Costume Design and Production of An Enemy of the People

THESIS

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By

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Abstract

The Ohio State University Department of Theatre’s main stage production of *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen sheds a light on the egocentric lives we live in a polluted world. This production ran November 5, 2015 to November 15, 2015. With direction by Professor Lesley Ferris, scenic design by MFA Design candidate Joshua Quinlan, lighting design by MFA Design candidate Andy Baker, and sound design by undergraduate senior Michael Jake Lavender, we brought to life a unique telling of this layered story. This production of *An Enemy of the People* held a mirror to the audience and showed them that hypocrisy and self-serving natures still run rampant in 2015.

In accordance with the director’s concept provided by Professor Ferris, I designed and executed costumes that would help the audience to subconsciously bridge the events within the play to similar events of pollution being dealt with in 2015. I accomplished this by incorporating contemporary fashion elements of 2015 into the Victorian styles and silhouettes of 1882. I used preconceived notions that the audience may have of the Victorian era to my advantage; I dressed the characters at the top of the socio-economic status in strictly period clothing and added more contemporary fashion elements to the middle and lower class characters based upon his or her status.

During the design and production process, I encountered a few challenges including resolving the logistics of the added characters of the Chorus of Women and the Townspeople, sourcing fabric originally swatched in April (four months before
production began), budget concerns, in addition to the last-minute redesign of a major character’s costume. Despite these challenges, I enjoyed the journey of finding answers and solutions. This production has aided in my growth as a designer that will stay with me throughout my career. The following thesis will discuss my design process, character analysis and production process from conception through production realization as well as performances. My final chapter contains a self-evaluation of my work.
To all the women in my life who inspire me every day; I succeeded because of you.

To those who have loved and supported me throughout this journey.

And to my grandparents, who never doubted that I could do it.

You will always be in my heart.
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Vita

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2011.................................................Nunsense, Costume Designer,

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2012.................................................The Pirates of Penzance, Costume Designer,

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Chapter 1: The Producing Situation

The Ohio State University’s Department of Theatre’s production of *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen, a version by Rebecca Lenkiewicz, was produced in the autumn semester of 2015. Performances ran November 5\textsuperscript{th} through the 15\textsuperscript{th} in the Thurber Theatre located in the Drake Performance and Event Center at The Ohio State University. Dr. Lesley Ferris, Arts and Humanities Distinguished Professor of Theatre, directed the production. I designed the costumes, Joshua Quinlan, a third year scenic design graduate teaching assistant designed the scenery, and Andy Baker, a third year lighting design graduate teaching assistant designed the lighting for this production. Quinlan and Baker also designed this production for their theses. This was my second opportunity to collaborate with Quinlan and my first to collaborate with Baker. Michael Jake Lavender, a senior undergraduate student, designed the sound.

This drama is set in a fictional coastal town in southern Norway, and featured a cast of 21 actors. The initial breakdown of the cast was nine actors in the main cast, six actors in the Chorus of Women, and six actors portraying the Townspeople/Crew Members. The final cast list, after some actors withdrew or were added, consisted of nine actors in the main cast, four actors in the Chorus of Women, and eight actors playing the Townspeople/Crew Members, for a final total of 21. See Chapter 3 for more information on the cast and character breakdown.
This production required 30 costume changes (See Table 1: Costume Plot for a breakdown of each look). A costume change is an ensemble of clothing that has a slight variation, or all of the clothing pieces are different. For example, a costume with a jacket and without a jacket creates two different looks – or changes. An entirely different ensemble would create a third change. Thomas, Catherine, and Petra Stockmann each had three costume changes, Captain Horster, Hovstad, and Aslaksen each had two changes, and the rest of the cast had one costume.

The costumes materials budget for this production was $2,530. The costumes materials budget did not include the costumes for the actors playing the Townspeople and Crew Members; the actors cast in those particular roles provided their own clothing as costumes. More information on this topic is covered in Chapter 2.

