



Denver Center
Theatre Company

Inside Out

A STUDY GUIDE

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The Last Night of Ballyhoo

The *Last Night of Ballyhoo* takes place in Atlanta, Georgia in December of 1939. *Gone With the Wind* is in the throes of its premiere and Hitler is invading Poland, but Atlanta's German Jewish elite are much more concerned with Christmas and who is going to Ballyhoo, the Jewish social event of the season.

SUNNY:
**That's all
we wanted
—to be like
everybody
else.**

The Last Night of Ballyhoo,
p. 50.

Most concerned is the Freitag family: head-of-the-house bachelor Adolph; his widowed sister, Beulah (Boo) Levy; and their also widowed sister-in-law, Reba. Boo is bound and determined that Lala, her day-dreaming and rather unpopular daughter, attend Ballyhoo because she believes her chances to snag a socially acceptable husband are

becoming slim. Meanwhile, Adolph brings his new assistant, Joe Farkas, home for dinner. Brooklyn born and bred and distinctly of Eastern European Jewish heritage, Joe is several social rungs below the Freitags, in Boo's opinion.

Lala, however, is charmed by Joe and she hints broadly about being asked to Ballyhoo. But Joe is more interested in Sunny, Reba's daughter, who is home from Wellesley College for Christmas vacation.

This enrages Boo and the family is about to be pulled apart when another "gentleman caller," Peachy Weil, appears to save Lala and the family. It all sounds like a Southern family soap opera, but underneath lies a darker tone of prejudice and self-hatred. The family must face their collective pasts and, ultimately, re-examine who they are and what they really believe. ■

**Ballyhoo—noisy and
sensational way of
advertising.**
World Book Dictionary.



**BOO: Jewish
Christmas trees
don't have stars!**

The Last Night of Ballyhoo, p. 6.

THE PLAYWRIGHT ALFRED UHRY

“In Atlanta, Alfred didn’t know what a bagel was.”

—Dana Ivey, actress.¹

Alfred Uhry was born in 1936 in Atlanta, Georgia, the son of Ralph K., a furniture designer, and Alene, a social worker. He attended Brown University where he received his B.A. in 1958 and a year later married a teacher named Joanna Kellog. They have four daughters and live in New York City.

His early livelihood combined the careers of lyricist and teacher. From 1960 to 1963 he worked with composer Frank Loesser, and then taught English and drama at the private Calhoun High School in Manhattan until 1980. He taught lyric writing at New York University from 1985 to 1988 while he also worked on comedy scripts for television.

His first well-known work is *The Robber Bridegroom*, a rustic musical based on the novella by Mississippi writer Eudora Welty. Uhry wrote the book and lyrics, and his friend, Robert Waldman, wrote the music. It ran on Broadway for 150 performances during the 1976-77 season.

After *The Robber Bridegroom*, Uhry’s fortunes waned somewhat and he turned to teaching. He worked on other musicals with little success, so he decided it was time to sit down and write a play. Drawing upon his family’s history, he wrote about his cantankerous grandmother, a former schoolteacher, who continued driving a car long after she could do so safely and was finally forced to give up the driver’s seat to a black chauffeur. The play’s 25-year span covers the civil rights struggle from 1950 to 1970 and shows the changes in the relationship of two very different people, first very suspicious of each other, resolutely formal in their relations and finally, good friends. The play is, of course, *Driving Miss Daisy*, which won a Tony nomination for Best Play, the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1988 and an Oscar for best screenplay adaptation.

For his next play Uhry again drew on his family experiences—a bachelor uncle who lived with two married sisters and their children—and his own upbringing. “I was brought up with Christmas trees, Easter egg hunts—and my Jewish face....In our temple the music was Christmas hymns.”² The product was *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*, which won the Tony Award for the Best Play of 1997.

Mr. Uhry is once again working on a musical. This one is with Harold Prince, called *Parade*, which is based on the Leo Frank case in Atlanta in 1915. Once again the subject is the South, but “Why not? I’m Southern.”³

“It was not a prejudice (I had) but an ignorance, a hole where the Judaism should be.”⁴ ■

**But what is
“Ballyhoo?”
An annual
social event, it seems,
involving hay rides and
weenie roasts and
parties, and,
the last night,
a dance**



Alfred Uhry

JEWISH IMMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

“If you want the present to be different from the past, study the past.”

