

INTO THE BREECHES!

By George Brant

Study Guide



NEW STAGE
Theatre

New Stage Theatre Education

Drew Stark, Education Associate

2019-2020

NEW STAGE THEATRE EDUCATION
STUDY GUIDE: INTO THE BREECHES!

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Please note: We want to hear from you and your students! Please respond by filling out the enclosed evaluation forms. These forms help us to secure funding for future Education programming. Please send your comments and suggestions to: New Stage Education Department, 1100 Carlisle Street, Jackson, MS 39202, or email: education@newstagetheatre.com

Thank you for your support!

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Theatre Etiquette

To best prepare your students for today's performance, we ask that you review these guidelines for expected behavior of an audience BEFORE the show.

TEACHERS:

Speaking to your students about theatre etiquette is ESSENTIAL. This performance of *Into the Breeches!* at New Stage Theatre may be some students' first theatre experience. Students should be aware that this is a live performance and should keep distractions to a minimum as a courtesy to those around them.

STUDENTS:

- Stay with your group at all times and pay attention to your teachers and chaperones.
- Listen to the New Stage staff member who will board your bus and escort your group to the lobby.
- Be sure to go to the bathroom before the performance begins. It is hard to leave without causing a disturbance to those around you once the performance starts.
- Please do not stand up, walk around or put your feet on the seat in front of you. Make yourself comfortable while keeping movement to a minimum.
- Recording devices and cameras are strictly prohibited.
- Absolutely no gum chewing, eating or drinking in the theatre.

Noise

Live theatre creates a unique and dynamic atmosphere between actors and audience members for sharing ideas and emotional expression. In the same way that actors can hear what is happening on-stage, they can also hear disruptions in the audience as well. While actors appreciate laughter and applause at appropriate times, excessive noise and talking is not welcomed. Even whispering voices can be distracting to the actors and others in the audience.

- Cell phones are prohibited inside the theatre. Not only is the use of cell phones during a performance distracting for both the actors and fellow audience members, the cellular signal interferes with the use of our sound system. Upon entering the theatre, please remind students (and teachers) to turn off all electronic devices and store them during the performance. If there is a disturbance, they will be asked to leave and will not be invited back to the theatre.

Applause

Applause respectfully acknowledges the performers and shows appreciation or audience approval. Traditionally, applause occurs before intermission and at the conclusion of a performance. Dimming the lights on the stage and bringing up the house lights generally signals these intervals. A curtain call, when the cast returns to the stage, will follow every performance. At the conclusion of the performance, we encourage you to like us on Facebook and other social media platforms. Enjoy the show!

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Discussion Questions (before seeing the show) at New Stage Theatre:

Show Etiquette:

What is the role of the audience in a live performance?

How is it different from seeing a film? Why can't you talk? What can happen in live theatre that cannot happen in cinema?

What are the differences between live theatre and cinema? (Two-dimensional vs. three dimensional; larger than life on the screen vs. life-size; recorded vs. live performances, etc.)

Discuss the nature of film as mass produced, versus the singular, intimate nature of live performances. Compare original art work to poster design or print work. Which do they feel is more valuable? Why?

Pre-show Questions:

Much of *Into the Breeches* focuses on forming a community in times of crisis. What communities are important in your life?

Into the Breeches takes place during World War II. Using the timeline in this packet, discuss what is happening in the US and the rest of the world in 1942.

Theatre Observations (on the day of the show) at New Stage Theatre:

A high quality theatrical experience will frequently raise more questions than it answers. After watching the play, audience members may agree on certain facts- what a character did, or said, the sequence of events, the action that took place- but they may not agree on the meaning of those actions. After students see the play, group discussion can focus on gathering opinions, making inferences and considering alternatives. Differing views can co-exist without conflict because each view serves to enrich our understanding of the play, ourselves and our world.

Post-show Discussion Questions:

Look around. What do you see? Observe the lighting instruments around the room and on the ceiling. Look at the set. Does it look realistic or abstract? Try to guess how the set will be used during the show.

Discuss the elements that go into producing a live performance: The lights, set, props, costumes, and stage direction. Discuss all the people involved in the backstage choreography or "behind the scenes" elements of the show happening in front of an audience. Tell them to be aware of this as they watch the show. Observe how lighting establishes mood or furthers the dramatic action of the story. Are there special effects in the show? Were the effects successful? Do the actors change costumes quickly? If so, how is this accomplished?

What did I see? How does it make me feel? What in the play contributed to that feeling?

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Post-show Discussion Questions (continued):

What is important in this play? Do you think the playwright succeeded in expressing his point of view?

How is that similar or different from my point of view?

If I were to write a play on this subject, what would it be like?

Were there moments in the show you saw characters making difficult decisions? Have you ever been asked to make a decision that goes against the beliefs of your community?

Into the Breeches is filled with both dramatic and comedic moments. Discuss how the playwright tactfully uses each to intensify a moment, enhance the poignancy of a particular scene, or help to endear a character to an audience.

Many argue that Shakespeare is meant to be read aloud in front of audience. After studying the texts featured in the play, how did the performers clarify moments or bring Shakespeare's voice alive?

Discussion Activities:

Exercise One: What's in a Role?

As a class, generate a list of common professions or job titles. Have each individual note which gender they would traditionally expect in that position. In small groups, discuss their answers and reasons for them.