The costumes for *An Enemy of the People*, as envisioned by Ferris and myself, were designed to be historically accurate to the time period while visually bridging 1882 with 2015 (See Appendix A: Director’s Concept for full directorial description). Together we decided that the residents of this fictional Norwegian coastal town were of a middle-class status. I used the Victorian period silhouettes as a point of departure for the costume design. From there, contemporary elements of fashion were incorporated into the period style with varying levels based upon the individual character’s socio-economic status. For example, the higher their socio-economic status of a particular character, the fewer contemporary elements were present in their costume, conversely the lower their status, the fewer period elements were present. On the extreme end of this spectrum, the Townspeople were dressed strictly in contemporary clothing. I took this direction to help
a modern audience connect with the issues within this play, which included: pollution, economic struggles, greed, collusion, and standing for what is right. I achieved this by creating designs that would capture what the modern audience believes Victorian clothing to be.

This production of *An Enemy of the People* was affected by the fact that it was produced in an academic institutional setting, as opposed to a professional setting. The Thurber Theatre, located in The Ohio State University’s Drake Performance and Event Center, opened in 1972 and was named after OSU graduate and writer James Thurber. This venue contains a proscenium arch stage which seats 600 people when at full capacity. Available resources for costume procurement and construction were influenced by the demands of other shows in production, as well as the facilities, staff, labor, skill, and funding available to create the costumes.

The theatre department costume studio is located on the ground floor of the Drake Performance and Event Center. The studio consists of a large, windowless workroom housing four cutting tables, three domestic sergers, one industrial serger, nine domestic sewing machines, one industrial sewing machine, many mannequins in various female and male sizes, as well as copious amounts of stock fabric, trims and notions.

Rebecca Turk, the costume studio manager, oversees the costume studio. Two other costume design graduate teaching assistants and one over hire stitcher worked part time in the studio to complete the costume construction and alterations needed for the production season. Additionally, numerous undergraduate students who are assigned to work in the studio for three hours a week for practical course credit, assisted in
completing any needed alterations. For this production, the graduate students served as cutters and first hands, while the students in the Intermediate Costume Construction class (TH 5531) served as stitchers under the supervision of Professor Kristine Kearney and studio manager, Rebecca Turk.

Production for An Enemy of the People began in August of 2015. This production was the third show of the season to open, following the RAW Theatre Production of Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays, which opened in late September, and the second production, Good Kids, which opened in mid-October. This construction timeline allowed all three productions to have ample time and attention in the studio. Fortunately, the overlap of production time was not a problem in the costume studio because a majority of the costume making was done by the students in the Intermediate Costume Construction course and no built costumes were needed for the other productions.

The following chapters consider the director’s concept, design scheme, character analysis, my design process, and evaluation of the design.
Chapter 2: The Production Concept and Design Scheme

Henrik Johan Ibsen (1828-1906) wrote An Enemy of the People in 1882 while he was living in Rome. It was written in response to the negative reception of Ghosts, written in 1881, and first produced in 1882. The public was appalled by the scandalous nature of Ghosts, because of “…the attack on religion, the defense of free love, the mention of incest and syphilis.” (Eyre, 2013) An Enemy of the People focuses on the issues of morality, truth, and personal conviction. A story based upon the pollution of the water in a small town, is a story that remains relevant and relatable. For example, as this production of An Enemy of the People prepared to open, the water crisis in Flint, Michigan garnered national attention in the United States. The crisis in Flint has been an issue for years, but has only gotten the attention and help it needs since gaining national attention. In an effort to save money, the city of Flint switched their water source in 2014. This switch caused the drinking water of the city to be contaminated with lead. Mayor Dayne Walling and other city officials urged citizens that the water was safe even when the water was brown, smelled and tasted badly. Even the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), who tested the water in early 2015, would not give a conclusive answer about the water. The lead levels in Flint’s water supply were not revealed until researchers from Virginia Tech tested the waters themselves. After this knowledge was
made public, the city of Flint was forced to deal with this problem (Yan, 2016). This situation is the perfect example of how Ibsen’s plays and messages still echo today.

