#### PRODUCED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

JANUARY 1999

**Oscar Wilde** — the writer and conversationalist who is on trial for "gross indecency."

The following characters are played by eight actors who double in parts: **Edward Clarke** — the defense lawyer for Wilde.

Marquess of Queensberry — the father of Lord Alfred Douglas and the framer of the rules for boxing. Edward Carson — the lawyer for the prosecution.

**Lord Alfred Douglas** — "Bosie"; the object of Wilde's love.

The Judge (Sir Alfred Wills) — presiding judge at the trials who sentenced Wilde.

**George Bernard Shaw** — the English playwright who befriended Wilde and defended him.

**Sidney Wright** — porter at the Albemarle Club.

Frank Harris — Wilde's friend and biographer.

**Queen Victoria** — Queen of England who reigned during Wilde's life and signed the Criminal Law Amendment Act (the Gross Indecency Law) of 1895.

Moises Kaufman — the playwright. Professor Marvin Taylor — coeditor of the book, *Reading Wilde*. Charles Gill — junior counsel for the prosecution.

Alfred Taylor — proprietor of a commercial service introducing gentlemen to their "social inferiors." Charles Parker, William Parker,

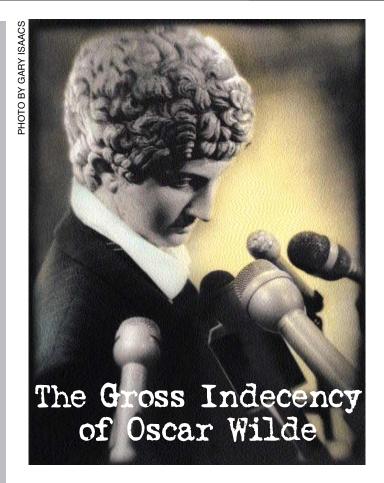
Alfred Wood, Fred Atkins, Sidney Mavor—the "rent boys" or social inferiors.

**Frank Lockwood** — prosecutor at the third trial.

Willie Wilde — Oscar's brother.

Speranza Wilde — Oscar's mother.

Constance Wilde — Oscar's wife.



"The truth is rarely pure and never simple."

—Oscar Wilde

In 1891 Oscar Wilde began an ill-fated friendship with Lord Alfred Douglas, whose father accused Wilde of "posing sodomite." Wilde sued the father for libel, but the case collapsed and Wilde himself was arrested and tried for homosexual offenses under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1895. The play is a stylized mutilayered docudrama that chronicles Wilde's trials. Some members of the cast act as a Greek chorus of narrators who read from various sources while other actors enact the varying accounts. From these readings the audience witnesses how Wilde went from fame to notoriety when he became the defendant in trials on morals charges.

Yet the play is about much more than one man's travails. Based on often-contradictory primary source materials, the play is also an exploration of the role of art and artist in society, the mores of Victorian society and the notion of class. It presents this history, not as one single authoritative narrative, but as a series of competing versions of the same story. "The audience is placed in a situation to decide not only if the character is right or wrong, but also how we construct stories, and hence how we construct truth." 1

he play takes place from 1895 through 1897 in the Old Bailey Central Criminal Court, London, England.

In politics, the British South Africa company territory south of Zambezi became Rhodesia; Armenians were being massacred in Turkey; Cuba fought Spain for its independence, and William McKinley was elected and inaugurated the 25th President of the United States.

In literature, Henry James wrote *The Middle Years*; H. G. Wells, *The Time Machine*; Anton Chekhov, *The Sea Gull* (Russian drama); Rudyard Kipling, *Captains Courageous*; Edmund Rostand, *Cyrano de Bergerac* (French drama); and George Bernard Shaw, *Candida* (British comedy).

In philosophy, Karl Marx wrote Volume three of *Das Kapital*, Havelock Ellis wrote *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* and the Nobel Prizes were established.

In art, the Art Nouveau style predominated in decoration; Rodin was working on his sculpture of Victor Hugo; Henri Rousseau painted *The Sleeping Gypsy*, and the first American comic strip, "The Katzenjammer Kids," was begun by Rudolph Dirks.