—Baruch Spinoza

Until 1836, Jewish immigration to America was a mere trickle, consisting of random individuals and families who, for various reasons, chose to leave their homelands and settle in the New World. But in that year began a relatively large-scale migration of Jews from Germany to America, largely because of oppressive social and economic restrictions coupled with a slump in trade that depressed the German economy. German, Austrian and Bavarian Jews continued to come to the United States in significant numbers until almost the end of the 19th century. They helped raise the Jewish population of the country to a quarter of a million by 1880. These immigrants from Central Europe settled not only on the Atlantic seaboard, but also in the West and South, setting up congregations in Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Louisville, Chicago, St. Louis and San Francisco.

Many of the German Jews who arrived in the 1830s had already broken with the tradition of Orthodox Jewry and had been influenced by the growing Reform movement in Germany and elsewhere on the continent. Actually in 1824, 47 members of the Orthodox congregation in Charleston, South Carolina petitioned its trustees to adopt a number of moderate changes in the synagogue ritual: shortening the services, saying some of the important Hebrew prayers in English, removal of references to the resurrection of the dead and a discussion in English on the scriptural reading of the week. When their petition was denied, they left the syna-

gogue and established a “Reformed Society of Israelites.” Within a short time, their membership quadrupled and to their abbreviated services in English they added instrumental music and worship with bared heads by the male members. Their statement of principles in 1831 shows how eager they were to conform their religious practices to what they regarded as the demands of the American environment. “They are their own teachers, drawing their knowledge from the Bible, and following only the laws of Moses, and those only as far as they can be adapted to the institutions of the society in which they live and enjoy the blessings of liberty.”⁵

The Reform movement soon spread to Baltimore, New York, Chicago, Cincinnati and other major cities. “Their early reforms were conscious attempts to break with the ghetto, achieve political equality, acquire



“We, who are the cultured and refined, constitute the minority—and shall be judged by the majority, by the Russian Jews, by the children of the Ghetto—Their children will far outnumber your children and your children, though educated, cultured, refined, will find themselves in the minority and judged by the Russian Jews.”

Rabbi William S. Friedman, Denver.⁷

esteem in the eyes of the gentile community, and retain the loyalty of an increasingly irreligious younger generation.”⁶ Their theoreticians wanted to abandon most of the 613 mitzvot (commandments) which had regulated Jewish life since the 16th century and had given them the inner strength and discipline to survive in hostile societies. The Reform wanted to retain only those precepts of religion and morality that were to be found in the laws of

Moses and prophetic idealism. They argued that Judaism must be free to adjust to changing conditions without being bound by historic law and medieval tradition. In 1885, the main tenets of American Reform Judaism were articulated in the Pittsburgh Platform. It rejected all Mosaic laws not adaptable to the views and habits of modern civilization, rejected the concepts of exile and return to the Holy Land (later changed) and denied the validity of bodily resurrection, heaven and hell.



**“When I first put my feet on the soil of America,
I was so disgusted that I wished I had stayed at home in Russia.
I left the Old Country because you couldn’t be a Jew over there and still live,
but I would rather be dead than be the kind of German Jew that brings
the Jewish name into disgrace by being a *goy* (non-Jew). That’s what hurts.
They parade around as Jews, but deep down in their
hearts they are worse than *goyim*!”**

—Anonymous Russian immigrant.⁸

About the only tenet that did not arouse the ire of the Orthodox Jews was upholding a belief in one God.

In 1881, Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe inaugurated a wholesale exodus from the Czarist empire. The new immigrants, who fled from the squalid, poverty-stricken shtetls (villages) of the Pale of Settlement (region in Russia where the Jews were allowed to live) and from Czarist persecution, were a different breed from the German and Central European Jews who had preceded them. Coming from areas of dense Jewish population in which a self-contained Jewish culture had long been maintained, they huddled together in the New World and tried to recreate as much as possible the life and culture they had known in the Old. They concentrated their settlements chiefly in the great cities of the eastern seaboard

because jobs were available there. Lacking entrepreneurial skills and ambitions, most of these immigrants, in the years immediately after their arrival in America, earned a meager livelihood in the factories and sweatshops of large American commercial centers.

The majority of these Eastern European Jews were quite orthodox in religious belief and practice. They established congregations of their own led by men who had considerable knowledge of Jewish law and tradition; their synagogues were virtual replicas of the ones left behind in the shtetl. Most important was the desire to maintain and preserve a strong sense of Jewish identity—be it only by the speaking of Yiddish (the language of Eastern European Jews made up of Hebrew, German, Polish and Russian vocabulary).