Henrik Ibsen was a 19th Century Norwegian playwright and poet, born in 1828 to Knud Ibsen and Marichen Altenburg Ibsen, a merchant and a painter respectively. After the family fell on hard times, Ibsen pursued a career as a pharmacist, all the while writing poetry. While trying to matriculate into the University of Christiania (modern day Oslo) to become a physician, he wrote a version of his first play *Catiline* in 1848, when he was 20. He continued to write during his time at university. Even after he became a full time playwright, he did not produce any successful plays until the late 1850s with *The Vikings at Helgeland*. However, his thought-provoking plays that grappled with issues and stigmas that were ahead of his time were not initially well received; audiences and the press attacked him, calling his plays, “inartistic, and immoral…” (Van Laan, n.d.). In 1864 he left Norway, and would not return again for 27 years. After a self-imposed exile of living in numerous countries across Western Europe, Ibsen returned again to Christiania, where he chose to spend the remainder of his life. His breakthrough play was *A Doll’s House*, initially produced in Copenhagen in 1879 and premiered in London in 1889. Ibsen was influenced by the work and writings of both Freud and Nietzsche. These two men, innovators in the ways of decoding and explaining the human psyche, would influence Ibsen to create authentic, multifaceted characters who were driven by engrained motivations, not simply a playwright’s contrived plot. Ibsen is widely known as the “Father of Modern Drama”. I have not found when this term was coined, or by whom, however this is a commonly accepted perspective. Ibsen’s most well-known play is
arguably A Doll’s House. Next to Shakespeare, his plays are some of the most widely produced to this day. Similar to Shakespeare, Ibsen’s mastery of real, complex characters challenges actors to create a living, believable story.

Rebecca Lenkiewicz is a British actor turned playwright. Born in Devon, England, she is best known for her play Her Naked Skin (2008), produced at The National Theatre. After writing and producing a few of her own original works, Lenkiewicz tried her hand at adaptation, partnering with Abdulkareem Kasid to produce in 2006 The Soldier’s Tale, based upon the work by Igor Stravinsky and Charles Ferdinand Ramuz. Her adaptation of Henrik Ibsen’s An Enemy of the People was first staged at the Arcola Theatre in 2006. She would then go on to write an adaptation of Ibsen’s Ghosts in 2009. Lenkiewicz remains an active playwright in the London theatre community.

An Enemy of the People is a dramatic play in five acts. Act 1, 2, & 5 takes place in Thomas Stockmann’s living room, Act 3 takes place in the editorial office of The People’s Messenger, and Act 4 takes place in hall of Captain Horster’s house which is serving as a meeting place for the town meeting. In this The Ohio State University production, Dr. Thomas Stockmann was portrayed by Zack Meyer; Catherine Stockmann, Thomas’ wife, was portrayed by Ambre Shoneff; Petra Stockmann, Thomas’ daughter, was portrayed by Mandy Mitchell; Peter Stockmann, Thomas’ brother, was portrayed by Blake Edwards; and Morten Kiil, Catherine’s adoptive father, is portrayed by Benito Lara. Hovstad, editor of The People’s Messenger, was portrayed by A.J. Wright; Billing, writer for The People’s Messenger was portrayed by Joe Kopyt;
Aslaksen, type-setter for *The People’s Messenger*, was portrayed by Gabriel Simms; and Captain Horster, a sea captain, was portrayed by Isaiah Johnson. The Townspeople were portrayed by Natalie Davis, Kelsey Frustere, Mohamad Quteifan, Alex Wilson, and Sangchul “Sean” Woo. The Chorus of Women were portrayed by Leqi “Jackie” Zeng, Claire Snode, Daneyliz Rodriguez, and Abigail Johnson. The voices of Morten and Eilif Stockmann, the sons of Thomas and Catherine Stockmann, were provided by Daniel Barnes and Kavanagh McClatchy.

For this production, it was important to the director, Lesley Ferris, to take the Norwegian landscape into consideration. It influenced Ibsen greatly in his writings, as he explains:

> Anyone who wishes to understand me fully must know Norway. The spectacular but severe landscape which people have around them in the north, and the lonely, shut-off life----the houses often lie miles from each other---force them not to bother about other people, but only their own concerns, so that they become reflective and serious, they brood and doubt and often despair. In Norway every second man is a philosopher. And those dark winters, with the thick mists outside----ah, they long for the sun! (Meyer, 1971)

The first productions of *An Enemy of the People* were met with mixed reviews. When the production was performed in Paris and Barcelona in 1893, and Petrograd in 1905 (See Appendix A: Director’s Concept), the audiences were provoked into action during the town meeting scene in Act 4; storming the stage in support of Thomas Stockmann. Ferris wished to elicit the same feeling in a contemporary audience. As a way of accomplishing this, Ferris imagined visually blending 1882 (the setting of the play) and 2015. This blending becomes especially apparent in Act 4 when, during the
riot, the Townspeople (dressed completely in contemporary clothing) storm the stage and invade the Victorian setting of the Stockmann’s home. She saw this blending present in all aspects of the production’s technical design. Ferris envisioned, “a Thurber stage that is mobile, shifting, and has the ability to adapt to a new setting or act quickly.” (See Appendix A: Director’s Concept). This would later develop into fluid shifts between scenes and locations.

