



CLARKSVILLE'S CENTER FOR ARTS & EDUCATION

ROXY REGIONAL THEATRE

SEASON THIRTY-THREE *Better than Broadway*



Robert Louis Stevenson's
Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde



Adapted for the stage by Dr. Lew Tatham & John McDonald
From the novel by Robert Louis Stevenson

A Roxy Regional Theatre Production
Teacher's Guide

About the Author

Robert Louis Stevenson was born on November 13, 1850, in Edinburgh, Scotland, coming from a long line of prominent lighthouse engineers. During his boyhood, he spent holidays with his maternal grandfather, a minister and professor of moral philosophy who shared his love of sermons and storytelling with him. Prone to illness, Stevenson spent many of his early winters in bed, entertained only by his imagination and a great love of reading, especially William Shakespeare, Sir Walter Scott, John Bunyan and *The Arabian Nights*.

Encouraged to follow the family tradition of lighthouse engineering, he began studies at the University of Edinburgh in 1867, but quickly discovered he preferred a career in literature. To satisfy his father, he acquired a law degree and was admitted to the bar by the time he was twenty-five.

Stevenson spent the next four years traveling through Europe, mostly around Paris, publishing essays and articles about his travels. In 1876, he met Fanny Vandegrift Osbourne, a married woman ten years his elder. When she decided to return to San Francisco soon after they met, Stevenson followed, taking the long voyage across the Atlantic and across the United States against the advice of his friends and physician. To add to his adventure and inform his writing, he chose to travel in steerage and was near death when he arrived in Monterey, California, in 1879. After being nursed back to health, he continued to San Francisco that winter, though it cost him his health. Osbourne, who had since been divorced, helped him recover. They married the following May.

After several months in the U.S. with his wife and her young son, Stevenson brought his family back to Britain. Frequently sick, he continued to write seriously, producing the bulk of his best-loved work. His first successful novel, *Treasure Island*, was published in 1884, followed by *A Child's Garden of Verses* in 1885, and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in 1886.

A representative of Neo-romanticism during the Modernist period of English literature, Stevenson was an incredibly popular and successful writer. Though many leading critics dismissed his work entirely, he was admired by many authors, including Jorge Luis Borges, Ernest Hemingway, Rudyard Kipling, Vladimir Nabokov, and J. M. Barrie. He was also friends with Henry James, who was a vocal supporter his work.

Following the death of his father in 1887, Stevenson left again for the U.S. with his family, planning a move to Colorado. Upon landing in New York, however, they decided to spend the winter at Saranac Lake, in the Adirondacks. That summer he chartered a yacht and sailed through eastern and central Pacific, stopping for extended stays among the Hawaiian Islands. In 1890, Stevenson purchased a four hundred-acre estate in Upolu, one of the Samoan islands. He adopted the native name Tusitala (Samoan for "Story Writer") and soon became immersed in local politics.

By 1894, Stevenson had become increasingly depressed, convinced the best of his work was behind him. He wrote that he wished his illnesses would kill him. On the evening of December 3, 1894, he collapsed, possibly due to a cerebral hemorrhage, and died. He is entombed at Mt. Vaea, at a spot overlooking the sea, with a tablet on which his poem "Requiem" is inscribed.

About the Creators

Dr. Lew Tatham (playwright), an Army veteran of World War II, was born in Trenton, New Jersey, and grew up in Rockport, Maine. Receiving his master's degree and his doctorate from the University of Florida, Dr. Tatham taught on the college level for a total of forty years at Virginia Tech, the University of Florida, and as a professor of English and Chairman of the Department of Languages and Literature at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. Dr. Tatham and his wife, Gerry, retired to Edgewater, Florida, in 1995 after twenty-nine years of residency in Clarksville, where they raised most of their family of seven. In addition to his teaching career, Dr. Tatham became a major actor in over a dozen productions at the Roxy Regional Theatre in Clarksville, beginning with his role as Archbishop of Canterbury in a production of *Murder in the Cathedral* at Trinity Episcopal Church. In 1990, he received the Roxy Regional Theatre's Monte Award, recognizing him as "best actor" for his leading role as the state manager in *Our Town*. Dr. Tatham died at the age of 87 at his home in Edgewater on January 30, 2012.

John McDonald (playwright) is the founder and artistic director of the Roxy Regional Theatre. A graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, as an actor John has worked with the New York Shakespeare Festival, *Macbeth* with James Earl Jones; Long Wharf Theatre, *A Lion in Winter* with Ralph Waite; and productions of *Long Days Journey Into Night* (James); *Macbeth* (Macbeth); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (George); and numerous others. As an instructor, he has taught theatre at the American Academy, The Rhodes School, The Dwight School, Hewitt, and is the creator of the School of the Arts, an acting program for young performers. Writing and production credits include, among others, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Dorothy Dix: Speaks!*, *Nora Witzel: A Very Curious Fella*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *All Quiet on the Western Front*, *Poe Unearthed*, *Headin' South*, *Goin' North*, *Heidi*, *Civil War Stories*, *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* and *The Magnificent Ambersons*.