Even if the German Jews of the 1880s

and 1890s were prepared to invite the newcomers to join the Reform congregation, the invitation would not have been accepted by any significant number. As far as the Orthodox immigrants were concerned, the Reform synagogue, with its bare-headed worshipers, mixed choir, prayers and sermons in English, mingling of men and women, was not much different from a Christian church and hardly deserved the name of synagogue. Besides, they sensed the disdain of the bourgeois, semi-assimilated German Jews who regarded the influx of these masses of unwashed co-religionists with horror. The German Jews perceived the foreign dress, cacophonous speech and clinging to the old ways of the Russian and Polish “greenhorns” (recent immigrants) as a threat to their hard-won status. What ever would their gentile neighbors think? ■

“How long would you say, dear reader, it takes to make an American?”

—Mary Antin, *The Promised Land*, 1912.

To the German Jews the problem of Americanizing Eastern European Jews overshadowed every other problem for almost half a century. To solve it, the German Jews proceeded in a variety of ways and, to their credit, gave time and money to all kinds of efforts, some more successful than others.

One way was the establishment of settlement houses which helped to alleviate conditions in the slums of big cities where the Eastern European Jews lived. There the immigrant could attend classes in English, American history, and lectures on hygiene, morals, sports, marriage, civic responsibility—and the Republican party. They also helped foster specific talents. It was at the Educational Alliance in New York City that a young Eddie Cantor first

sang on stage, the sculptor Jacob Epstein took his first art lessons, and the young David Sarnoff learned enough English to write a letter to the Marconi Company suggesting a plan to make radios a household utility. Yet the air of condescension that accompanied the Alliance’s purpose often provoked its beneficiaries. The immigrants objected strenuously to a ban on speaking, reading, or writing Yiddish and were downright hostile when it was suggested they remove their children from “cheder” (Hebrew school) and send them to English classes at the Alliance.

Another hope for Americanization was the Hebrew Emigrant Aid Society whose idea it was to set up “farming colonies” in the United States. They bought up land in southwestern Louisiana, eastern Arkansas, South Dakota, and in Cotopaxi and Atwood, Colorado, for example. Alas, the land in Louisiana was flooded by the Mississippi River, the Arkansas property was a dense forest, the South Dakota farms were destroyed by prairie fires; and the Cotopaxi colony was a scam to recruit cheap immigrant labor for the mines in Leadville. The immigrants were isolated in small groups away from the rich, soul-nourishing centers of Jewish life, a fact which lowered their spirits and sapped their vitality. Thus, many Russian farm colonies “dragged out a short

unhappy existence and finally failed utterly.”⁹

In 1906, ships carrying Russian Jewish immigrants began to be diverted from New York and Philadelphia harbors to Gulf ports. The purpose was to “spread” the immigrants through small Jewish communities in the South and West. The intention was to persuade these communities to accept the entire responsibility of finding jobs for these immigrants and of settling them within the community. This was the Galveston Movement, an offshoot of the Industrial Removal Office (IRO), an offshoot of the Baron de Hirsch Fund, which was an offshoot of Jacob Schiff—two wealthy, influential German Jews. Usually agents from the IRO were sent across the country to confront American Jews with



pep talks and the fact that the “Jewish problem” in New York ought to be the concern of Jews in the entire country. Such “selling of Jews” seems reprehensible today, but sometimes it brought out the best in individuals in communities. People rallied to find the newcomers clothes, food and homes. As Morris Dubois wrote from Dayton, Ohio to the IRO in 1908: “They treat me like a father with children, they got me a good position, and I am making a good living. All the people in Dayton are nice, kind and friendly.”¹⁰

With the frenzied burst of industrial growth after 1873, the growth of railroads, the invention of the telephone, electric light, phonograph, motion pictures, the Eastern European Jewish pushcart peddler or menial worker secured better employment opportunities—and education, through the American public school system. The Russian immigrants of limited means became fatter, richer and more accepted in the community. Fortunately, the hostility between Jews of East and West European origin has waned with the passage of time. The prediction that the “Eastern European Jews will far outnumber us”¹¹ turned out to be accurate, for more than 85 per cent of present day American Jews are Eastern Europeans or their descendants. A philosophical Yiddish expression sums it up best: “Azoy geyt es,” “that’s the way it goes.”¹² ■

ASSIMILATION—OR NOT?

T H E H I S T O R Y O F THE JEWS IN ATLANTA

In 1836 the future site of Atlanta was a virgin wilderness, but the town first called Marthasville was a creation of the railroads, a by-product of Georgia's search for a way to import foodstuffs from the West and transport cotton to the North. The first Jews who settled there in the 1840s were ambitious and independent men, Jacob Haas and Henri Levi. Both from Germany, they set up a dry-goods business. More people came and by 1850, Atlanta's Jewish population had grown to 26. In 1862, the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation was organized by 30 families and they worshiped in the Masonic Hall.

