for the ideal American family home.

## KEFAUVER & THE MAFIA

In 1950, Senator Estes Kefauver, a Democrat from Tennessee, invited cameras into hearings of the Senate Special Committee to Investigate Crimes in Interstate Commerce, which centered on the doings of the Mafia. A national sensation as an uncompromising crime-fighter, Kefauver

used his celebrity to run for president in 1952, gaining almost 40 times as many votes in Democratic primary elections as Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson. Party leadership, however, favored Stevenson, who went on to lose to General Dwight D. Eisenhower. Television's influence on American culture and politics, however, only continued to grow.

## DISNEYLAND ON TV

The land of Walt Disney's dreams was born on television before a single child set foot on park grounds in Anaheim. On Wednesday, October 27, 1954, *Disneyland* premiered on ABC as an anthology of children's cartoons hosted by Disney himself. Unlike other studio chiefs, who worried about television's impact on ticket sales, Disney invested in the new

technology wholeheartedly. The television program *Disneyland* skillfully promoted an eponymous amusement park that opened several months later to such popularity that in only two-and-a-half years it marked its 10-millionth visitor. With a hit theme song and a national coonskin cap craze in 1955, *Disneyland* programs like *Davy Crockett* demonstrated not just Walt Disney's wisdom in accepting television as an advertising tool, but also his foresight in expanding a children's movie business into a brand that could touch every aspect of a child's life. With the launching of the *Disneyland* anthology, park, and line of products, it became a ubiquitous alternate reality, promising citizens a shining, utopia—just as long as they remained loyal customers.



## MCCARTHY & MURROW

Ed Murrow's March 9, 1954 *See It Now* episode, entitled "A Special Report on Senator Joseph P. McCarthy," had the impact of the little boy's outburst in *The Emperor's New Clothes*. The hour-long program, sponsored by Murrow himself and his producer Fred Friendly, was dedicated to a public examination of the career of Senator Joseph R. McCarthy and was almost entirely made up of recordings of the senator's own public appearances. Though CBS subsequently pulled funding for *See It Now*, Murrow's televised exposure of McCarthy effectively broke the senator's spell.



## AMERICAN BANDSTAND

In the '50s and '60s, *American Bandstand*, alongside *The Ed Sullivan Show*, was a living mirror of American popular culture. Beginning in 1957, Dick Clark became the face of *Bandstand*, inviting teenagers to dance at home with the rest of the nation. Among the dozens of legendary acts *Bandstand* hosted in 1957 was Jerry Lee Lewis, the fiery Louisiana-born pianist who collaborated and competed with Elvis Presley. Some parents were shocked by Lewis' suggestive performance, but Clark stood by the singer through three appearances. Though the show broke few social barriers, *American Bandstand* provided continuity and community for generations of Americans, reflecting changes in the national culture for a faithful audience at home.

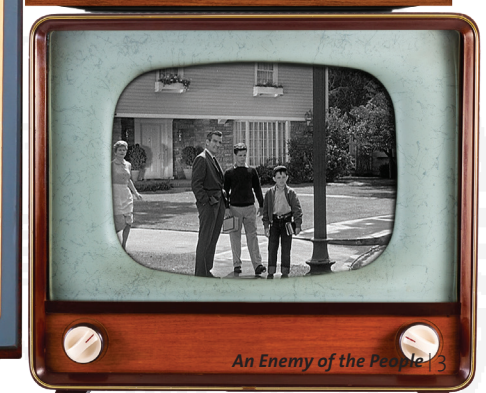
## QUIZ SHOW SCANDAL

Americans familiar with cynical reality television today might find it hard to imagine the disillusionment audiences felt in 1959 on learning that the popular quiz show *Twenty-One* was fixed. At the heart of the public tragedy was the popular contestant Charles Van Doren. Fifty million Americans had tuned in to watch the showdown between Van Doren and previous champion Herb Stempel. For months after, audiences followed

Van Doren's prodigious performance. Performance, sadly, was all it was—tevery answer was scripted. That year, almost 100 former contestants chose to perjure themselves rather than publicly admit that the show's seductive presentation of brilliance and sudden fortune had been a sham.