Why did you assign a particular gender to this role?

What discoveries did you find out about the group's expectations for traditional gender roles?

Discuss in groups how it might look like to have members of the opposite gender work in each professions. Is this hard to picture? Why?

Exercise Two: The Linger Effect

Divide your students into small groups and read the following prompt:

In *Into the Breeches!*, Maggie explains "the linger effect" of a play that "can leave a glow that lasts for days, weeks, sometimes a lifetime." This effect is brought up throughout the play.

Discuss when a play, movie, book, TV show, or any other work of art has left an impression on you after experiencing the work. Share this experience with your small group.

How did this work of art make you feel differently than you had before?

Is there a particular aspect of the work that made a distinct impression on you?

Did you revisit this work more than once? If so, how many times?

Would you recommend this work of art to others? If so, to whom?

After viewing *Breeches*, what "lingers" in your mind from this production? Would you recommend this play to others?

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Notes about the show from Francine Thomas-Reynolds,

Artistic Director of New Stage Theatre and Director of *Into the Breeches!*

I am enthusiastic about bringing this new play to New Stage Theatre's audiences, in part, because we have adapted it to include Mississippi history. *Into the Breeches!* was originally set in Providence, Rhode Island but, with permission from the playwright and with a little bit of customization of local and historical references, our production of the play takes place in the Jackson, Mississippi area of 1942. So, for instance, what is the Rhode Island Country Club Clubroom on the page becomes the Jackson Country Club in the New Stage production.

It has been enriching for the *Into the Breeches!* company to research the history of Mississippi and the Jackson area during the period of World War II. We discovered that Jackson's Hawkins Field became the Jackson Army Air Base and was used by the United States Army Air Forces' Flying Training Command as a basic flying training airfield. We also learned the University of Mississippi was one of the first sites for Army Administration training during World War II and that a U.S. Army prisoner of war camp for German prisoners was established in Clinton. Camp Clinton was the only US camp that housed German general officers. These, and other historical facts have been incorporated into our production.

American women played important roles during World War II, both at home and in uniform. Not only did they give their sons, husbands, fathers, and brothers to the war effort, they gave their time, energy, and some even gave their lives. As the men fought abroad, women on the Home Front worked in defense plants, in addition to managing households, and volunteered for war related organizations traditionally led by men, demonstrate by the women in *Into the Breeches!* as they step up to mount a play. Public, iconic characters like Rosie the Riveter helped assure that the Allies would have war materials they needed to defeat the Axis.



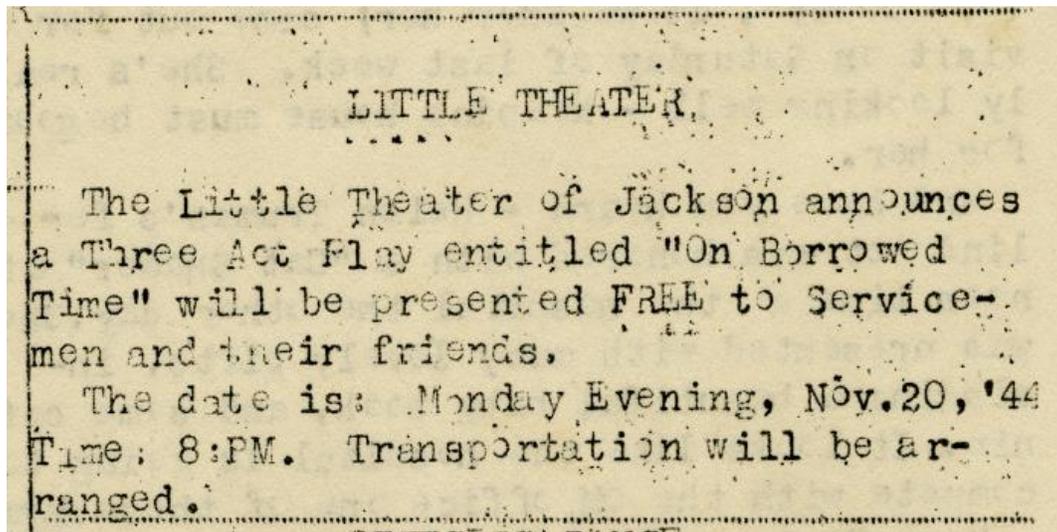
In Jackson, Junior League volunteers chaired and helped organize the Civilian Defense Volunteer Office. League members also extended hospitality to members of the armed forces in Jackson. JLI helped issue Ration Books, sold War Bonds and Stamps during the Third War Fund Drive and assisted the local Ration Board in a nation-wide check-up of local groceries.

When the U.S. entered a war, the federal government offered women employment opportunities usually reserved for men. These women were welders at the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation of Pascagoula, Mississippi, during World War II. (86-WWT-85-35, National Archives Identifier 522890)

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In our vision of *Into the Breeches!*, The Oberon Theatre is located at our current address, 1100 Carlisle Street in Jackson, which was the location of Little Theater of Jackson before New Stage Theatre acquired the property.

I was impressed to discover that the Little Theater of Jackson did their part for the war effort with special performances for service men stationed at Camp Clinton. The excerpt below is from the Camp Clinton's newsletter P.O.W. Wow.