The Civil War was a watershed in the evolution of Atlanta and her Jewish community. The War stimulated manufacturing, doubled the population within four years, and resulted in the city's destruction and subsequent rebirth as a major regional center. Particularly after the war, the ravaged and bankrupt South desperately needed goods and capital, which Jewish merchants were willing to supply. Although suspicion of Jews as religious and cultural aliens arose, they were respected for their "renowned business capacity" and were welcomed by New South advocates of commercial growth.¹³ By 1875, the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation was able to build its synagogue, and the affluent German Jews settled nearby.

For the first few years of its existence, the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation adhered to the traditional ritual. Men and women sat separately; the service was conducted in Hebrew and there was no instrumental music. But after its first leader, Isaac Leaser, died in 1868, the congregation fell under the influence of rabbis from the Reform movement.

By the 1880s, Saturday Sabbath services were slimly attended (merchants did business that day); the dietary laws fell into disuse because there were too

few Jews to support a kosher meat market; forbidden foods like ham and shellfish were consumed in public and the congregation of the Hebrew Benevolent Congregation had changed. In addition, the influx of more than 500 Russian Jews threatened the status of the already acculturated German Jews. They "consciously endeavored to set themselves off from their Orthodox brethren and rushed to embrace American cultural forms. They found an ideal spokesman in Rabbi David Marx."¹⁴

"The gates of Atlanta are open to all (Jewish) people—and I think I speak for the city when I say they are welcome."

—Mayor James W. English of Atlanta, 1882.

David Marx was 23 when he assumed the rabbinate and for the next 50 years, he led his congregation (now called the Temple) along the path of radical Reform. The ritual robes and prayer shawls were discarded; holiday observance was reduced to one day instead of two; men worshipped with bare heads and hardly anyone observed the Yom Kippur fast. In 1904, he instituted a Sunday service for those who could not attend Friday night or Saturday morning services. Like his predecessors, Marx was committed to the survival of Judaism but stripped of "foreignism" like ritual or tradition. Under his leadership, the congregation conducted its affairs in tone and form resembling a liberal Protestantism. Despite declin-

ing participation, the congregation revered its rabbi. "He made them proud to be Jews, but their pride was not in the teachings of Judaism which made few demands upon their lives. It was rather in Marx's acceptance by the gentile community, which they interpreted as acceptance for themselves."¹⁵

At first the Temple welcomed the Russian Jews and provided them with kosher food, funds and other assistance to cover the cost of resettlement as well as a place to worship. However, the condescending Germans made the Russians uneasy and they looked upon the Reform service as impious. By 1887, they formed their own synagogue, Congregation Ahavoth Achim (Brotherly Love). With the influx of more Eastern European Jews at the end of the 19th century, the Germans and their children had been reduced to a minority by 1915. There were now six congregations, mirroring the community's deep economic, social and religious divisions.

The affluent German Jews who lived on the southern fringe of the business district pushed deeper into the southwest quarter of the city and co-existed along with their more numerous Gentile neighbors. In contrast, their Eastern European counterparts lived close to the railroad station on Decatur Street east of the center of the city. The demographic, economic and residential differences between the Germans and the Russians were reflected by an almost total absence of social interaction. The Germans (unable to break into gentile country clubs) formed the Standard Club in 1905. Established as a high class social club, it drew on bits of WASP culture—Christmas parties, golf courses, New Year's Eve balls—and Ballyhoo, a sort of German-Jewish debutante ball. Excluded from the German clubs, the Russian immigrants founded several social clubs, the most successful of which was the Progressive club, which in 1916, built a clubhouse

equipped with dining and billiard rooms, library, theatre, gymnasium and swimming pool.