In music, Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake ballet premiered in Russia; Gustav Mahler wrote Symphony No. 2; Richard Strauss wrote the symphonic poems "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks" and "Also Sprach Zarathrustra," and Giacomo Puccini wrote the opera La Boheme.

In science and technology, Wilhelm Roentgen discovered X-rays; Marconi invented radio telegraphy; Sigmund Freud wrote *Studies in Hysteria*; August and Louis Lumiere invented a motion-picture camera, and J. J. Thomson discovered electrons.

In daily life, King C. Gillette invented the safety razor; the first professional football game was played in the United States at Latrobe, PA; the first modern Olympics were held in Athens, and Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was held in England in 1897.

## PLAYWRIGHT: MOISES KAUFMAN

"Because I'm Jewish and because I am gay and Latino and live in a society where I'm such an outsider, it has made me very aware of the structures we create."

#### —Moises Kaufman

oises Kaufman was born and raised in Caracas, Venezuela. Of Russian-Jewish descent, he attended a yeshiva (an Orthodox Jewish school) through high school. But his family took many trips to New York where the young man was exposed to the performing arts. At an international theatre festival in Caracas, he attended experimental works by Jerzy Grotowski, Tadeusz Kantor and Peter Brook.

He entered college in Venezuela and became a member of Thespis Theater Ensemble, one of Venezuela's pre-eminent experimental companies. He spent the next five years performing in it and toured Latin America and Europe. During that time he completed his studies, graduating as a business major.

In 1987, he moved to New York to undertake graduate studies in theatre. He joined the Tectonic Theater Project. As Tectonic's artistic director, he staged works of Tennessee Williams and Benjamin Britten. His first real New York acclaim came with his 1994 production of German playwright Franz Xaver Kroetz's *The Nest*, which was nominated for an Obie.

In 1995, someone gave him a copy of a book called *The Wit and Wisdom of Oscar Wilde*. The last ten pages of the book are trial transcripts. Kaufman found the beginnings of *Gross Indecency* there and was astounded that Wilde was "in a court of law having to defend and justify his art." He was also reading Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality*, which says the way people relate to art, sexuality and gender comes directly from the Victorian era.

This combination led Kaufman on a quest for the full transcripts of Wilde's trials—which he found five months later in the basement of The Strand bookstore in New York. After discovering competing versions of the same historical event, he decided to stage the play. It opened in the auditorium of Greenwich House School in early 1997. A rave review by Ben Brantley in the *New York Times* made business take off and the show moved to the off-Broadway Minetta Lane Theater in Greenwich Village where it played until September 1998.

"The great thing about art is not what it gives us, but what we become through it."

—Moises Kaufman

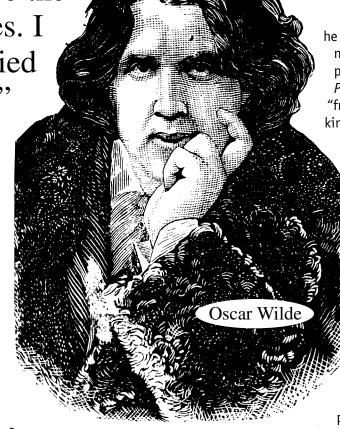
"I have the simplest tastes. I am always satisfied with the best."

## —Oscar Wilde

scar Wilde was born on October 16, 1854 in Dublin, Ireland, son of William Wilde, a pioneering and well-known doctor, and his wife, Jane Elgee, a poet who wrote under the name of "Speranza." He was educated at Portora Royal School In Enniskillen, Trinity College in Dublin, and Magdalen College, Oxford. At Oxford, he was influenced by John Ruskin, a critic of the Victorian era and an advocate of art as an essential part of life. When Ruskin went to Venice in 1876, the mantle of aesthetic mentor went to Walter Pater. Pater wrote Studies in the History of the Renaissance (1873) which stressed the overriding importance of sensation and that art should have no concern with morality. Pater had a lasting intellectual and aesthetic influence on Oscar who began to develop poses, positions, and speeches that "reflected rarefied tastes and a refined persona."5

In 1880, Wilde published *Poems* and his personality was so well known that Gilbert and Sullivan lampooned it with the character Bunthorne in their operetta *Patience*. When D'Oyly Carte produced *Patience* on Broadway, they asked Oscar to make a lecture tour of the United States with guaranteed fees and all expenses paid. Wilde was delighted with the idea and had an extraordinary set of costumes made for himself. In New York, at the Customs House, he pronounced, "I have nothing to declare—except my genius." 6

After his return to London in 1883.