Scenic designer Joshua Quinlan used the lift on the orchestra pit to raise and lower the playing space that would serve as the office of *The People’s Messenger*, as well as Captain Horster’s house, in which the town meeting is held in Act 4. A false proscenium was created upstage of the actual proscenium to frame the Stockmann home. Walls were extended into the calipers. According to freedictionary.com calipers are described as, “in a theater, a stage having side arms, which may be used for acting, on both extreme sides of the main stage or apron”. These walls extended beyond the proscenium arch to create the doors for the entrance into *The People’s Messenger’s* office and workspace. The molding along the walls connected the spaces, making them separate but unified. Quinlan also experimented with horizontal lines, both implied and real to delineate the spaces.

Quinlan additionally experimented with the idea of fragmentation, overlapping the interior with an actual landscape early in the design process, but ultimately he chose to focus on the idea of incorporating a series of fragmented interior walls. Quinlan drew inspiration from the paintings of Vilhelm Hammershøi. Hammershøi was a Danish painter and one of Henrik Ibsen’s contemporaries. He is known for his restrained portraits
and minimalistic interiors. These elements can be seen in the stark nature of the painting; they are reserved and subtle, much like Victorian society. During a production meeting, Ferris mentioned that she wanted to work with the idea of the audience simultaneously seeing further action occurring beyond the walls of the Stockmann home, as well as the walls extended from the edge of the proscenium arch. Behind these walls the audience was able to see into the Stockmann’s foyer, Thomas’ study, as well as into the dining room. The Chorus of Women also used the transparency of the caliper walls to watch the actions within the Stockmann household.

Ferris knew from the start of the process that, in regard to costuming, she wanted to use the silhouettes of the late 1800s with a hint of modern day fashion. Early in the design process, Ferris and I discussed how much she wanted to depart from the 1882 style. We decided that employing a slightly earlier silhouette would reflect the poor financial state of the town. My approach to this design was to make the Victorian silhouette more accessible to a contemporary audience by incorporating contemporary fashion elements into the design. This approach reflected how I interpreted Ferris’ concept to give, “a suggestion of the period—selective choices versus full-blown realism.” (See Appendix A: Director’s Concept) The most noticeable example is that of the women, Catherine and Petra Stockmann. For their outfits, I decided that their corsets, normally used as an undergarment, would be worn on the outside of their clothing. I made this decision because there is a contemporary notion that Victorian corsets were worn on the outside of clothing, this is partially due to the contemporary “steampunk”
fashion trend. Pictured below in Figure 1 is inspiration from which I drew this corset look, as well as the specific look for Petra Stockmann’s costume.

I chose to dress the men in a combination of 1880s and modern fashion clothes that resembled late Victorian suits in the cut and fit of the jackets and trousers. I drew upon contemporary fashion styles found in stores that have similar styles to Victorian clothing in order to blend the two eras. For example, I looked for contemporary jackets with wider lapels and rounded hems to emulate a cutaway coat, which was popular in the late 1800s. The amount of modern clothing pieces on a character was determined by the individual’s status within the community. For example, Peter Stockmann, and Morten Kiil shared the highest status within the community. This status was achieved because of Peter’s relationship to power and Morten’s relationship to money. Because of this, they had the fewest contemporary fashion pieces and their clothing adhered strictly to the style of the time period.
This play is a drama with comedic elements; therefore I decided to employ more muted colors to reflect the mood and realism of the play. To create this color palette I drew strongly from images of the Norwegian landscape. Lesley Ferris provided the design team with a painting by Gabriele Münter titled *Staffelsee* (See Figure 2 below), from which to draw inspiration. I also used the painting *View Over Hallingdal* by Johan Christian Dahl (See Figure 3 below) as additional inspiration for my color palette. I used a range of earth tones (brown and tan) as well as colors associated with water (blues and purples) with red as an accent. I used red very selectively in my design. As red is a very strong color which can easily draw focus, I reserved it mainly for Dr. Thomas Stockmann, who is the most passionate character, and the primary focus within the play. My intent was to use fabrics that had large patterns or smaller and dense patterns with monochromatic colors to give a suggestion of depth to the fabric without drawing undue
attention. I did not receive much direct feedback in terms of requesting changes in the original costume designs; therefore there is little difference between the preliminary sketches and the final renderings. However one notable change was the color of Petra Stockmann’s jacket. I had originally designed it as a red/burgundy jacket to connect her strong convictions with those of her father’s. However, Ferris approached me about this choice, concerned that the jacket would draw too much focus on stage. After considering this concern and reviewing my fabric samples, I agreed with her. I then solidified the Stockmann family in their own color scheme of cool blues and purples.

