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an enemy of the people runs approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes with one 15 minute intermission

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At the impressionable age of seven, Henrik Ibsen watched his father’s successful mercantile business crumble financially. After spending almost the first decade of his life in luxury, the family was left with a small summer house, Venstøp, and not much else. Knud Ibsen, his father, turned to both alcoholism and familial abuse as a means of coping with the failure of his business. Marichen Altenburg, his mother, took a great deal of the burden upon herself, attempting to shield her children from the man their father had become. Eventually, the Ibsens were taken in by one of Knud’s half-brothers, and were able to move back to their home town of Skein. The family, however, would always be wracked by the pain experienced during that time of bankruptcy.

Ibsen carried this experience with him as he left school, home, and family at the age of fifteen to begin writing plays in the small coastal town of Grimstad (he also served as an apprentice pharmacist while learning the literary ropes). Too poor to enjoy local entertainment and too shy to make acquaintances in the small town, Ibsen spent a majority of his time in Grimstad alone: reading, saving money, and preparing himself to study at a university when the time came. Ironically, considering the later success of his plays, Ibsen’s first few plays written and published at this time (Catiline and The Burial Mound in particular) were completely ignored by the public, with very few copies even making it through the printing process.

After moving to the capital of Norway, Oslo (Christiania at the time), Ibsen faced several further failures in his attempts to matriculate from a university and achieve mainstream artistic success. His break came when he performed the prologue to a production at a benefit event for a new Norse theater built by Ole Bull, a famous violinist. Bull was so impressed by Ibsen that the budding playwright was appointed “theater poet” and stage manager for the new theater, allowing him access to a great deal of practical experience in stagecraft—something that would prove invaluable to his later writing. As the theater’s resident playwright, it was also Ibsen’s duty to produce one original work a year. Though his first few attempts (The Warrior’s Barrow and St. John’s Night) were not well received, several later plays (Lady Inger of Østraat and The Feast at Solhaug) were met with critical acclaim. It was during...
CAST

DR. THOMAS STOCKMANN .......... STEVEN WINKELMAN
KATHERINE STOCKMANN, HIS WIFE .......... GIULIA PERUCCHIO
PETER STOCKMANN, HIS BROTHER, THE MAYOR .......... MARIO GAMBINI
PETRA STOCKMANN, HIS DAUGHTER .......... ZOE NETTER
MORTEN STOCKMANN, HIS SON .......... DAVID LIBBEY*
EJLF STOCKMANN, HIS SON .......... DAMON FULCHER
MORTEN KIIL, HIS FATHER-IN-LAW .......... T. BOHRER
CAPTAIN HORSTER .......... ANGEL MORALES
HOVSTAD, AN EDITOR .......... IAN VON FANGE
BILLING, A SUB-EDITOR .......... LYDIA JIMENEZ
ADLÆSSEN, A PUBLISHER .......... ALBERTO CARILLO CASAS
T. VIK .......... MANAL SIDI
LAMSTAD .......... HAORU LI
ENGSTRAND .......... MATTHEW STOLMAN
EVENSEN .......... WILLIAM GRIMBLE
LAMMERS .......... BLYTHE HOSPELHORN
PETTERSEN .......... ARTURO DASHAN

* DANCE CAPTAIN

ARTIST BIOS

ALEXANDRA KUECHLER CAFFAL (DIRECTOR) is a Red Hook, Brooklyn-based Director and Artist. Prior to New York, she worked as a resident designer at Artists Repertory Theater in Portland, Oregon. She often writes and develops her own work including Untitled Ladyplay: We hate you and it’s good, Sensual Over-eauty, and What’s Your Name Dear? A Radio Play by Springer Barry. Described as ’festive’ or ’aggressively female,’ her work celebrates femininity, pop-culture and generational dissonance. Her most recent credits include Little Piece of You at Theatre Latea, and Assistant Directing Daniel Fish’s world premier of House for Sale at The Duke on 42nd, The Return of Ulysses at Baryshnikov Arts Center. Alexandra holds a MFA in Directing from The New School for Drama. Alex is honored to be directing her first production at the University of Rochester International Theatre Program.