## THE TWILIGHT ZONE

Rod Serling was one of the most successful writers in television when *The Twilight Zone* debuted on October 2, 1959, with an episode concerning a U.S. airman who slowly loses his mind in an idyllic small town mysteriously emptied of people. Episodes of *The Twilight Zone*—all hosted by the wry and impeccably dressed Serling—used elements of science fiction to feed television viewers subtly disguised moral and political problems, including racism, nuclear war, and mass hysteria. The show was a critical and popular hit from the start, lasting five seasons and earning three Emmy Awards, among numerous other honors. American audiences seemed to crave the thoughtful treatment of the widespread paranoia rarely examined elsewhere on television. As Serling later said, "I found that it was all right to have Martians saying things Democrats and Republicans could never say."



# A PLACE FOR

Imagine what it must have been like to be faced with the task of building a nation, as our Founding Fathers set out to do some 200-plus years ago. Thomas Jefferson envisioned a nation filled with philosopher farmers, each man the master of his own small domain, granted individual liberty to live as he saw fit. Alexander Hamilton dreamed of progress, industrialization, a collective march forward toward better living and new discoveries. Rather than choose, these men and their fellows attempted to create a system that allowed for the possibility of both ways of living, a system of checks and balances founded on the idea that no single person should decide the fate of a nation; people would have the right to live as they chose. Consequently, as our nation grew, different ways of being inevitably clashed. Hamilton's dream of progress played out against Jefferson's ideals of liberty, sometimes at the cost of the safety of workers or the health of the land. Other clashes—moral, religious, ideological—arose. The system that established our Republic left its descendants constantly in battle, endlessly wrestling over the right path and struggling to balance costs against benefits.



## INDUSTRIALIZATION

### Waltham-Lowell System

In September 1813, Francis Cabot Lowell bought the Boies Paper Mill in Waltham, Massachusetts, changing American industry forever. The Boston Manufacturing Company housed under a single roof all the processes involved in turning cotton into cloth. Contributing to the efficiency of his system was the company's strict control of factory workers' lives. Housed nearby, they were awakened before five and worked roughly 80 hours per week. Americans have enjoyed the cheap goods such modern factories provide and the economic dominance they earned the country. It would be almost 100 years before workers' interests would find a voice in Upton Sinclair's 1906 novel, *The Jungle*, which exposed brutal conditions in Chicago's meat-packing factories. Jack London called it "the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of wage slavery."

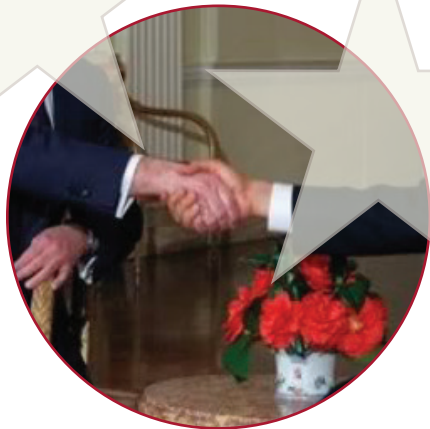


## ENERGY

### Fracking

In December of 2007, Terry Engelder, a Penn State professor, estimated that ground beneath the rock formation in Pennsylvania known as the Marcellus Shale housed about 50 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Engelder was lauded as the man responsible for creating new jobs and revenue in Pennsylvania and discovering a new fuel source for the country. After the extraction process began, however Conrad Voltz, a University of Pittsburgh professor, posited that the removal of natural gas would contaminate the state's drinking supply. The process, called hydraulic fracturing, involves drilling a tunnel underground and forcing gas upwards with chemically infused water. Voltz estimated that frackers were dumping about 800,000 pounds of this liquid into the Monongahela River, a prime source of drinking water for the state. Voltz was asked to keep his findings quiet by his peers. Instead, he resigned from his position at the university. The debate over the health risks versus economic benefits of fracking continues in Pennsylvania and throughout the country.