0scar

met Constance

Lloyd and they married in 1884. They had two sons, Cyril and Vyvyan. Oscar was writing poetry, book reviews and was editor of Woman's World magazine. But by 1887, Oscar became bored with domesticity and began his "same sex" romance with a young man named Robert Ross. In 1891, he met Lord Alfred (Bosie) Douglas, one of the two beautiful homosexual sons of the Marguess of Queensberry and they began their notorious, doomed affair. Oddly enough, this was the most prolific time in his career; he wrote the novel The Picture of Dorian Gray (1891), as well as the plays Lady Windemere's Fan (1892), A Woman of No Importance (1893), An Ideal Husband (1895) and The Importance of Being Earnest (1895).

After his trial, Oscar was sentenced to spend two years in prison—first Pentonville, then Wandsworth and finally Reading Gaol. His greatest punishment was to be shut away from the world, ignored and forgotten, but

he also became ill and never fully recovered. In prison, he wrote *De Profundis* (Latin for "from the depths"), a kind of personal testament. Upon his release

in 1897, his wife Constance agreed to pay him an allowance and permit him to see his children if he did not see Lord Alfred again. But Bosie's letters promised him a home, love, affection and care. The passion was re-ignited and the two met in Naples. But Bosie forgot his promises and, when he

found Oscar had no money,

left.

In 1897, Oscar wrote one more work, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, which dealt with the cruelty of the penal society and how it emanates from a guilty society. He died in November 1900 and was buried in Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris with these words inscribed on his tomb:

"And alien tears will fill for him Pity's long-broken urn, For his mourners will be outcast men, And outcasts always mourn."

Oscar Wilde, *Ballad of Reading Gaol*.

# "There is no harm in deceiving society as long as she does not find you out——."

## —E. M. Forster. Arthur Snatchfold (1928)

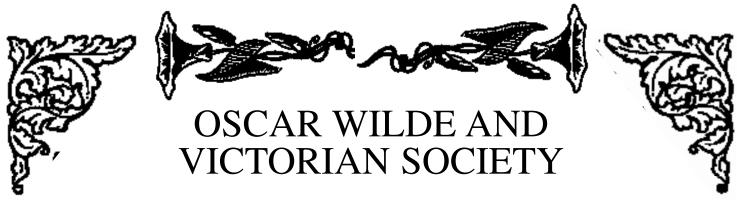
t the beginning of Act II of Gross Indecency, the characters of Moises Kaufman and Marvin Taylor discuss Wilde's trials. Taylor says that when Wilde heard the medical-legal discourse of homosexuality, he began to run into trouble at the trial because he did not consider himself to be in that category. But, "the trial itself created the modern homosexual as a social subject." Wilde defended his affection for young men on the grounds that "Plato made it the very basis of his philosophy and such as you find in the sonnets of Michelangelo and Shakespeare—there is nothing unnatural about it."8 But the prosecutor, Edward Carson, sought to reduce these arguments to screens for sodomy, to show Wilde as "a disruption—of class, of gender, of sexuality—and by that point had released these ideas (of homosexuality) into Western culture that are still there."9

According to Claude Summers's book, Gay Fictions, in the late 1890s in England, there was an increased visibility of homosexuals which provoked hostility and persecution. The hostility, in turn, provoked resistance. A group of writers, artists and philosophers formed a loosely organized group dedicated to the goal of securing sympathetic recognition of the homosexual impulse in this repressive society. They called themselves "Uranians" (a term that comes from Plato's Symposium) and attempted to explain homosexuality as a congenital condition related to gender confusion that reached its apex in classical Greece. Although the movement had little success in improving the legal status of homosexuals, it did contribute somewhat to a greater consciousness of homosexuals. In the late 1890s, a medical and legal study culminated in Havelock Ellis' and John Addington Symond's book, Sexual *Inversion*. It also led to a surfeit of poetry and fiction such as Gerard Manley Hopkin's poem, "Epithalamion" and A. E. Houseman's book, A Shropshire Lad.