Despite their differences, Jewish life went on fairly peacefully and profitably until 1913. In that year, Leo Frank, a well-to-do German Jew from Brooklyn who was superintendent of his uncle's National Pencil Company, member of the Temple and Standard Club, was accused of murdering Mary Phagen, a 14-year-old factory worker and daughter of a dispossessed tenant farmer. The trial and its aftermath was perhaps the worst example of anti-Semitism in American history. The trial carried overtones of political ambition in that the state's prosecutor, Solicitor General Hugh Dorsey, used it as a vehicle for his own advancement. In addition, the gentile community, always suspicious, began to view the outsiders as threats to the purity of Southern blood and values. With some evidence suppressed and some manufactured, the prosecution managed to convince the jury. It needed only four hours to find Frank guilty and sentence him to hang. Frank's subsequent appeals were rejected by the Georgia courts and his lawyers finally petitioned Governor Slaton. Slaton, a popular governor, reviewed the evidence and, convinced that Frank was innocent, commuted his sentence to life imprisonment and confided to friends a full pardon would be forthcoming. Although most newspapers approved of Slaton's action, the commutation produced violent protest in Georgia. Mobs of several thousand armed men marched on Slaton's home but were repulsed by the state militia. Threatened with



“It would take another generation and the shared agony of the Holocaust before a divided community became whole.”¹⁷

lynching, Slaton left the state. But for Frank, the consequences of commutation were fatal. Eight weeks after he was transferred to the state prison farm, he was abducted by 25 men calling themselves the Knights of Mary Phagen. They hung him from a tree not far from Mary's home in Marietta, Georgia. Though their identities were known, none of the lynching party was ever brought to justice.

The turmoil engendered by the Leo Frank case affected the Jews of Atlanta more than those of any other community. The Russians, who accepted anti-Semitism as a fact of life and had less

contact with gentiles, were less concerned by the manifestations of prejudice than the acculturated Germans. The Germans became acutely self-conscious and endeavored to maintain a low profile. Aware of Southern sensitivity to outside opinion, local Jews attempted unsuccessfully to restrain Northern observations about Georgia justice and anti-Semitism. For several decades the Frank case hung like a dark cloud over the Jewish community, confirmation that economic success was no protection against bigotry. In 1925, a Canadian journalist uncovered new evidence documenting Frank's innocence, but prominent Atlanta Jews, fearing repercussions, persuaded the editors to suppress the article. When Warner Brothers in 1937 released a film dealing with the case, the Jewish leaders petitioned the distributors not to show it in Atlanta. Nor were the after-effects confined to the local Jewish community. The Knights of Mary Phagen provided the nucleus for a revived Ku Klux Klan—and gave final impetus to the establishment of the Anti-

Defamation League, a Jewish organization which deals with anti-Semitism.

“The German community wanted to disappear into the woodwork, and they turned inward to each other as if to have anything to do with us would endanger them. To tell the truth, we wanted to disappear, too, but we couldn't. So we just pulled our wagons in a circle and insulated ourselves from the goyim as much as we could.” ■
—Eastern European Jew on the Frank case.¹⁶

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN JEWS IN THE NORTH AND JEWS IN THE SOUTH

**“In New York,
I have found my
soul but without
my body, and in
Atlanta, a body
without a soul.”**

—An immigrant to Atlanta.¹⁸

In *The Lonely Days Were Sundays*, author, Eli N. Evans, says the differences between Jews in the South and Jews in the North lie in numbers. While New York is heavily populated by Jews, in the South Jews are a definite minority. To keep their numbers up, Jewish fathers in the South built businesses to keep their sons at home, while in the North, the seamstresses and tailors worked to get their children up and out of the ghettos and into Long Island. Thus, the Northern Jews were upwardly mobile; the Southern Jews wanted roots.

In *Turn to the South: Essays on Southern Jewry*, Stephen Whitfield thinks that in comparison to Northerners, Southern Jews are anti-intellectual. He notes the low rates of literacy and quotes Lenny Bruce who once said he could not imagine a nuclear physicist with a Southern accent. The fundamentalism, absolutism, irrationality and lack of realism have been the stigma of Southern culture; but, to be fair, the male character ideal for the Jew has first been the scholar, then later the business or professional man. This ideal is not met by a region who has produced Lester Maddox, Elvis Presley, Janis Joplin, Burt Reynolds and Jerry Lee Lewis, to name just a few.

Few in number and unobtrusive in



manner, most Southern Jews have seemed to want nothing more than to make a living. Their history can best be recognized as a business history and aside from this business success, Southern Jews were rarely conspicuous—preferring to merge into the landscape. Having won the right to be equal, most Jews showed no interest in being different, preferring to emulate their Protestant neighbors, if not to be assimilated by them.