Figure 2: Staffelsee by Gabriel Münter, 1920.
The Townspeople represented the people of today, blindly following public opinion. This representation was used to facilitate the blending of the time periods. The script calls for at least four people to play the Townspeople. In May of 2015, during one of the final production meetings before the end of the spring semester, Ferris wished to add four to five supplementary actors to this group. I was concerned that I would not have enough funds and means to costume these additional actors. For these reasons, it was agreed that the additional actors would be added under the condition that the actors wore their own clothes, pre-approved by me, as their costumes. The actors who portrayed these characters were positioned amongst the audience and became involved with the proceedings onstage during Act 4. Dressed in contemporary clothing, the presence of the Townspeople onstage during the Act 4 riot created a visual irony that was intended to emphasize the link between 1882 and 2015.
Ferris created the Chorus of Women (they are not contained in Lenkiewicz’ script) as an abstract concept; their presence represented a number of different ideas and commentaries. Ultimately, Ferris wanted the audience to develop his or her own impression of what the Chorus of Women meant. The concept and design of the Chorus of Women developed throughout the production process. At first the Chorus of Women did not have a clear purpose or meaning, as I understood them; Ferris began by simply describing the Women through adjectives. She wanted the Women to reflect “other-worldly, and ethereal” qualities; she wanted them to be ghostly. The Chorus of Women dealt mainly with movement rather than dialogue; they did not say a single word in the play. Their movement was “lingering”; they lingered in the corners, observing from the background. This added to the ghostly effect of their presence. This also gave the sense of a looming disaster to their presence. It is my interpretation that they represented the impending decision that had to be made about the waters, or the presence of the people who have died. The Chorus of Women physically interacted with Thomas Stockmann twice, each time handing him the document containing the confirmation of the polluted waters. There were moments wherein I also construed them as a manifestation of his conscience. This notion is further supported by the fact that the Chorus of Women only appeared within the Stockmann’s home. The Women are not present in Act 3, which takes place in the editorial office of The People’s Messenger, and they remain in the Stockmann’s home during the town meeting in Act 4. They appear only where he feels his knowledge is heard and accepted.
For their clothing, I was particularly influenced by Hammershøi’s painting *Interior* (See Figure 4 below). I also drew much of my inspiration from a photograph of a group of women who worked in a cotton mill in 1908 (See Figure 5 below). Ferris wanted to experiment with the idea that the women would possibly pour water on themselves throughout the play or simply appear as though they were wet. The idea was that as the events of the play came to its climax, the Chorus would appear progressively wetter, highlighting the presence of the conflict over the contaminated water.

Figure 4: *Interior* by Vilhelm Hammershøi, 1899
For the lighting design, Baker drew inspiration from Italian painter Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, as well as the Norwegian Painter Vilhelm Hammershøi. The influence of Caravaggio’s warm, dynamic lighting could be seen in the production, particularly the office of *The People’s Messenger*. His paintings give the air of scheming and secrets, which is present amongst the dealings of Hovstad and his work force. Baker and Quinlan worked closely together to create a transforming and dramatic environment. Recycled scrim was stretched over wooden frames and was used in place of solid walls. This was done to reflect the switch between the transparency of truth that Thomas wishes to promote and the opaque wall of lies that Peter is using to profit. Baker then used a combination of back and front lighting to create an alternating opaque and translucent wall surface, allowing the audience to see the action upstage. The lighting design
combined realistic lighting, practical lighting, and dramatic lighting to create different locations. Baker drew upon painter Vilhelm Hammershøi for inspiration for the Stockmann’s home. Stark, clean lighting was used to define the Stockmann’s home. The lighting was bright and gave the room a clear and serene feeling. The People’s Messenger’s office used more amber in the lighting to differentiate the space from the Stockmann’s home. Lighting was used for the scene transitions; each scene ended with a still tableau, which was characterized by stark, clean dramatic lighting.