Though Wilde refused to acknowledge his own homosexuality, he relished belonging to an illegal confederation. He enjoyed its connection with aestheticism and with socialism. To express his point of view, Wilde wrote *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Dorian is an alarmingly beautiful young man who does not limit himself to one sex. He ruins young men and a young woman alike. He kills the painter who does his portrait and loves him. Dorian then blackmails a friend, presumably by threatening to disclose homosexual offenses, into disposing of the corpse, and thereby causes the friend's suicide. Incidentally, Dorian is also pursued by a seducer, Lord Henry Wottan. Wilde was attacked for writing immorality in the book, but he had cleverly left Dorian's sin unspecified and he did not leave him unpunished. The morality is grandly symbolic when the youthful Dorian attacks his hideous, aging portrait and then dies, a debauched, deformed and despicable man.

■ilde's most important gay fiction is the poignant but exhilarating letter written in prison, De Profundis (1897). In the letter, Wilde breaks free of the bourgeois mold he had belittled yet clung to so tenaciously. Imprisoned because of his homosexuality, he develops a new insight into the nature of the relationship between the individual and society and discovers in his imagination a way of liberating himself from the oppression that he experienced and that he came to symbolize for others. As a result of the analysis and introspection caused by his pain and suffering, Wilde transformed himself from a victim into a martyr. He comes to symbolize both homosexual vulnerability and resistance. He will exclude himself from society and look to nature for comfort. In doing so, "Wilde emerges as Saint Oscar"  $^{10}$  and "the love that dare not speak its name" finally had one.  $^{11}$ 

- "—Any love is natural and beautiful that lies in a person's nature; only hypocrites would hold a man responsible for what he loves."
  - —Truman Capote, Other Voices, Other Rooms.



he 19th century was a time of paradox. On the one hand, there were great technological, industrial and manufacturing advancements which altered every aspect of daily life, including transportation, commerce and law. This progress heralded a wealth of new employment opportunities, speculative plans for financial gain and a general sense of well-being as overall living conditions improved. While the general population of Great Britain embraced these advancements, their behavior became more rigid than ever before. They adhered religiously to time-honored social values and rules of conduct. Each person, at whatever level in

meaning and purpose and individualism would flourish.

Wilde thoroughly believed in individualism, especially his own. His self-confidence, poise and sense of importance, his dress and manners, lent him an air of egotism that attracted some as well as repelled others. His creed of individualism allowed him to question established mores and social conventions. "He knew perfectly well that his ideas were shocking to the English provincials in their conventionality, piety, and conservatism, as he, an Irishman, was not. He had no intention of changing. They must change." 13

# "[Wilde] began, as he liked to say, as a lion in a den of Daniels. He ended by being thrown to the Christians."<sup>12</sup>

society, was aware of his or her place in that society and the social restrictions and obligations involved. If anyone was in doubt as to how to proceed, he or she could have read one of the many etiquette books published during the period.

However, the late 19th century produced a sense that life was there to be lived and that the life of the mind and spirit held wonderful possibilities. New theories in science (Charles Darwin's recently popularized evolutionary scheme) and education (the opening of women's colleges and the trade union movement) added to this confidence. There was a belief that a new environment could be created in which the human spirit would be nourished and would become a force capable of sustaining as well as beautifying a new culture. In this new culture, the human spirit would discover

n his comic melodramas, *Lady* Windemere's Fan, An Ideal ■ Husband, A Woman of No Importance and The Importance of Being Earnest, Wilde introduced everyone to a very exclusive and insular world. Because he had infiltrated this world, Wilde attacked the English establishment from within. He saw that English imperialism thrived by promoting the belief to their subjects that they, the conquerors, had achieved a more advanced state of civilization and should be used as an example. Wilde's comedies challenged such arrogance; as an Irishman, he

set about deconstructing Englishness.