With its focus on women who are the theatrical version of Rosie the Riveter, I feel the story of *Into the Breeches!* is a love song to the theater. Through rehearsals, I couldn't help but think of New Stage Theatre's beginnings and its founders. Just like the characters in our play, they were courageous in forging ahead to create a new artistic organization. I think of them as brave warriors for the art of theatre.

When New Stage Theatre opened its doors on January 20, 1966 with *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* a passage from director Ivan Rider's note read, "In 1962, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* opened on Broadway and Edward Albee, then in his early thirties, became, with his first full-length play, the most important American playwright since Tennessee Williams. In the furor of controversy which engulfed the play one fact remained constant: its author was a writer of great force and power. A writer who whether liked or loathed championed or criticized could not be ignored."

I can imagine the audiences in Jackson, Mississippi, in 1966, were just as shocked as the earlier Broadway audiences. I admire Jane Petty, Ivan Rider, Carl Black, Jr., Beth Jones, Patti Carr Black, James Child, Howard Jones, O.C. McDavid, Ford Petty, Kay Fort Child, and Frank Hains – New Stage Theatre's founding Directors and Board Members - for their courage.

Their determination and bravery created something innovative and unique for the cultural life of Jackson. Because of their perseverance and tenacity, New Stage Theatre exists and is able to continue to present both classic and important contemporary challenging works selected for their artistic merit, entertainment value and power to illuminate the human condition.

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About George Brant, the Playwright



Born in Park Ridge, Illinois, **GEORGE BRANT** received his undergraduate degree at Northwestern University and completed his MFA in Writing from the Michener Center for Writers at the University of Texas at Austin. A member of the Dramatist Guild, Brant is published by Samuel French, Oberon Books, Fisher Verlage, and Smith & Kraus. His award-winning work has been produced internationally, most notably the off-Broadway production ***Grounded***, directed by Julie Taymor and starring Anne Hathaway.

An Affiliate Writer at the Playwrights' Center, his scripts have been produced by the Public Theater, the Atlantic Theater Company, Cleveland Play House, the Alley Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, the Studio Theatre, City Theatre, the Gate Theatre of London, Page 73, and the Traverse Theatre, among others. Brant has been awarded writing fellowships from the James A. Michener Center for Writers, the MacDowell Colony, the McCarter Theatre Center Sallie B. Goodman Artist's Retreat, Blue Mountain Center, Hermitage Artists' Retreat, the Djerassi Resident Artist's Program. His plays have received a Lucille Lortel Award, an Edgerton Foundation New Play Award, a Kennedy Center National Playwriting Award, a Creative Workforce Fellowship, three OAC Individual Excellence Awards, and the Keene Prize for Literature. His work *Grounded* received the National New Play Network Smith Prize in 2012 and Edinburgh Fringe First Award in 2013.

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Conversations with George Brant, the Playwright

Combined interviews conducted by Gillian Gurganus for the world premiere production at Trinity Repertory Company in January 2018 and Northlight Theatre's Dramaturg, Lauren Shouse for their production in May 2019. Used with permission.

Lauren Shouse: What was your inspiration for writing *Into the Breeches*?

George Brant: My wife Laura Kepley is the Artistic Director for The Cleveland Play House, and the theatre was about to celebrate their 100th anniversary, and as a result, everyone on the staff was digging into the theatre's history. I became intrigued by the effort, which led me to rifling through the Women's Committee's archived scrapbooks of the Play House's WWII years and discovering the pivotal part that the women on the home-front played in keeping the theatre afloat during that difficult time. This spurred me on to further research: wartime diaries, sweethearts' correspondence with soldiers, African-American poetry of the time, anything that expanded my knowledge of women on the home-front beyond Rosie the Riveter.

At the time I had a commission with Trinity Repertory Company, a theatre which I'm quite familiar with from our time living in Rhode Island, so the play ended up a bit of a hybrid between the history of the two theatres.

Gillian Gurganus: What is the biggest challenge being commissioned to do a world premiere?

GB: One thing that's kind of different about Trinity Rep is that they have the resident acting company, so that was kind of the only condition I was given in writing the commission, that I write it for the acting company. There was no subject matter proposed, it was just an idea that you write for the actors, as well as figuring out a story that would show all of their strengths and that they'd have fun with.

LS: While the play was originally set in Providence, you shifted the play for our local community – how does that impact the story, if at all? *New Stage Theatre shifted the production to occur in Jackson*

GB: Yes, as *Breeches!* makes its way out into the world, I thought it might be more interesting to encourage theaters to work in the WWII history of their area into their productions to make it more personal. Growing up in the Northlight area as I did, I was happy to research the area's history myself and make those changes. It's been fascinating for me to get to know how each part of the country contributed in their own way to the effort.

GG: How is *Into the Breeches* relevant to audiences in 2018?