SCOTT TEDMON-JONES (SCENIC DESIGN) NYC credits include Mary-Kate Olsen is in Love (The Flea Theater), Rise and Fall of a Teenage Cyberqueen (Access Theatre), That Beautiful Laugh (La MaMa E.T.C.), and Harry and Pep (Center Stage NY). Other credits include Vigil of the Living, the Dead (Pittsburgh Opera), Into the Woods (Carnegie Mellon University), and Deathtrap and Later Life (Snowy Range Summer Theatre). Working with Narelle Sisson, he has been associate designer for Juilliard Drama’s 4th Year Repertory since 2012. He has also worked extensively with Dane Laffrey as an assistant and as an associate designer since 2010. MFA: Carnegie Mellon University. www.stjdesign.com

STACEY BERMAN (COSTUME DESIGN) is a Brooklyn based costume designer who works in theatre and film. Selected theatre credits include The Verge (Ontological-Hysteric), Desire Caught by the Tail (Performa 09), The Ring Cycle: Part II (The Bushwick Starr) and La Place de L’Etoile (Richard Foreman at NYU/EKW). She regularly collaborates with the experimental performance company, Object Collection. Her recent film credits include Rebecca Thomas’s Electric Children, Stephen Elliott’s Happy Baby, and the upcoming Unreachable by Conventional Means, written by David Shapiro, Jr. She is a graduate of Barnard College. Her work and full portfolio can be seen at: staceybermandesign.com
**Ibsen's Ghosts and the Subsequent Public Backlash**

After the wild scandal and success of his most famous play *A Doll's House* in 1879 (now the world's most performed play), Ibsen spent the great majority of 1880 contemplating how exactly to follow up his examination of marriage and the gender roles contained therein. He decided to focus on writing a play about what would have happened to a woman like Nora (the principal character in *A Doll's House*) should she have stayed in an unhappy marriage. In late November 1881, he had completed writing *Ghosts* and had it published in Copenhagen later that same year. It premiered on May 20th, 1882 in Norwegian in Chicago, USA. The commonly known English title is actually a mistranslation; the play should actually be named *Revenants* (according to Wikipedia: a revenant is "a visible ghost or animated corpse that was believed to return from the grave to terrorize the living.")

True to both titles, however, the play itself focuses on five characters haunted by the ghosts/revenants of their past. Following Mrs. Helene Alving (the matriarch of a household) over the course of a single day, Ibsen slowly but surely unravels the lies she has told to cover up the philandering nature of her deceased husband, Captain Alving. Containing references to syphilis, incest, and euthanasia, the play was immediately subsumed in controversy (as Ibsen intended). In fact, it could be said that Ibsen wrote the play to intentionally stir up anger within the community. He did not, however, foresee just how vitriolic the public's opinion would be, particularly in the Britain.

*An open drain: a loathsome sore unbandaged; a dirty act done publicly.*

-Daily Telegraph

*Characters either contradictory in themselves, uninteresting or aberrant.*

-Daily Chronicle

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*The individual has to learn to submit to society, or, more accurately, to submit to the authorities whose job it is to decide what's good for society.*

-Peter Stockmann, Mayor, *An Enemy of the People*, Act I

*Society is like a ship; you need all hands on the rudder!*

-Billing, *An Enemy of the People*, Act I

*The general public doesn't want new ideas. The general public is happiest with the good, old, familiar ideas it's used to.*

-Peter Stockmann, Mayor, *An Enemy of the People*, Act I

*What's the use of being right, if you have no power?*

-Mrs. Stockmann, *An Enemy of the People*, Act II

*An averagely constructed truth lasts...seventeen or eighteen years as a rule, twenty years at the most; hardly ever longer. And truths as ancient as that are always dreadfully threadbare.*

-Dr. Thomas Stockmann, *An Enemy of the People*, Act IV

*If you live in filth, how can you hope to think about anything on a higher plane than the grease-spotted window you stare out of?*

-Dr. Thomas Stockmann, *An Enemy of the People*, Act IV

*The strongest man in the world is the man who stands most alone.*

-Dr. Thomas Stockmann, *An Enemy of the People*, Act V
This period that he became engaged to and married Susannah Thoreson, a strong and quick-witted woman who was able to keep up with the energetic twenty-eight-year-old playwright.