■ e also satirized the tradition of the English stiff upper-lip. The more intensely a character feels and the greater his passion, the more outrageous the language became in an attempt to control and mask these passions. Outward calm and nonchalance were designed to hide inner turmoil and desperation from close investigation. This is especially apparent in the play The Importance of Being Earnest. The characters have a highly developed sense of their own self-importance and they wish to conduct themselves with due decorum. But everyone wears a mask: Algernon has a secret life; Jack has invented a necessary "friend," Ernest, who is never around, but he must run off to see; Gwendolen is submissive to her mother but is a determined to get her way; demure Cecily hides passionate feelings; and the redoubtable Lady Bracknell is a woman with a past. "The tone established by Wilde is of overbred boredom and of elegant desperation among a leisure class at its wit's end. Its members are all exponents of glittering style, but without any inner substance." <sup>14</sup>

In his article "The Invention of Oscar Wilde," Adam Gopnik suggests that Wilde was not tried for homosexuality alone, but for his view of Victorian society. He was intolerant of everything that was bourgeois, useful, rational, procreative, right-thinking and patriotic. "Wilde represented a constellation of fears and ideas which was anti-thetical to the representative middle-class values of the

"The supreme vice is shallowness."
—Oscar Wilde, *De Profundis* 

## OSCAR WILDE'S THEORY OF AESTHETICISM

"Art is the one thing that death cannot harm."

### —Oscar Wilde

The definition of aestheticism as given by the World Book Dictionary is: "acceptance of, or belief in beauty as the chief standard of value in human life, either irrespective of or underlying all moral or materialistic considerations."

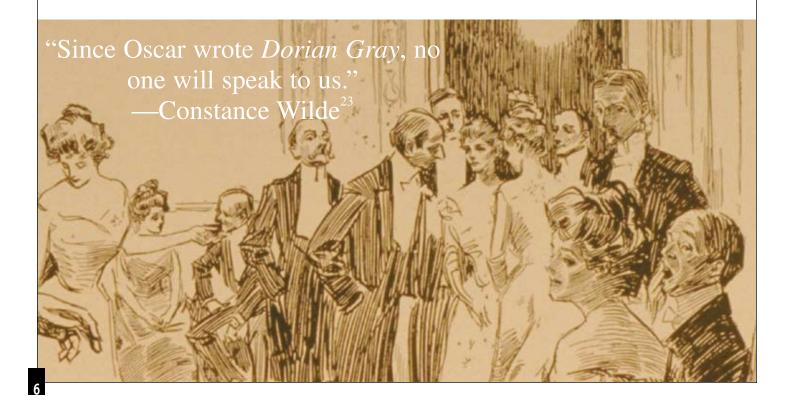
Oscar Wilde was a disciple of aesthetician Walter Pater, a lecturer at Oxford. Pater believed the theory that art was an end in itself, and art had no business preaching morals when it should be proclaiming beauty. Oscar took Pater's philosophy further, or, at least redefined it. In his essay, *The Critic as Artist*, Wilde says that the critic is the greatest of artists, because while an artist creates an object of art, it is up to the critic to explain in language the beauty he or she sees. "Language is the perfect expression of life" for Wilde and works of art were of the highest value only if they were appreciated by a critic sensitive to beauty Wilde was the preeminent critic-as-artist of his time. 16 "His studio was the Victorian public at large, and his self-promotion was one factor in bringing the debates about art into the public forum." 17

Between 1889 and 1895, the Aestheticism movement was revised and perfected. Wilde now called for a "higher ethic" <sup>18</sup> in which artistic freedom and full expression of personality were possible, along with a curious brand of "individualistic sympathy and narcissistic socialism." <sup>19</sup> To this he also added the

additional feature of the invasion of forbidden areas of thought and behavior.

Wilde gave an illustration of this new aestheticism. Dorian follows the advice of his seducer/mentor, Lord Henry Wotten, who says: "We are punished for our refusals. Every impulse that we strive to strangle broods in the mind, and poisons us. The body sins once, and has done with its sin, for action is a mode of purification... The only way to get rid of a temptation is to yield to it. Resist it and your soul grows sick." Thus, Dorian acquires every beautiful object of art he can and, when tired of that, enters into the life of acquiring "sensations." He goes about London ruining lives and reputations, engaging in nameless vices and loathsome practices. When and the way he dies make him the "first martyr to aestheticism." 21

The critics attacked the book as dull, tedious, self-advertising and immoral. Wilde replied with this remark in *The Critic as Artist*: "Self-denial is simply a method by which man arrests his progress and self-sacrifice is a survival of the mutilation of the savage, part of that old worship of pain which is so terrible a factor in the history of the world, and which even now takes its victims day by day..."<sup>22</sup> To Wilde, life imitated art and every pleasure, sinful or not, must be indulged according to his view of aestheticism.