GB: Even though the play does take place in the '40s, I do think it holds a mirror up to today in many ways, actually kind of increasingly with recent events, with more of a focus on women and their struggles in various industries. It's been interesting to see how the play is taking on more relevance as time goes on because it is very much about a group of women, in this case who have never had the opportunity to act on stage before, but it's the very fact that the men are away for the war that allows the women to take on roles that they've never had before, and not just roles in the theatre, but really roles in their lives that they've never had. One of the characters in the play has never acted before because her husband never really approved of it, but now he's gone, so she feels like she can take a chance on it. The character Maggie, was the assistant director for 26 years, and this is finally her chance to actually direct a show. It's really about all the characters awakening to new possibilities in their lives and opening up to those possibilities and running with them. It's very much about women of this time, but unfortunately, things haven't changed all that drastically since then, so I think it does carry a lot of relevance and also just the simple fact that we are technically still at war as a country, even though most of us are able to carry about as if that's not the case. This is very much a play where the presence of war is being felt and I think the contrast, to me, is almost very interesting in that this was a time

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period where everybody really pulled together as a country and everybody knew we were at war and everyone knew someone who was fighting overseas and the whole country really rallied together, whether it was scrap metal drives or rationing of food. The whole country was in that war and I think it's good to be reminded of that nowadays when it seems like a small percentage of our countrymen are fighting these war for us, and the rest of us are told to just go shopping and carry about our lives.

LS: What is your connection to Shakespeare's works, especially *The Henriad*, Shakespeare's play series following the rise of Prince Hal?

GB: I grew up loving Shakespeare; I don't know how many times as a kid I watched the VHS tape I'd recorded of Olivier's *King Lear*. I've had the pleasure of seeing a full *Henriad* at Trinity Rep and many productions of the individual plays. The Henry plays, particularly *Henry V*, felt like the perfect match for a theatre trying to rally the troops and the home front.

GG: In this show, Maggie tells Ellsworth about "the linger effect." What do you hope lingers with these audiences who come to *Into the Breeches*?

GB: With any play you hope that your characters will linger afterwards and will hang in the audience's memories, but in this case, this play ends on a note where they're about to do the play and I think that might create a bit of the linger effect because we know that something happens right after the play ends. The play ends with a beginning, so I think in that vein it will linger for an audience. There's a certain tragic air to the end of the play, I mean if you know the history of things, as far as women in the workforce in this time, they were all first told, "Don't get a job, stay at home as women, this is all men's work" and when the men all went away, suddenly the women were encouraged to work in the factories and to support the troops in that way, but once the men came back, the women were all fired and lost their jobs. So it's a time of flowering that I think this play shows, but for those of us who know the history, we know this flowering comes to an end in a few years. So I think there's also some tragic lingering in that effect.

LS: What do you hope audiences take away from this play?

GB: Although the script takes place in the '40s, my hope is that it resonates in our present day as well. *Breeches* depicts a time when our country pulled together in common sacrifice; a juxtaposition which I hope puts our current home-front efforts (or lack thereof) in sharp relief. In addition, while the play pokes fun at the sometimes absurd world of the theatre, I hope it also shares its unique ability to allow a person to become their best self while portraying someone else.

GG: What are you most excited for overall in this process?

GB: I think to see the play realized. It was commissioned a few years ago and we've had several workshops of it and it's been really exciting to see it get up on its feet just this last week. You can kind of get used to just reading a play out loud, sitting around a table. It's been great to finally see it realized and it's going to be really exciting once we get into the actual theatre space. We're in a rehearsal space as of right now and once we get into the actual theatre and see this huge set that's getting ready for use and all those things- it's going to be really fun.

LS: What are you working on next?

GB: Next up in September is *The Prince of Providence* at Trinity Rep, an adaptation of the book by Mike Stanton about the colorful and corrupt long-time Mayor of Rhode Island's capital city. I'm also working on a solo play, *Tender Age*, about child detention at the border and developing an operatic adaptation of *Grounded* at the Met with music by Jeanine Tesori.

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Plot Synopsis

This hilarious comedy is set in 1942, in Jackson, Mississippi, during World War II. While her husband fights in Europe, Maggie Dalton, played by Jessica Wilkinson, has been left in charge of the local theatre. Determined to move forward with the originally scheduled production of *The Henriad*- a combination of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* and *Henry V*, Maggie conceives of mounting a production with all of the roles being played by women. Initially skeptical of this concept, the company's diva, Celeste Fielding, played by Emily Wright, agrees to take part in the production at the thrill of portraying the leading character. Theatre board president, Ellsworth Snow, played by Ray McFarland, is unconvinced that this all-female cast will succeed and worries that this production will tarnish the theatre's reputation within the community. He eventually concedes after his wife, Winifred Snow, played by Jo Ann Robinson, expresses an interest in participating in the production. After sparsely attended auditions, two new faces join the novice cast: Grace, played by Annie Cleveland, and June, played by Sarah Beth Solop. A few unexpected cast members join the production, costumer Ida Green, played by Jasmine Neal, and stage manager Stuart Lasker, played by Evan McCarley. Sweetened by comedic and tender moments, the women solidify their way through rehearsals, longing for word from their missing loved ones, and growing into each of their characters, finding both the humor and heart of their work. As rehearsals progress, the cast confronts the injustices of the world: discrimination against women, African-Americans, and homosexuals. Yet through this production, the cast members inevitably awaken to a fresh perspective of what their world could be and find the courage to bravely face their new reality. Ultimately the cast brazens opening night with hope and conviction for a better world around them.