# DEBATE



## FOREIGN POLICY



## FOOD

### The Great Corn Debate

For centuries, corn has been used to fatten cattle for slaughter. Over time, corn increasingly became the main source of food for cows, a fact that resulted in cheaper meat more widely available to the mass public. However, studies show that a corn and protein diet can cause intestinal damage in cows and increases the risk of E. coli-ridden beef. Communities are calling for a return to a grass-fed diet, and some cattle raisers have taken up the call. This meat, though healthier, is more expensive, and may affect the prices as more fields are taken up for grazing and less is available for growing corn. While the debate between proponents of corn and backers of grass rages on in the farming community, it also plays out in the grocery store—where customers have to choose between cheaper corn-fed beef and more expensive, but arguably healthier, grass-fed meat.



## EXPANSION/SETTLEMENT



## IDEOLOGY

### Prohibition

By the time the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment was repealed on December 5, 1933, the Constitutional prohibition on the sale of alcohol changed more than America's drinking habits. Many women's groups, including the Women's Christian Temperance Union, had supported Prohibition, arguing that saloons—once bleak, all-male establishments—could drain a man's finances while his wife was left at home with the children, helpless and dependent on him for support. Evangelicals and public health activists had joined women's groups in making Prohibition policy. As Americans wearied of the ban, though, it was not just civil libertarians who swayed public opinion. Perhaps the boldest advertisements for repeal were prominent gangsters like Bugs Moran and Al Capone, themselves happy supporters of Prohibition, which after all had made them very wealthy men.