Synopsis

Unlock the secrets of the soul! Unleashing the dark forces within, idealistic young scientist Dr. Henry Jekyll creates a mixture he hopes will eliminate human evil. In doing so, he creates the hideous and murderous Mr. Hyde in this stage adaptation of Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

Main Characters

Dr. Henry Jekyll - A respected doctor and friend of both Lanyon, a fellow physician, and Utterson, a lawyer. Jekyll is a seemingly prosperous man, well established in the community, and known for his decency and charitable works. Since his youth, however, he has secretly engaged in unspecified dissolute and corrupt behavior. Jekyll finds this dark side a burden and undertakes experiments intended to separate his good and evil selves from one another. Through these experiments, he brings Mr. Hyde into being, finding a way to transform himself in such a way that he fully becomes his darker half.

Mr. Edward Hyde - A strange, repugnant man who looks faintly pre-human. Hyde is violent and cruel, and everyone who sees him describes him as ugly and deformed—yet no one can say exactly why. Language itself seems to fail around Hyde: he is not a creature who belongs to the rational world, the world of conscious articulation or logical grammar. Hyde is Jekyll's dark side, released from the bonds of conscience and loosed into the world by a mysterious potion.

Mr. Gabriel John Utterson - A prominent and upstanding lawyer, well respected in the London community. Utterson is reserved, dignified, and perhaps even lacking somewhat in imagination, but he does seem to possess a furtive curiosity about the more sordid side of life. His rationalism, however, makes him ill equipped to deal with the supernatural nature of the Jekyll-Hyde connection. While not a man of science, Utterson resembles his friend Dr. Lanyon—and perhaps Victorian society at large—in his devotion to reasonable explanations and his denial of the supernatural.

Dr. Hastie Lanyon - A reputable London doctor and, along with Utterson, formerly one of Jekyll's closest friends. As an embodiment of rationalism, materialism, and skepticism, Lanyon serves a foil (a character whose attitudes or emotions contrast with, and thereby illuminate, those of another character) for Jekyll, who embraces mysticism. His death represents the more general victory of supernaturalism over materialism in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Mr. Poole - Jekyll's butler. Mr. Poole is a loyal servant, having worked for the doctor for twenty years, and his concern for his master eventually drives him to seek Utterson's help when he becomes convinced that something has happened to Jekyll.

Mr. Enfield - A distant cousin and lifelong friend of Mr. Utterson. Like Utterson, Enfield is reserved, formal, and scornful of gossip; indeed, the two men often walk together for long stretches without saying a word to one another.

Sir Danvers Carew - A well-liked old nobleman, a member of Parliament, and a client of Utterson.

Maid - A maid, whose employer Hyde had once visited, is the only person who claims to have witnessed the murder of Sir Danvers Carew. She states that she believes Hyde murdered Carew. She faints after she sees what happens, then wakes up and rushes to the police, thus initiating the murder case.

Discussion Questions

At one level, *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde* is a story about a mad scientist gone wrong; at another level it is a reflection on human nature. The following discussion questions explore this and additional themes.

Dual Nature or Split Personality

- In order to explore how persons can engage in both positive and negative behaviors, have students discuss or write about a time when they showed kindness to an animal or another person and then about a time when they were cruel or unkind. Why might students act in these opposite ways at different times? What causes a person to act in such radically opposite ways and what does this suggest about human personality or human nature?
- Twins have intrigued scientists and psychologists because they are often two separate individuals with remarkably similar patterns of behavior. Ask students if they are twins or if they know any twins. Are the twins fraternal or identical? What differences are evident in their behaviors? How do twins explain their insights into the mind of each other?
- Horror and gangster films and fiction often explore the dual nature of a criminal by showing an evil person performing an act of kindness. For example, in the film *The Godfather* the gangster hero is shown playing with children and interacting with family and friends. Also Darth Vader in *Star Wars* shows a complex mixture of good and evil. Ask students to share some examples of this dual personality from these or other films. Discuss: Why do writers and directors include these “positive” elements in their characterizations of an essentially evil person? Do they make the characters sympathetic or more sinister? Do these behaviors lead us to empathize with the criminal? How do these characterizations affect us in thinking about our own behavior?