Thus, this Southern sub-culture of Jews is concerned with good manners, and hospitality, and making a good impression. It is a society where “even non-acceptances are covered by gentili-

ty, good manners, and smiles.”¹⁹ In this respect they share a commonality with their Southern gentile neighbors. But there are also similarities which distinguish both groups from other Americans. Jews and Southerners know that an attachment to the land is important and that tradition may be a major factor in preserving group loyalties. Just as Southerners are fearful of outside influences from a desire to preserve their society (recognize the

effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction), so Jews have a distrust of all outsiders. Hundreds of years of Crusades, organized massacres, forced conversions and inquisitions have molded this distrust. Finally, there is a common bond in their sense of history, the disturbing weight of a collective past, the memory of defeat that caused so many dreams and ambitions to go unfulfilled. “Perhaps Southerners saw in Jews an adaptability, an elasticity, a sense of how to bend in order not to break, that offered lessons in survival.”²⁰ ■

“Jewish writing in America has a minority psychology to it; so does Southern writing. As my wife once said, ‘You’re just like Jews, you Southerners,’ and I think there’s some truth in that. This is reflected in the literature. There’s a certain insideness of the outsider...”

—Robert Penn Warren, *Interviews*, 1950-1978

“And I’ve appreciated everything people have done for me, to be kind to me and my Scarlett.”

—Margaret Mitchell,
at the premiere, Dec. 15, 1939.

The Atlanta premiere of David O. Selznick’s production of *Gone With the Wind* crowned the madness that had begun almost four years before with the publication of the book. Atlanta organizations began angling for the premiere and started planning parties and festivities, but as 1939 wore on, Selznick began discouraging the idea of a local opening. When he circulated the rumor in summer that the premiere was off, the citizenry, led by Atlanta matrons, went berserk. The ladies descended on Mayor Hartsfield’s office and their ire led the Mayor to announce to the press “that this was the worst outrage since Sherman burned the town.”²¹ The Mayor, the City Council and the Governor began bombarding Mr. Selznick, until he conceded and promised the event for December 15, 1939.

By late November the lunacy began. Governors of Southern states arrived with their entourages; regional literati swept into town along with local “yokels” from the countryside. Waitresses were decked out in hoop skirts and Confederate bunting decked public and private buildings. The facade of Loew’s Theater (site of the premiere) was transformed into a Greek Revival mansion.

The Mayor declared December 15 a city-wide holiday and the city went entirely mad. This event blotted out the stigma of Appamatox and rendered politics and the outside world irrelevant. The horrors of the war in Europe seemed fantasy beside the reality of Hollywood in the provinces.

Margaret Mitchell, the author of the book, tried to keep a low profile. She sent regrets to the Junior League that she could not attend the

Charity Ball on the 14th. She also squashed plans for a grand party in her honor. She did attend a luncheon given for her by her publisher, the MacMillan Company on the 14th, where she wrenched her back when she missed her chair and fell on the floor.

On the 15th, she went to a luncheon hosted by the Women’s Press Club of Atlanta. She was 40 minutes late and a fuming Clark Gable had to be quieted by a mint julep. In a simple lace-trimmed dress, she paled beside Vivian Leigh’s and Olivia de Havilland’s elegant, furred finery.

That evening Mitchell appeared at the premiere in a pink tulle gown with a bouffant skirt and tight bodice and pink bows in her hair. When Clark Gable appeared at the theater just before the author, he said to the crowd: “This night should belong to Margaret Mitchell.”²² But the author aroused little enthusiasm from the crowd compared to that given to the “glitterati” like Gable, Carole Lombard, Claudette Colbert and other stars. As the minked and ermined audience members were herded through the lobby to their seats, Margaret and her husband found themselves seated with the celebrities near the front. Her husband, John Marsh, sat next to Clark Gable.

As the houselights dimmed, Gable dozed, or so the rumor has it. He stirred, of course, at the intermission and was wide awake four hours later when the audience leaped to its feet yelling and screaming. Mayor Hartsfield then took the stage and named all the principals in the production. Finally he called on the author to come forward. Margaret was escorted to the stage by Gable, to a thunderous ovation and a few attempts at a Rebel yell. She made a simple speech, thanking all the taxi drivers, librarians, bankers, boys in filling stations, etc. She ended by praising David O. Selznick, saying: “He’s the man everyone of you cracked that joke about, ‘Oh well, he’ll wait till Shirley Temple grows up and she’ll play Scarlett.’”²³

“And so it ended: everyone went home, and tomorrow was another day.”²⁴ ■

GO NE WITH THE WIND



Activities

ETHNIC GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES

Divide into groups of three and look up the major migrations to the United States.

When did they occur?

Where did the people come from?

Where did the people settle?

Why did they come to the United States? (examples: famine, depression, war, oppression, other)

What were conditions like for them when they arrived?

What were the expectations of the people who came here?