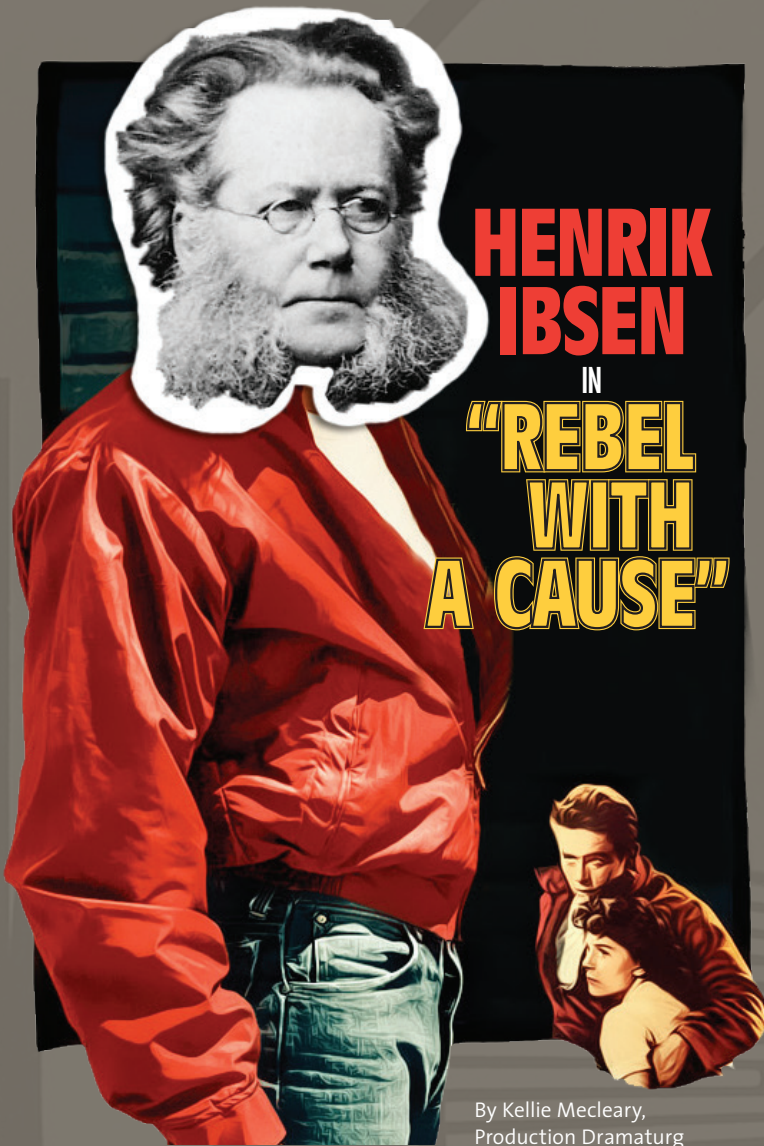
## HEALTH & MEDICINE

### Embryonic Stem Cell Research

On the night of August 9, 2001, President George W. Bush addressed the nation with news of scientific and ethical importance. The matter was federal funding for embryonic stem cell research. Congress had already passed the 1995 Dickey-Wicker Amendment, which stopped federally funded programs from performing research on embryos created specifically for that purpose. Citing qualms with the ethical status of such embryos, President Bush decided to withhold federal funding for research on all but 60 established lines of cells. Eight years later, President Obama rescinded the ban, upsetting those who shared Bush's moral concerns. The scientific community, on the other hand, remains frustrated by the Dickey-Wicker Amendment, which still stymies some efforts to cure diseases like Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and Multiple Sclerosis.



## URBANIZATION



By Kellie Meclarey,  
Production Dramaturg

Henrik Ibsen. The name has a tendency to conjure images of staid, tight-laced women and dark, heavy drapes. Very un-cool. Way old-school. But these images, these ideas only tell a partial story, one that fails to consider the playwright in his time. Ibsen, while alive, was the James Dean of Norway, an outsider with his metaphorical cigarette dangling effortlessly between his thumb and forefinger and his collar turned up. In short, a rebel. Only this rebel had a cause, and his cause was truth.

Ibsen was born in Skien, Norway, on March 20, 1828, to Marichen and Knud Ibsen. Knud was a wealthy merchant whose business went under when Ibsen was six, leaving the family considerably poorer, and necessitating young Ibsen's apprenticeship at a pharmacy in Grimstad—a tiny, grimy, rough-and-tumble shipping town 100 miles south. It was here where Ibsen really grew into his outsider/rebel persona: he even fathered an illegitimate child, whom he helped support but never knew. Had he been a 20<sup>th</sup>-century man, I imagine questions about this boy would cause him to look away, take a drag of his self-rolled cigarette, and say something like, "Wasn't my time, man. Wasn't my truth."

Ibsen had a tumultuous relationship with his native country, Norway. He would often claim that he didn't have a single drop of Norwegian blood in his veins (though he was in fact two-thirds Norwegian), and lived in voluntary exile for 27 years of his adult

# IBSEN

life. Yet, he was in other ways very invested in Norway. In his twenties, Ibsen worked tirelessly to develop a Norwegian national theater, believing it would help bring about an independent nation, rather than one still culturally and politically under Danish rule. It was Ibsen's dream to become his country's national playwright: he campaigned aggressively for awards and accolades throughout his career. And though he felt very much an outsider among the Norwegian bourgeoisie and elite, Ibsen did not feel he chose his outsider status: he longed to be an accepted member of their society.

Yet, when it came to the art itself, Ibsen would regularly throw status and acceptance to the wind for the sake of the work. While writing *Brand*, his first hit and the play that would bring him international renown, Ibsen remarked, "I have an impression that my new work will not dispose [the Norwegian parliament] more charitably toward me. But hang me if I can or will, on that account, suppress a single line, no matter what these 'pocket edition' souls think of it. Let me rather be a beggar all my life! If I cannot be myself or what I want, then everything is nothing but lies and humbug..."

Ibsen clung fast to the idea that "The important thing is to remain true and faithful to yourself," and used this idea as a north star guiding his life's work. Variations on 'to thine own self be true' are a dime a dozen, of course, but the statement becomes interesting when considering where it led the playwright. Ibsen's plays are plays of ideas, theses thoroughly explored through the psychodrama of his characters. But the ideas themselves differ significantly from one play to the next: Ibsen is constantly critiquing the idea he asserts only one play prior. *An Enemy of the People*, which Ibsen wrote in 1882 in a fury after critics' scandalized response to *Ghosts*, champions the intellectual individual in possession of the truth. Ibsen's very next play, *The Wild Duck*, portrays a similar individual in a much harsher light.