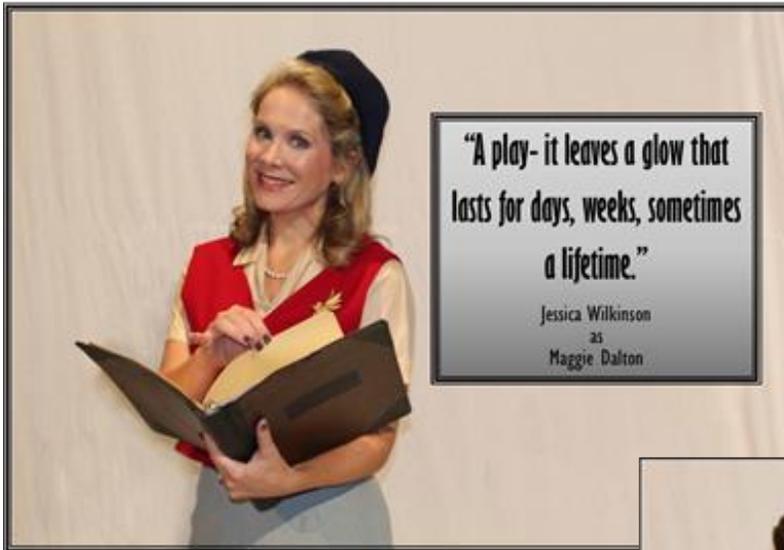
Major Themes:

Patriotism in WWII: How does military service compare to those on the home front? Is one more valuable or not? Is "better-ing" one's community by entertaining and enriching with culture/art as important as defending it?

Equality for Women, African-Americans and LGBT: World War II gave women (and African-Americans) opportunities that were previously denied them. How does a society reconcile with fighting against Nazi tyranny and discrimination of the world order, yet maintain segregated communities at home? How can the same opportunities be given to those with different socio-economic backgrounds? "Equal pay for equal work" is a common practice today, but how can opportunities be afforded to all when discrimination still exists in this country?

Responsibility to One's Family and the Community: In the context of Shakespeare's *Henry IV and V*, Henry outgrows his impish youth and becomes his country's leader to victory. How can theatres continue to inspire and entertain audiences and serve as a catalyst for change in the community? How can the needs of your loved ones supersede your own desires/needs?

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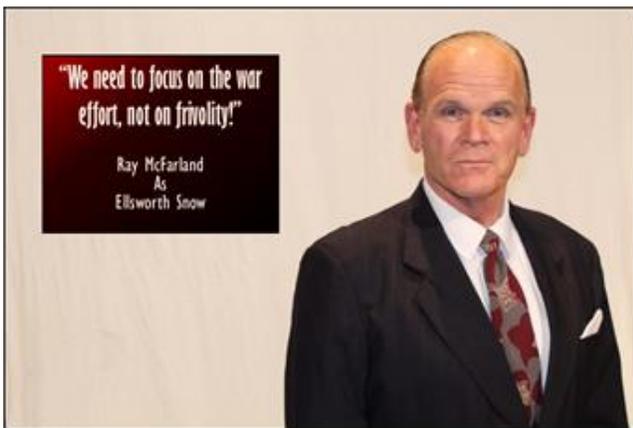


The Cast

Setting: Fall of 1942 in Jackson, Mississippi



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1940's Fashion Inspiration



From Costume Designer, Caleb Blackwell:
I usually find inspiration from period images that reflect the character in the show.
These are examples of some of the images.

Because of war-rationing, certain dress-making materials were not able to be used. Buttons, typically made out of metal, were made out of an early plastic or wood and was covered in fabric to match the dress. To conserve fabric, hemlines were shorter. Many women of the '40s were proficient in sewing and much of the dress-making was done at home. Dress patterns became more elaborate (pleating) and intricate. Typically, women wore less jewelry and used the patterns in the fabric for decoration.



New Stage Theatre: Season 54: A Literary Party

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World War II Statistics:

Estimated number of people serving in World War II worldwide: 1.9 billion

Number of Americans who served in World War II: 16.1 million

Average amount of time each U.S. military serviceman served overseas during World War II: 16 months

Estimated number of U.S. soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines killed in battle during World War II: 292,000

Deaths, in total, sustained by U.S. forces during World War II: 405,000

Estimated number of deaths by Military Forces in World War II:

British:	373,000	Civilians:	93,000
Japanese:	1.3 million	:	672,000
German:	3.5 million	:	780,000
Russian:	11 million	:	7 million

Estimated number of European Jews killed in the Holocaust: 6 million

Mississippi World War II Facts:

The State of Mississippi contained 1.63% of the population of the United States in 1940. They contributed 1.54% of the total number who entered the Army. Of these men and women who went to war, 2.32% did not return.

Total number of deaths of Mississippi servicemen who died in combat or combat related injuries:

Army: 3,555

Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard: 1616

Counties with the largest Army casualties: Hinds (Jackson), Harrison (Gulfport), Lauderdale (Meridian) and Lee (Tupelo)

Interesting Fact:

The town of D'Lo, Mississippi, sent proportionally more men to serve in World War II than any other town in the country, which was literally every eligible man in town.

Guided Questions:

What is Patriotism? How does it compare to Nationalism, and why?

What does it mean to "serve to your country"? What are various ways you can be in service to your country?

Try and name all the military deployments/operations the United States is currently involved in across the globe. As a class, discuss how and why the United States became involved in each conflict and what is the strategic outcome for the United States .