## →OSCAR WILDE AND THE EPIGRAM ✓

n epigram is a short, pointed, or witty saying and Oscar Wilde was The literary genius and undisputed master of the genre. To be a successful epigrammist, one has to know the distinctive features. Epigrams demand immense knowledge, a demonstration of their author's mastery of language, texts, history and ideas. The second necessity is the audience's familiarity with the proverbial ideas on which it is based. Because an epigram is always short and memorable, its inclusion and alteration of already familiar ideas makes it all the more powerful. Third, epigrams gain additional authority by being repeated. Wilde, one of the most quoted writers in history, established this pattern by frequently quoting himself and using his best lines more than once. For example:

LORD ILLINGWORTH: All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy.

MRS. ALLONBY: No man does. That is his. (A Woman of No Importance. Act II, p. 487.)
ALGERNON: All women become like their mothers. That is their tragedy. No man does. That's his. (The Importance of Being Earnest. Act I, p. 371.

"The world is a stage, but the play is badly cast."

-Oscar Wilde

Ilde's plays feature characters who are practiced at epigrams. They are usually "dandies" who are witty and adept at conversation. They are aristocrats who are hiding some secret beneath a witty, flippant quote. The epigram then becomes a perfect symbol for Wilde's artistic game: "the genre within which he worked simultaneously asserts and effaces the personality, asserts individuality, and yet hides behind the authority of already-familiar modes of expression."<sup>24</sup>

alking was Wilde's vocation, writing his avocation. Those who knew him were unanimous that Oscar Wilde was the best conversationalist they'd ever met and some of his best "bon mots" went unrecorded. By his own choice, Wilde's commentary was more often witty than wise. Some of his epigrams were mere word play such as:

"Familiarity breeds consent."

"Nothing succeeds like
excess."

"It is better to be goodlooking than to be good."<sup>25</sup>

But because he was so intelligent, even Wilde's flip remarks implied insight. For all of his verbal acrobats, many of Wilde's observations displayed real wisdom and nuggets of deep thought.

"The reason we all like to think so well of others is that we are all afraid for ourselves. The basis of optimism is sheer terror."

"No man dies for what he knows to be true.

Men die for what they want to be true, for what some terror in their hearts tells them is not true."

"I am not a scrap ashamed of having been in prison. I am

horribly ashamed of the materialism of the life that brought me there. It was quite unworthy of an artist."<sup>26</sup>

It's interesting to speculate how Wilde and his unwritten works might have matured (a concept he loathed). But as another epigrammist remarked:

"Oscar Wilde had a good first act and a better second one, but missed the call to the third."<sup>27</sup> hen Oscar Wilde visited
America in 1882 as part of the
D'Oyly Carte promotion of
Patience, his subject for lectures was
"The English Renaissance." One anecdote from the tour is particularly
enlightening. When asked by a journalist in Leavenworth, Kansas, why he
thought the United States was such a
violent country, he replied: "Oh, I
know perfectly well why your country
is so violent. It is because your wallpaper is so ugly."<sup>29</sup>

arrived, he felt faint, but this was diagnosed as "light air" and the reception went forward. Led by the Mayor, H. A. W. Tabor, they visited the Matchless Mine. Wilde was lowered down in a bucket and, once at the bottom, found he was part of two ceremonies. One was that he should open a new shaft, named "The Oscar" in his honor with a silver drill. Later he was to remark: "I had hoped that in their grand simple way they would have offered me shares in 'The Oscar,'

the younger ones pulled out their revolvers and left to see if Jimmy [Whistler] was prowling about the saloon."33 Because they were silver miners, Wilde read them passages from the autobiography of the silversmith Benvenuto Cellini. When the miners asked Wilde why he had not brought Cellini along, he explained the man had been dead for some time, which elicited the inquiry, "Who shot him?"34 Asked later whether the miners had been rough and ready,