This time of unbridled growth in Ibsen’s life was followed by a period of equal decline and depression, as his duties as theatre manager left him almost no time to pursue his own creative interests. It wasn’t until 1867 and Peer Gynt that he recaptured his fame, not only on a local, but a global level. Failures such as Love’s Comedy taught Ibsen not only the sting of negative critical reviews, but also the idea that the conformity of writing required for widespread acclaim is not something he was interested in pursuing. This revelation lead to the production of Ibsen’s loose quartet of “social critique plays” from 1877 to 1882: plays that were deliberately controversial and written to incite both discussion and anger in the community. This series began with Pillars of Society, continued with A Doll’s House and Ghosts, and concluded with An Enemy of the People.

Today, Ibsen is known as one of the greatest playwrights in the European tradition and the father of realism in contemporary theatre. Influencing such playwrights as Arthur Miller, Oscar Wilde, and Eugene O’Neill, Ibsen wrote not to moralize, or tell an audience right from wrong (as can be seen in the translation debate between Petra and Hovstad in Act III of An Enemy of the People), but rather to provide a brief insight into the common failings of the human condition.

There is one quality in Ibsen that no serious writer can afford to overlook. It lies at the very center of his force, and I found in it—as I hope others will—a profound source of strength. 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. It is the very same quality that makes a star actor, a great public speaker, and a lunatic. Every Ibsen play begins with the unwritten words: ‘Now listen here!’ And these words have shown me a path through the wall of ‘entertainment,’ a path that leads beyond the formulas and dried-up precepts, the pretense and fraud, of the business of the stage. Whatever else Ibsen has to teach, this is his first and greatest contribution.

Arthur Miller, in a preface to his adaptation of An Enemy of the People

To live is to war with fiends
That infect the brain and heart;
To write is to summon one’s self,
And play the judge’s part.

Henrik Ibsen to Ludwig Passarge

Infects the unsuspecting audience member with the same syphilitic disease of the mind that so afflicts Oswald.

Ockham’s Quarterly

Ninety-seven percent of the people who go to see Ghosts are nasty-minded people who find the discussion of nasty subjects to their taste, in exact proportion to their nastiness.

Sporting and Dramatic News

Ghosts received even harsher criticism than any of Ibsen’s earlier work. Theatres across Europe refused outright to put it on their stages. Both conservative and liberal media turned against Ibsen and blasted his work. Later, in 1898, at a dinner in the Royal Palace in Stockholm in his honor, King Oscar II spoke of his distaste for the play’s subject matter, to which Ibsen replied (after a pause), “Your Majesty, I had to write Ghosts.” Driven by both media attention and public bile and writing at twice his usual speed, Ibsen completed An Enemy of the People a mere year after he published Ghosts. Although the subject matter is quite different, Ibsen was able to use Dr. Stockmann as his mouthpiece against the opinion of a majority, the betrayal of a supportive media, and the rapidly aging truths embraced by his society.

One of the most important narratives expressed in *An Enemy of the People* is the censorship of free speech if it threatens institutional and economic norms. Our version, set in the 1980s, uses music that, at the time, would have been considered not only censorable, but also unmarketable. Below, you’ll find a list of instances of censorship from those years:

**1980**

The New York State Division of Substance Abuse Services considers a significant tax increase on musicians and CDs whose songs include drug abuse.