Discussion:

As a class, discuss what you would leave behind (not material things) in the country of your origin?

Possible answers:

- A strong sense of community
- A history dating back hundreds or perhaps thousands of years
- A set of identifiable characteristics which were a source of pride
- A common written and spoken language
- Shared beliefs and customs

Now as a class discuss what your hopes for the future are.

- Religious freedom
- A better place to work and raise a family
- Educational opportunities
- Economic opportunities
- Freedom from oppression
- Adventure

Create two timelines from 1935 to 1945

One for the United States

One for the rest of the world

QUESTIONS

In 1939, the world was plunged into World War II. The United States officially joined the war in 1941.

Use history books, timelines, encyclopedias and historical maps to answer the following questions:

How did the war change the map of Europe? Asia?

What inventions were part of the war effort?

How did our own culture change before and after the war?

- changes in dress
- changes in jobs and those who performed them
- changes in a female's expectations
- changes in a man's expectations
- changes in music
- changes in art
- changes in mode of travel
- changes in social conditions
- changes in attitudes

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Find a family member or friend willing to be interviewed who was about your age in 1939.

1. Create a series of questions that will start the conversation. Don't feel that you have to stick with your questions; you may only need them to get started.

2. Bring a tape recorder or video camera.

3. After you have finished the interview, write your thoughts or tape your reflections on the differences between then and now.

You can use the same techniques to question an older relative about your ethnic heritage.

You are going to Ballyhoo or another social dance in 1939.

Find:

- the popular music
- dress for both women and men
- hairstyles
- dances
- style of makeup
- style of car

other forms of entertainment back then

Dot-Free Society

1 Everyone picks a piece of paper from a hat. Several pieces of the paper have little black dots on them.

2 The group must create a dot free society. Those with black dots should not be allowed to associate with those whose paper is blank. Walk around the room and talk to others to see if you can figure

out whether each player has a dot or not. Exclude the dots. Create a dot free part of the room.

3 The Moderator may stop the game at any time. Ask the class to define where the dot-free area is. Were there dots in the dot-free section? Discuss how it feels to be the odd man out.

CARD PARTY

You will need a deck a cards (or enough for each member of your class to have a card)

1. Everyone in the room selects a card from the deck.
2. Each student has a card which will give him or her status at the "party." Ace is the lowest; King is the highest. Each guest must show his/her card to the other guests by



- placing the card on his/her forehead, but he/she may not look at the card. Each guest is to react to the other guests according to his/her status (i.e. a King may not talk to a 3, but he would talk to a Queen). Let the party continue for a period time. Allow groups to begin to form. No player may tell the others what card they are holding.
3. Now have everyone line up in