## OSCAR WILDE IN COLORADO

"(Wilde) knew, instinctively, how to sell himself, to present his character above his achievements: He was famous for being famous, a phenomenon with which we are now all too familiar."<sup>28</sup>

On the face of it, the remark seems a flippant epigram. But at the heart of it is part of Wilde's philosophy of aestheticism. A person is born into a world where, if he or she turns to look out of a window, he/she may see a nature whose every aspect is wholly beautiful. The only things that are not beautiful are the things made by man, because man is the only creature capable of "uglifying" the environment. The cumulative effect of such ugliness is to inherit a quilt, a terrible view of oneself. If we are capable of only marring this world, is it any wonder that we are violent? Carrying this argument to its logical end (for Wilde), quilt leads to aggression just as surely as self-hatred leads to hatred of others.

One of Wilde's best adventures took place in Leadville, Colorado. Wilde prepared himself by wearing baggy trousers under his usual green overcoat and a miner's black slouch hat. He climbed the 10,000 foot peaks by train and even joined the engineer in the cab where he and the fellow Irishman had a chat. When he

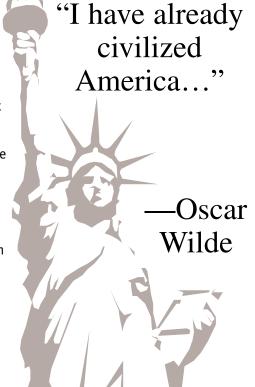
but in their artless, untutored fashion they did not."30

Then they had supper at the bottom of the mine. "The first course was whiskey, the second whiskey, the third whiskey, all the courses were whiskey, but they still called it supper." 31

A fter supper, they went to the Casino where Wilde saw a pianist playing in the corner. Over him was this notice: 'Please don't shoot the pianist; he is doing his best." Wilde remarked: "I was struck with this recognition of the fact that bad art merits the penalty of death, and I felt that in this remote city, where the aesthetic application of the revolver was clearly established in the case of music, my task would be much simplified..."<sup>32</sup>

The miners slept through his lecture about the early Florentines. But when he described one of Whistler's paintings as a nocturne in blue and gold, "they leaped to their feet and in their grand simple style swore that such things should not be. Some of

Wilde defended them as he would defend any ordinary people. "Ready, but not rough. They were polished and refined compared with the people I met in larger cities farther East..." 35 Wilde had thoroughly chioyed his trip to the Wild West.











## ROLE OF ART AND ARTIST IN SOCIETY

...art is one of those vaque spheres of human activity which escape any very precise definition. Art...causes us in some way or other to become conscious of [our] existence. ... Art is not necessarily a moral activity, and its tonic effect is made through the senses. It does not leave us without affecting us, and affecting us, according to some scale of value, for the better.

The virtue in art is shown by its survival value. Historically speaking, we cannot distinguish a civilization except by its art. At any rate, the more a civilization is subjected to the test of time, the more it is reduced to its works of art. The rest rots away."

(Read, Herbert. *To Hell with Culture*. New York: Schocken Books, 1963. P. 171-172.)

Wilde: Art is what makes the life of each citizen a sacrament. Art is what makes the life of the whole race immortal. ... The arts are the only civilizing influences in the world, and without them people are barbarians. An aesthetic education, which humanizes people, is far more important even for politicians than an economic education which does the opposite. Gill: Carson asked: Is that good for the young? Wilde: Anything is good that stimulates thought in

any age.

Trial.

Moises Kaufman. Gross

Indecency Act II, Second

#### DISCUSSION

What is art? Define art.

Why is art created? Why does art appear all through human history? How is art experienced? Through the senses? Through the mind? Does it stimulate thinking? How?

Does it humanize people? How?

Does it make us more conscious of our existence? Explain. What is the place of art in our lives? Would we be better off without it or does it, in fact, make our spirits soar? What would we be like without art?

#### **DEBATE**

Should citizens take time away from making practical contributions to society in order to pursue artistic endeavors? Should a child's education include art? Why?

#### **EPIGRAMS**

The epigram is a light-hearted, witty poem or statement, often satirical, dealing with a single thought or event and often ending with a clever turn of phrase.

From the Roman epigrammatist Martial:

You're rich and young, as all confess, And none denies your loveliness; But when we hear your boastful tongue, You're neither pretty, rich, nor young.