Reason Versus the Supernatural

- In making the transformation of Jekyll into Hyde believable, Stevenson shows the limits of reason and science in dealing with the supernatural. The reasonable Utterson is unable to figure out the mystery until it is revealed in letters at the end of the novel, and the scientific Dr. Lanyon collapses when he sees the transformation occur. Students can consider the limits of reason and science in their everyday lives. Have them list three important ideas or factual statements that they believe are true. Then have them list why they believe these things are true. Among students’ reasons may be: personal observation, faith, intuition, the report of a trusted expert, or scientific reports. Have them contrast those things they believe on the basis of empirical knowledge or reason and those based on non-scientific proof. Discuss the extent to which science can discover the truth of all that exists.
- Have students think about the basis of popular superstitions. Discuss what the emotional effects of these superstitions are and whether reasoning with the person who believes them will lessen their emotional impact. This can also be applied to horoscopes that some students read.

Limits of Scientific Experimentation

- Dr. Jekyll decides to test his theory of the two sides of human nature by performing an experiment on himself with potent drugs. He knows death is possible but decides the potential knowledge is worth the risk. Today scientists explore the possibilities of cloning and creating life. Bring in an article from a newspaper or the Internet that discusses advances in cloning or genetic manipulation. After reading and discussing the article, engage students in a structured debate about the issue.
- Divide the class into groups of four for a constructive controversy on this issue: There should be limits to scientific experimentation. Assign one pair of students in the group to support the statement, the other pair to refute it. Student pairs prepare their arguments separately for about five minutes. Then form groups of four to present the two sides. After about ten minutes or when it is clear the main points have been argued for both sides, switch the debate, so the pairs must now argue from the opposite point of view. Give the pairs a few minutes to assemble their arguments and then have them debate as before. After the debate in groups, the whole class should list on the board all of the arguments. Finally, students can either free write or write a more formal short essay responding to the statement, using their own views and the strongest arguments they learned in the debate.
- Read with the class the short story, "The Birth Mark" by Nathaniel Hawthorne. Discuss: What does Hawthorne say in this story about the limits of science?
- Read aloud the chapter from Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* where he succeeds in creating a Creature (Volume I, Chapter 4). Discuss with the class: What is Frankenstein's reaction? Do you blame him for his decision to create and then reject the creature? What is Shelley's point of view? How do you know? What does this story suggest about the responsibility of the scientist?

The Effects of Society on the Individual

- In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, Stevenson shows the civilizing influence as well the restricting and debilitating effects of society. The benefits of society can be seen in the compassion shown to the little girl trampled by Hyde and the social outrage and response to the murder of Carew. The negative effects of society can be seen in the repressed and restricted behaviors of Mr. Enfield and Mr. Utterson and the duplicity shown by Dr. Jekyll, a member of elite society who is a reputed social benefactor. Students can think about the positive and negative effects of society on the individual by having them imagine a situation in which they find themselves totally alone on a deserted island. Ask them to describe how they would dress, what kinds of things they would do, and what they would think about. Then have them imagine they are in a typical social situation such as in school, church, or with a group of friends and make a parallel list. Then in pairs have them identify the positive aspects of being alone that are lost when in a social group, and the positive aspects of being in a social group that are lost when they are alone.
- Another way to get students thinking about how social expectations shape their behavior is to have them think about social situations in which they dramatically change how they act. For example, have them compare their behavior in a private space at home with the way they act in the public sphere of school, sports, or work. Have them make a chart with three headings: home, school, and work (or sports or any other situation in which they interact with adults

outside of home or school) indicating the setting and then listing their behaviors in each situation including the type of language they use, colloquial or formal; how they address other persons; the body language they use; whether they smile or laugh freely or are more serious; how they interact—as equals with the other persons or as inferior or superior. Students can share their charts with a partner and discuss what factors affect how a person behaves. Note: If your students are comfortable with each other, they could shadow each other for a day, gathering notes about the ways people react in different situations.

- Whenever Dr. Jekyll wants to change into his “darker” side, he seeks isolation. He wants to maintain his respectable role in the community while he engages in activities not acceptable to society. Novels and films explore what happens when people are freed from the restraints of society and the role of the community to maintain moral behavior. Your students may have read William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, or Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. Show a film clip from one of these classic novels where the theme of isolation vs. civilization is dramatically demonstrated. For example in a recent film version of *The Lord of the Flies*, the boys throw off all the restraints of rules and civility when they attack the child who is most vulnerable because of his size and inability to see without eyeglasses. Their personality changes are shown by the way they dress in “native” costumes and paint their faces. Show a brief film clip and then ask students to respond in writing: What happens to people when they are not restrained by social conventions?
- Read the first chapter of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in which Mr. Utterson and Mr. Richard Enfield are described. Discuss: What are the ways that Victorian society has shaped their behavior? Why does Stevenson emphasize their behaviors, their routine, and their philosophy of “minding their own business”? Do you agree with Enfield that it’s not good to ask too many questions? Do you think Stevenson is using irony and what is its impact?