**1981**

A municipal judge in Newark, Ohio, bans rock concerts at the Legend Valley Park because they pose a public nuisance.

**1982**

Ozzy Osbourne is forbidden from performing in San Antonio, Texas, after he is arrested for urinating on the Alamo. Osbourne’s various legal troubles also prevent him from playing in several other cities, including Boston, Baton Rouge, Corpus Christi, Las Vegas, Philadelphia, and Scranton, Pennsylvania.

**1983**

Voice of America programmer, Frank Scott, issues a directive to staff that they are not permitted to play music that might offend any portion of their audience.

**1984**

Rick Allen and his wife express concerns over a Prince album to their local PTA meeting in Cincinnati, Ohio.

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**PMRC & the “Filthy Fifteen”**

In 1985, Tipper Gore, wife of Senator (and later Vice-President) Al Gore, founded the Parent’s Music Resource Center, a committee of “Washington wives” dedicated to increasing parental awareness and control over their children’s access to controversial music of the time. Later referred to as the PMRC, this committee led to a stricter rating system for both films and music as well as the removal of provocative rock music from several American chain stores as large as Wal-Mart and Sears. They are most famous for their creation of the “Filthy Fifteen,” a list of current popular songs they found most offensive.

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**In Greek mythology, Eteocles and Polynices were the children of Oedipus and Jocasta who, upon gaining control of Athens after the revelation of Oedipus’ unintentional regicide and incest, quarreled with one another for control of the city. Their battle over the community, eventually resulting in the death of both brothers at Thebes, is said to have stemmed from the conflict between Eteocles’ nature as a somewhat radical philosopher and Polynices’ conflicting interests in improving the state of Athens.**
the fracking debate

A n issue of much public debate since the process’s implementation in 1947 and widespread adoption throughout the late 20th century, “fracking” (hydraulic fracturing) is a common drilling practice that uses highly pressurized water and chemicals to create cracks (or “fracs”) in the soil and extract minerals from the earth. Although fracking is exceptionally efficient at releasing such fuels as natural gas at low cost to the driller, the process has been controversial in its ecological safety, particularly with regard to the methane levels it leeches into the air and local water aquifers.

Water supplies, in particular—a focus of An Enemy of the People—are in danger of contamination from the process. As fracking uses anywhere from 1.2 to 5 million gallons for each well, it both redirects and corrupts the water reservoirs it draws from. A simple Google search reveals accounts of natural gas present in the tap and well water surrounding fracking drilling sites. Corporations who benefit from the process maintain that it is completely safe, or that contaminated water was present to begin with. The debate between environmentalists and fracking corporations rages on to this day.

Activism (noun): A doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue.

Artist | Song Title | Reason for Objection
--- | --- | ---
1 | Prince | Darling Nikki | Sex/Masturbation
2 | Sheena Easton | Sugar Walls | Sex
3 | Judas Priest | Eat Me Alive | Sex
4 | Vanity | Strap on Robbie Baby | Sex
5 | Motley Crüe | Bastard | Violence
6 | AC/DC | Let Me Put My Love Into You | Sex
7 | Twisted Sister | We’re Not Going To Take It | Violence
8 | Madonna | Dress You Up | Sex
9 | W.A.S.P. | Animal (F**k Like A Beast) | Sex/Language
10 | Def Leppard | High ’n’ Dry (Saturday Night) | Drug & Alcohol Use
11 | Mercyful Fate | Into the Coven | Occult
12 | Black Sabbath | Trashed | Drug & Alcohol Use
13 | Mary Jane Girls | In My House | Sex
14 | Venom | Possessed | Occult
15 | Cindy Lauper | She Bop | Sex/Masturbation

This action started the mid-80s music censorship movement that eventually results in the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America) universal parental warning sticker.

1985
In October, President Ronald Reagan insinuates that “reactionary” and “obscene” rock music does not deserve constitutional protection. Reagan states “I don’t believe that our Founding Fathers ever intended to create a nation where the rights of pornographers would take precedence over the rights of parents, and the violent and malevolent would be given free rein to prey upon our children.”