Has support on the home-front changed from World War II, and why do you think that is?

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Mississippi References in *Into the Breeches!*



Biloxi Daily Herald



Jackson Advocate



Jackson Daily News



Clarion- Ledger



The City Auditorium, Jackson, MS (1930s)



Edwards, MS: Home of the Southern Christian Institute, now merged with Tougaloo College



Bogue Chitto



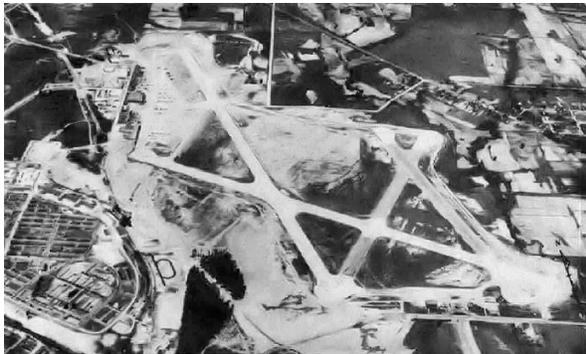
Jitney Jungle, a Jackson grocery store

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Camp Shelby

On May 1943, 442nd Regimental Combat Team begins training at Camp Shelby. Composed of Japanese Americans, mostly from internment camps, became the most highly decorated unit of its size in U.S. military history, serving in North Africa, Italy, and Europe.



Hawkins Air Field, Jackson Air Base

On May 30, 1943, members of the African American 364th regiment were stationed at Camp Van Dorn. Refusing to be segregated at the camp and while visiting the nearby town of Centreville, MS, a member of the 364th, Private William Walker, was killed by a local sheriff. Tensions sparked riots among his regiment, many arguing that German POWs were treated better than the enlisted African American soldiers. In December, the 364th were sent to the Aleutian Islands, where they performed garrison duty for the remainder of the war.



Member of the 364th African-American Regiment

*"Goodbye to the days of the jig and shine boy;
And hello, brother.
We will live with you, work with you,
And sing in your songs your sorrow.
We will weep for your dead as we mourn our own,
And place our blood beside yours upon the altar"*

– Ida to Stuart, Act One, Scene Seven

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Important Events of 1941-1942: Mississippi and the World Timeline

1941

Eudora Welty publishes first collection of short stories titled *A Curtain of Green*.



President Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurated to third term.

Japanese naval forces attack Pearl Harbor.

Nine Mississippians were killed aboard the USS Arizona during the attack. United States declares war on Japan on December 8th, 1941.



Kessler Army Airfield activated in Biloxi.

Rationing of civilian goods begins in the United States. With America's entry into the war, certain goods and materials were rationed to ensure that adequate supplies were available for military production. Certain items could only be purchased if the buyer had the allotted ration stamps. The stamps were issued in booklets such as the one below.

1942

Sales of new cars are banned to save steel.

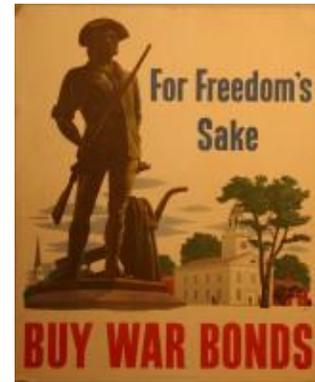


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January 16



Film actress Carole Lombard and her mother are among all 22 aboard TWA Flight 3 killed when the Douglas DC-3 plane crashes into Potosi Mountain near Las Vegas in Nevada while she is returning from a tour to promote the sale of war bonds. United States begins first of eight war bond drives to finance war effort.



January 26

The first American forces arrive in Europe, landing in Northern Ireland.

February 2

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs an executive order directing the internment of Japanese Americans and the seizure of their property.



February 19

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs executive order 9066 allowing the United States military to define areas as exclusionary zones. These zones affect the Japanese on the West Coast, and Germans and Italians primarily on the East Coast.

February 20

Lieutenant Edward O'Hare becomes America's first World War II flying ace.

February 22

President Franklin D. Roosevelt orders General Douglas MacArthur out of the Philippines as American defense of the nation collapses.

February 26

The 14th Academy Awards ceremony is held in Los Angeles; *How Green Was My Valley* wins Best Picture.



March 9

Executive order 9082 (February 28, 1942) reorganizes the United States Army into three major commands: Army Ground Forces, Army Air Forces, and Services of Supply, later redesignated Army Service Forces.

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April 3- May 6 Japanese forces begin an all-out assault on the United States and Filipino troops on the Bataan Peninsula. On Corregidor, the last American and Filipino forces in the Philippines surrender to the Japanese.

May 4 First German U-boat enters Gulf of Mexico. During 1942 and 1943, 24 U-boats patrolled the Gulf, sinking a total of 56 ships and damaging 14 others. Only one U-boat was sunk in the Gulf.

May 7 600 Dutch personnel arrive for training at Hawkins Field in Jackson. The Royal Netherlands Military Flying School was established in Jackson as a training base for Dutch airmen. It operated until February 1944. Over 40 Dutchmen are buried at Cedarlawn Cemetery near Hawkins Field due to training accidents.



May 14



Aaron Copland's "Lincoln Portrait" is performed for the first time by the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra.