Consequently, in his lifetime Ibsen was claimed by every political group in town: everyone from socialist to libertarian could find an Ibsen play to complement their thinking. But Ibsen had no permanent interest in any of them. He felt himself a man apart, an 'intellectual pioneer,' forging a path of ideas for others to follow after him, but always leaving them behind in the dust.

In the introduction to his adaptation of *An Enemy of the People*, Arthur Miller wrote, "There is one quality in Ibsen that...lies at the very center of his force...It is his insistence, his utter conviction, that he is going to say what he has to say, and that the audience, by God, is going to listen." Ibsen—he ambitious, would-be aristocrat, who wanted to be adored by his countrymen—rebelled against his own desires again and again in order to say what he had to say, to examine the world and its ever-changing rules and norms. And so he accepted his status as outsider, man alone, a rebel in more ways than one.

Surrender the motorcycle, James Dean. Ibsen leaves you in the dust.

# MILLER

*By now you're probably on to me. You're thinking, "I know where she's going. She painted Ibsen as a rebel, now she's going to try to convince me that Miller was a fuddy-duddy stick-in-the-mud." Well, you're only half right.*

I won't try to tell you that Miller, the young idealist who believed that theater could change the world, was a square. Nor does that title apply to the somewhat more mature husband of Marilyn Monroe who refused to give up the names of alleged Communists and was consequently charged with contempt of Congress. Through the McCarthy years in particular, Miller was just as much of an outsider in his country as Ibsen at his most abject. But the two men's philosophical and artistic inclinations did differ in some fascinating and illuminating ways, and it is on these differences that I want to dwell.

Arthur Miller was born on October 17, 1915, to Isidore, an Austrian-Hungarian immigrant who ran a small coat-manufacturing business, and Augusta, a New York native and schoolteacher. They spent the first 12 years of Miller's life in relative comfort and prosperity in Manhattan, until the Great Depression began to take hold of the city, crippling Isidore's business and making it necessary for the Miller family to move out to Brooklyn. Miller, greatly affected by the destitution caused by the Depression, embraced Marxism at the University of Michigan. It seemed clear to him that capitalism was failing and a new system was needed. He and his fellow students believed Marxism was the answer, and Miller, through his art, was going to help spread the word and make a difference.

So Miller picked an ideology and more or less stuck with it. Over time, as it became evident that socialism also had its flaws and would not be taking the United States by storm, Miller became less idealistic, less certain that he could help change the world—indeed uncertain that the world could be changed at all—but he never fully abandoned the set of beliefs he embraced as a young college student.

Another difference between Ibsen and Miller was their approach to form. Unlike Ibsen, who developed an entirely new way of making theater and experimented with others, Miller chose to breathe new life into forms that already existed. Miller in fact drew from Ibsen in developing his style, as well as the Greek Classicists. In Miller's eyes, both the Greeks and Ibsen possessed a "powerful integrative impulse which, at least in theory, could make possible a total picture of a human being" where "Present dilemma was simply the face that the past had left visible." In other words, both Ibsen and the Greeks incorporated history into their work, accounting for what had happened in what was happening. For Miller, this element was essential in making socially powerful art. He repurposed the techniques of Ibsen and the Greeks to emulate what he valued in their work. The results, however, were always his own.



*An Enemy of the People* offers an excellent example of this. Coming off of the wild success of *Death of a Salesman*, the tragedy that sharply critiqued the American Dream, Miller decided to adapt Ibsen's classic. Miller saw in *Enemy* an opportunity to put language to his feelings about the anti-Communist McCarthy hearings. Explicitly embracing Ibsen's form, structure, and setting, Miller managed to make them just a bit leaner—while also introducing dialogue that more directly addressed the contentious divisions of his day. Though the play was not a hit—due in part, Miller felt, to the overwhelming orthodoxy of the time—he continued to explore this subject matter in his next play, *The Crucible*, following the path of the minority versus the masses into deeper and darker territories, but remaining on the path.

Miller was no fuddy-duddy, but he was not exactly a rebel, either. He was a man who held fast to his ideals, regardless of how unpopular, or indeed dangerous, they became. Whom does he resemble? Gregory Peck as Atticus Finch. Steady, stalwart, and sticking to his guns until the bitter end.