1986
In February, CBS Music sets a strict, yet vague, company-wide policy regarding explicit lyrics. The policy is meant to dissuade artists from releasing any albums that may be deemed “controversial.”

1987
In an attempt to thwart an upcoming concert by the Beastie Boys, the city of Jacksonville, Florida, passes an ordinance in August that requires all “adult” acts to put a “For Mature Audiences Only” notice on all concert tickets and advertisements.

1988
Retailers across the country refuse to carry Prince’s Love Sexy, protesting the record’s cover, which contains a nude, yet unrevealing, photograph of Prince.

1989
The Federal Communications Commission launches a campaign to clean up a backlog of radio obscenity complaints, handing out thousands of dollars in fines to stations in order to discourage them from playing risqué music.

information courtesy of freemuse.org
In An Enemy of the People, Ibsen created a tale full of immediately recognizable paradigms and emotions; from the isolation felt by Dr. Stockmann when the entirety of society turns against him, to the concept that we must constantly fight against aging or outmoded truths even though they might be embraced by the majority. Ibsen’s original work has resonated loudly since its original production and has been translated and adapted time and again in different media and using differing theatrical conceits.

In what is perhaps the most renowned adaptation, playwright Arthur Miller (Death of a Salesman, All My Sons, The Crucible) rewrote An Enemy of the People in 1950. In his version, Miller used Ibsen’s original script as a springboard to pursue “his own agenda, [portraying] Stockmann as a heroic bulwark against the…McCarthyite forces of mendacious self interest,” according to fellow adapter, Christopher Hampton. Miller’s Enemy follows the same basic plot structure, but many characters are combined or changed to be far more antagonistic towards Stockmann (who ends the play as an American ideal of steadfastness to vision and family).

Somewhat surprisingly, another adaptation of the work is the 1975 hit summer blockbuster, Jaws, directed by Steven Spielberg—famous for instilling a fear of the ocean in beachgoers for decades after its release. While at first glance An Enemy of the People seems to have little in common with the Academy Award-winning creature feature, the two share thematic and plot similarities. Both stories center around one man whose ideas about public safety are shut down by the authorities in order to save face and to preserve economic affluence. Jaws doesn’t let it end there, though. In classic American film hero fashion, Police Chief Martin Brody (the film’s main character) goes on to fight the danger to society himself, saving the beach, the town, and his reputation. Were Ibsen’s play to follow that route, it would conclude with Dr. Stockmann, bottle of cleaning solution in hand, scrubbing the water pipes clean himself in a climactic final scene.

There have been various film and television adaptations of the play, most meeting with various degrees of failure. An Indian version titled Ganashatru, written and directed by Satyajit Ray, was released in 1990, with the Nordic spa setting replaced by an Indian health spa. Warner Brothers made a more faithful adaptation (of the Arthur Miller version) in 1978, directed by George Shaefer and starring Steve McQueen. The film suffered from a relative lack of publicity due to McQueen’s insistence on performing the lead role in a beard and long hair, contrary to his widespread public image. The film faded into obscurity soon after its short cinema run ended.

Other Selected Adaptations:
- The French theatre troupe, Compagnie Ouriel Zohar, performed a two man version of the play, touring Europe through 2008 and 2009.
- The BBC remade the Shaefer and McQueen Enemy in a 1980 TV movie set in a Scottish town, which the main character redubbed as “Tom Stockmann.”
- A 2004 Norwegian film version of the original script was renamed The Strongest One is the One Who Stands Alone. It was directed by Erik Skjoldbjær.
- During the recent unrest in Egypt, a new translation of An Enemy of the People was performed in colloquial Arabic and featured a rock-themed soundtrack. Translated by Nora Amin (who also played the role of Mrs. Stockmann) the play was well received by the public.

Christopher Hampton in a preface to this translation of An Enemy of the People