May 15

In the United States, a bill creating the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) is signed into law.



May 20



The first African-American seamen are taken into the United States Navy. Out of the 16 million US soldiers who fought in World War II, there were about one million African-American soldiers. They fought in the Pacific, liberated Europe from the Nazis, yet served in strictly segregated units. Even blood banks were segregated.

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- June 4–7 World War II – Battle of Midway: The United States Navy defeats an Imperial Japanese Navy attack against Midway Atoll.
- June 7 World War II – Aleutian Islands Campaign: Japanese forces invade the Aleutian Islands of Alaska.
- June 13 The United States opens its Office of War Information, a propaganda center.
- July 4 WWII in the European Theater of Operations: U.S. Eighth Air Force flies its first inauspicious mission in Europe using borrowed British planes; six aircraft went out, only three came back.

- August 7 –
Nov. 15th WWII: Battle of Guadalcanal – USMC initiate the first American offensive of the war with a landing on Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. Battle of Cape Esperance: On the northwest coast of Guadalcanal, United States Navy ships intercept and defeat a Japanese fleet on their way to reinforce troops on the island. A naval battle near Guadalcanal starts between Japanese and American forces. Although the United States Navy suffers heavy losses, it retains control of Guadalcanal.



October 28



The Alaska Highway is completed (also known as the Alcan Highway). However, the "highway" is not usable by general vehicles until 1943.

November 26

The movie *Casablanca* premieres at the Hollywood Theater in New York City.

December 1

Gasoline rationing begins in the United States.

December 2

Manhattan Project: Below the bleachers of Stagg Field at the University of Chicago, a team led by Enrico Fermi initiates the first self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction (a coded message, "The Italian navigator has landed in the new world" is then sent to U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt).



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The Henriad

Considered Shakespeare's finest achievement as a political writer, *The Henriad* is a series of history plays that spans from *Richard II*, through *Henry IV, Parts I & II*, and *Henry V*. These works offer an intimate portrait of power; the theatrical dimensions of politics and diplomacy and how public figures reconcile their public personas and private lives. *The Henriad* chronicles the rise of the Lancaster branch of England's House of Plantagenet, by deposing his cousin Richard and gain the throne of England. Admired for his courage, the bad-tempered Hotspur raises a rebellion against Henry IV and claims the right to England's throne Henry V. Prince Hal defeats Hotspur in battle, and in turn, reunites him with his father, the King. Matured from his selfish, misspent youth, he abandons the wayward Falstaff to become the brave and intelligent King Henry V. Victorious in the Battle of Agincourt over the immense French army, Henry succeeds in bringing both countries together by his strategic marriage to the Princess of France, uniting the Lancaster rule over the thrones of both France and England. Shakespeare paints the portrait of a man who both inspires his troops by assuring them of eternal glory, yet who passes the night before battle among his wearied men, sharing in their fears and common humanity. The play is commonly interpreted as a call-to-arms and a celebration of war, heartening to those enduring hardship, yet critically harken to the bloodshed and aftermath of war.



An Introduction to Performing Shakespeare

Elizabethan and modern drama conceptualize drama in two different ways. In the context of modern drama, the actors pretend to be living lives on stage oblivious of the audience (hence, a fourth wall) and are encouraged to speak and behave naturally. In Shakespeare's time, theatrical conventions were quite different. The stage jutted out into an open yard with spectators on all three sides, with only daylight to illuminate the stage, and no curtain to conceal or reveal the main stage. Scenery was kept minimal, yet properties (or props) were used to indicate setting, such as a chair or stools to indicate a living room or tavern. The members of Elizabethan acting companies were all men, including the female roles. Women were not permitted on the stage during the reign of Queen Elizabeth or for many decades after.

The classical element of Shakespeare's poetry centers around the use of unrhymed iambic pentameter consisting of ten syllables with five stresses. Shakespeare often alternates between a four-beat line and a five-beat line. The rhythm depends on the size and arrangement of the words on the page. Shakespeare should not be approached with an air of caution. While overlooking the verse causes the actor to lose a certain flavor in the characters, yet as Maggie coaches June in *Breeches*, understanding and communicating the meaning of the line makes for a more compelling performance. Shakespeare's universality- his use of timeless and familiar themes- make contemporary productions of his works possible, like in *Breeches*, and needs only a director to tailor her needs specific to the production.

Shakespearean Speeches in *Into the Breeches!*

Act One, Scene Three

June as Lady Percy

Tell me, sweet Lord, what is't that takes from thee
Thy stomach, pleasure, and they golden sleep?
Thy spirit within thee has been so at war,
And thus hath so bestirred thee in they sleep,
That beads of sweat have stood upon thy brow
Like bubbles in a late-disturbed stream.
Some heavy business hath my lord in hand,
And I must know it, else he loves me not.

Act One, Scene Three

Grace as Henry V

Wherefore take heed how you impawn our person,
How you awake our sleeping sword of war:
We charge you, in the name of God, take heed;
For never two such kingdoms did contend
Without much fall of blood; whose guiltless drops
Are every one a woe, a sore complaint
'Gainst him whose wrong gives edge unto the swords
That make such waste in brief mortality.

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Act One, Scene Six

Grace as Henry IV

But wherefore do I tell these news to thee?