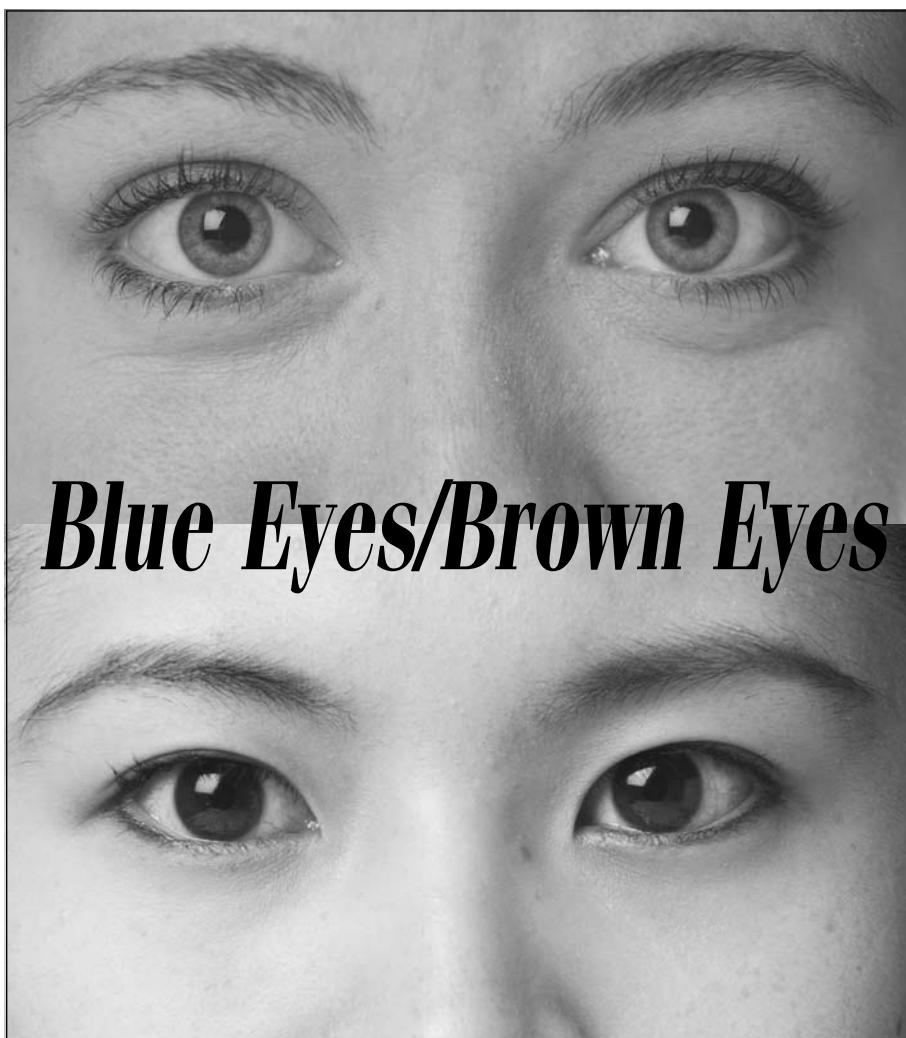


- the order in which they think they rank. Highest at the start of the line and lowest on the end.
4. Have everyone look at his/her card. Were they the rank they thought they were? What was it like to be a 2 or 3? King or Queen? Did you feel different? Did you want to be accepted into the other group? ■

1 Select one student with either blue eyes or brown eyes.

2 Inform that student that he/she can only allow classmates with the same shade of eye color into his/her group (blue or brown). Others are excluded from this group. The student is not to tell anyone that he/she is looking for eye color.

3 All the other students begin to realize that only certain people may join the group. There is a certain criteria one needs to join. All of the students must find out if they belong. They must ask and the group leaders will either accept



Blue Eyes/Brown Eyes

5 When all students are in the group or have been rejected by it, stop the game.

6 Ask the excluded students why they are not in the group.

7 Once the eye criteria is revealed ask the students: What was it like to be rejected for something you were not aware of or could not control? Did you feel different when you were accepted in the group? What was it like to watch

them or reject them.

4 Their job is to find the reason for their acceptance into or exclusion from the group.

others try to get in your group? Variation. Have two groups: one for blue and one for brown-eyed students.

TWO VIEWS OF 20TH CENTURY JEWS

"The Jewishness that he wore so lightly as one of the tall blond athletic winners must have spoken to us too... in our idolizing the Swede (Seymour Levov) and his unconscious oneness with America, I suppose there was a tinge of shame and self-rejection. Conflicting Jewish desires awakened by the sight of him were simultaneously becalmed by him; the contradiction in Jews who want to fit in and want to

stand out, who insist they are different and insist they are no different, resolved itself in the triumphant spectacle of this Swede who was actually only another of our neighborhood Seymours whose forebears had been Solomons and Sauls and who would themselves beget Stephens who would in turn beget Shawns. Where was the Jew in him? You couldn't find it and yet you knew it was there."

—Philip Roth,
American Pastoral, p. 20.

"In my family, Judaism meant only one thing: Orthodoxy. I come from an unusual American Orthodox family. The most unusual thing about it is that it

is still Orthodox. There is an ugly adage about American Jewry that I was brought up on, although not until years later did I realize it was not only ugly but false. The adage goes like this: The first generation is Orthodox, the second is Conservative, the third is Reform and the fourth is Christian. I am a third-generation American-born Orthodox Jew. ...If anything, over the generations, my family—which found refuge in America from the persecutions and economic hardships of Eastern Europe...was becoming more confident of its religious place in the world."

—Ari L. Goldman,
The Search for God at Harvard, p. 5-6.

Notes

1. Shewey, p. 55
2. Wichel, p.H5
3. Wichel, p. H27
4. Wichel, p. H5
5. Martin, p. 290
6. Hertzberg, p. 56
7. Manners, p. 112
8. Manners, p. 103
9. Manners, p. 178
10. Manners, p. 215
11. Manners, p. 301
12. Manners, p. 305
13. Hertzberg, p. 34
14. Hertzberg, p. 69
15. Hertzberg, p. 72
16. Evans, p. 275
17. Hertzberg, p.138
18. Evans, p. 64

19. Lavender, p. 107
20. Whitfield, p. 104
21. Pyron, p. 375
22. Pyron, p. 379
23. Pyron, p. 380
24. Pyron, p. 380

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