From The Webpage of the Roycrofters:

Audacity is not necessarily genius.

Those who can do; those who can't criticize.

Things are moving so fast now a days that people who say it can't be done are interrupted by some one doing it.

Progress often springs from doubt.

From Emily Dickenson:

Behind me - dips eternity

Before me - immortality

Myself - The term in between

Great hungers feed themselves but little hungers ail in vain.

#### WRITING ASSIGNMENT

Ask students to write their own epigrams:

- 1. about Oscar Wilde,
- 2. about the play experience,
- 3. about a current event,
- 4. about something they feel strongly about.

#### **GAMES**

#### I. Memories of Discrimination

Discrimination can occur on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, beliefs, race, age, skin color, ethnicity, physical size, ability, occupation, location, citizenship, income, or even style of dress. The favorite targets of discrimination tend to be people whom society fails to protect.

- 1. Begin by discussing examples of discrimination of each of the above mentioned categories.
- 2. Objectives of the game:
  - •recall situations in which you were a victim of discrimination;
  - •recognize the long-term effects of this discrimination;
  - •develop empathy for other victims of discrimination.

- 3. Form small groups; allow 30 minutes. A paper and pencil will be needed.
- 4. Players

Recall a personal experience of discrimination, write the incident down and your feelings about it.

Share the incident with your group. Is the memory still painful? Why?

Listen to other group members as they share their memories. What common feelings emerge? Fear? Loneliness? Isolation? What do these feelings tell you about the victims of discrimination?

After everyone has finished, ask each victim if he or she would act differently today and, if so, why? Does knowledge of discrimination empower the victim?

From Cech, Maureen. Globalsense: A Leader's Guide to Games for Change. California: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1995.

#### II. Expert Endowment

Several players leave the room. The class is asked for topics in which those players are "experts." The game begins as a talk show in which the "experts" will be interviewed. The host and perhaps co-host give the endowments by how they work the interview questions or ask the experts to give demonstrations. The experts try to take on their expertise with enthusiasm and fervor.

From Belt, Lynda and Stockley, Rebecca. Acting Through Improv: Improv through Theatresports. Seattle, Thespis Productions, 1995.

#### III. Dual Secret Endowment

Two Students. Each student leaves in turn. When A is out of the room B learns A's secret. When B is out of the room A learns B's secret. The goal of the scene is for each student with total honest interaction, to learn his or her own secret. Students should get a location and an activity to carry on during the scene.

Run scene for two minutes; students should start subtly and then become less discreet as the scene wears on.

From Belt, Lynda and Stockley, Rebecca. Acting Through Improv: Improv through Theatresports. Seattle, Thespis Productions, 1995.

## Notes

- 1. Kaufman, Los Angeles Times,
- p. 8.
- 2. Breslauer, p. 8.
- 3. Breslauer, p. 8.
- 4. Breslauer, p. 8.
- 5. Calloway and Colvin, p. 19.
- 6. Calloway and Colvin, p. 33.
- 7. Taylor and Dever, p. 33.
- 8. Taylor and Dever, p. 33.
- 9. Kaufman, p.36.
- 10. Summer, p. 21.
- 11. Douglan, Alfred
- 12. Chamberlin, p. 46.
- 13. Ellmann, p. 149.
- 14. Cave, p. 277.
- 15. Gopnick, p. 88.
- 16. Taylor and Dever, p. 43.
- 17. Taylor and Dever, p. 43.
- 18. Ellmann. p. 305.
- 19. Ellmann, p. 305.
- 20. Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray, p. 118.
- 21. Ellmann, p. 315.
- 22. Wilde, The Critic as Artist, p. 560.
- 23. Ellmann, p. 320.
- 24. Taylor and Dever, p. 13.
- 25. Keyes, p 7.
- 26. Keyes, p. 8.
- 27. Keyes, p. 14.
- 29. Fry, p. 55.
- 30. 28. Fry, p. 53.
- 31. Ellmann, p. 204.
- 32. Ellmann, p. 205. 33. Ellmann, p. 205
- 34. Ellmann, p. 205
- 35. Ellmann, p. 204.

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Inside Out is intended for students and teachers but may be enjoyed by audiences of all ages.



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