Why, Henry, do I tell thee of my foes,

Which art my nearest and dearest enemy?

Celeste as Henry V

Do not think so. You shall not find it so.

And God forgive them that so much have swayed

Your Majesty's good thoughts away from me!

I will redeem all this on Hotspur's head

And in the closing of some glorious day

Be bold to tell you that I am your son,

When I will wear a garment of all blood

And stain my favors in a bloody mask,

Which, washed away, shall scour my shame with it.

Grace as Henry IV

A hundred thousand rebels die in this!

Thou shalt have charge and sovereign trust herein.

Act One, Scene 7

Stuart as Hotspur

By heaven, methinks it were an easy leap

To pluck bright honor from the pale-faced moon,

Or dive into the bottom of the deep,

Where fathom line could never touch the ground,

And pluck up drowned honor by the locks,

So that he that doth redeem her hence might wear

Without corrival all her dignities.

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Act One, Scene Eight

Ida as Hotspur

For I profess not talking. Only this-
Let each man do his best. And here draw I
A sword, whose temper I intend to stain
With the best blood that I can meet withal
In the adventure of this perilous day.
Sound all the lofty instruments of war,
And by that music let us all embrace;
For heaven to earth, some of us never shall
A second time do such courtesy.

Act Two, Scene Four:

Grace as Henry V:

Fair Katherine, and most fair,
Will you vouchsafe to teach a soldier terms
Such as will enter at a lady's ear
And plead his love suit to her gentle heart?

June as Katherine

Your majesty shall mock at me. I cannot speak your England.

Grace as Henry V

O fair Katherine, if you will love me soundly with your
French heart, I will be glad to hear you confess it brokenly
With your English tongue. Do you like me, Kate?

June as Katherine

Pardonnez-moi, I cannot tell what is "like-me"

Grace as Henry V

An angel is like you, Kate, and you are like an angel.

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Act Two, Scene Five:

Ida as Hotspur:

O Harry, thou hast robbed me of my youth!
I better brook the loss of brittle life
Than those proud titles thou hast won of me;
They wound my thoughts worse than thy sword my flesh.
But thoughts, the slaves of life, and life, time's fool,
And time, that takes survey of all the world,
Must have a stop. O, I could prophesy,
But that the earthy and cold hand of death
Lies on my tongue. No, Hotspur, thou art dust,
And food for- (He dies.)

Grace as Henry V

For worms, brave Hotspur. Fare thee well, great heart!
Ill-weaved ambition, how much art thou shrunk!
When that this body did contain a spirit,
A kingdom for it was too small a bound;
But now two paces of the vilest earth
Is room enough: this earth that bears thee dead..



Coat of Arms of Henry V

Iambic Pentameter Guide

(|) to divide the feet

(/) stressed syllable

(~) unstressed syllable

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Additional Resources:

Trinity Rep Study Guide: *Into the Breeches!*

Trinity Rep's Education Department, Fatima Faris and Gillian Gurganus.

Mississippi Department of Archives and History:

Lesson Plans: *Mississippi at War, Wartime Roles, Workplace Culture Resource Packet*

Mississippi Timeline- 1941-1942

African-American GIs of WWII: Fighting for Democracy Abroad and at Home

Maria Hohn, The Conversation. February 9th, 2017.

The Player Kings: On Shakespeare's Henriad

Guy Patrick Cunningham. Los Angeles Review of Books. May 29, 2016.

Knitting for Victory- World War II

Paula Becker. HistoryLink.org Essay 5722. August 19, 2004.

The Inspiration behind Into the Breeches! Playwright George Brant in Conversation with Dramaturg Lauren Shouse, *Into the Breeches!* Study Guide, Northlight Theatre. May 16, 2019.

Mississippi.. Believe It! *Patriotism* Study Guide www.mississippibelieveit.com

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Teacher Evaluation Form for *Into the Breeches!*

Name: _____ School: _____

What is your overall reaction to the production?

How would you rate the production values of the performance (costumes, set, props, lighting, special effects)?

How did your students react to the production?

Please comment on the educational value of the program.

What is your overall reaction to the question and answer (talk-back) session?

How did you hear about New Stage's production of *Into the Breeches*? What other plays would you like your students to see?

How could this Study Guide be more effective for use in your classroom? Please explain.

Please have your students fill out the enclosed student evaluation forms. We want to hear from them too! Evaluations not only help us improve our programming, but help us find sponsorship for bringing quality theatre to you!! Thank you for your continued support!

Please return this form with any additional comments to:

New Stage Theatre Education

1100 Carlisle Street, Jackson, MS 39202, or email at: education@newstagetheatre.com

NEW STAGE THEATRE EDUCATION
STUDY GUIDE: INTO THE BREECHES!

Student Evaluation Form- *Into the Breeches!*

Name: _____ School: _____

What was your overall reaction to the play?

How would you rate the production values of the play (costumes, scenery, props, lighting, special effects)?

What was your favorite part of the play?

Did you learn anything from this production? If so, what?

Which character in the play did you most identify with? Why?

Have you ever seen professional theatre production at New Stage or elsewhere? Would you recommend a friend to see a production at New Stage and why?

What other stories would you enjoy seeing staged by live actors?

Other comments and observations:

Please return this form with any additional comments to:

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