The soundscape was designed by Michael Jake Lavender. The sound for An Enemy of the People created the atmosphere of a relaxing spa town. Edvard Grieg’s music was used in tandem with water sounds to create a tranquil mood amongst the chaos of the play. This music was used for the pre-show music and during act breaks. Clara Schumann’s classical music was used when the Chorus of Women were present. Schumann’s compositions aided in the Chorus of Women’s ghostly presence while framing the Chorus as benevolent beings. While Lavender successfully created this atmosphere reminiscent of the Norwegian landscape, he also crafted a realistic compilation of sounds and voices for the moments when Morten and Eilif, Stockmann’s small sons, can be heard offstage. Lavender’s complex composition of chanting, Morten and Eilif’s voices, musical instruments, water sounds, and sounds of destruction in Act 4 was integral in the alarming cacophony throughout the riot scene.

Combined, these design elements in tandem with the direction from Lesley Ferris, brought An Enemy of the People to life.
Chapter 3: Character Analysis

Within *An Enemy of the People*, Ibsen has created a cast of deeply intriguing, complex characters that come to life on the page. The people he creates in his plays are very dimensional; with strong beliefs, morals, and motivations. Ibsen’s plays revolutionized the way plays were written. The well-made play became popular in France in the early 1800s. “The technical formula of the well-made play… called for complex and highly artificial plotting, a build-up of suspense, a climactic scene in which all problems are resolved, and a happy ending” (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica). Ibsen restructured the well-made play, which has strict rules and organization, into a more realistic format. He discards soliloquies and asides for lifelike dialogue and pacing. Challenging the Victorian way of thinking, Ibsen often used his plays as an outlet for his own political views.

*An Enemy of the People* is a story that revolves around a fictional, small spa town located off the southern coast of Norway. Dr. Thomas Stockmann, the Medical Officer who oversees the spa wants to do what is right for the greater good of the people. But his decision as to what is best for the “greater good” is not necessarily perceived that way by others. Stockmann has discovered that the waters supplying the Baths are contaminated, making guests and locals sick. Stockmann shares this information with Hovstad, editor for the local newspaper, *The People’s Messenger*. Hovstad wants to print the story
immediately, but Stockmann convinces him to withhold the story until he has had a chance to talk to his brother, Peter Stockmann, who is the Mayor of the town and Chairman of the Baths Committee. Peter reveals that exposing the information about the water will cause a scandal that will cripple the town financially. Peter and the staff of *The People’s Messenger* then conspire to suppress Stockmann, even when he tries to hold a town meeting. But Stockmann will not back down and continues with a rant about how progressive men must stand alone on the path to what is right.

Dr. Thomas Stockmann, played by Zack Meyer, is a man who takes his work very seriously. He is intelligent, but he feels entitled and above everyone else in the community because of his schooling and idealism. He has a hard time bowing to the authority of the Mayor (Peter) and the Baths Committee. At the beginning of the play Stockmann is reasonable when it comes to withholding his suspicions about the polluted waters. But by the end of the play, in his frustration, he has turned to extreme opinions as to how society as a whole should function. He becomes so blinded by his pride and his idea of “the truth” (the fact that the Bath waters are contaminated and need to be tended to for the greater good) that he fails to see the bigger implications of what is at stake by revealing this information.

It seems to me to be a common practice in both Victorian and contemporary society to simply ignore issues that do not contribute to one’s own personal gain. However, Thomas Stockmann is a man who is inquisitive about the world around him, a man of science, who feels the need to share his knowledge and discoveries with others without benefit of personal gain. It is exactly this nature that begins the conflict in *An*
Enemy of the People. The article about the contaminated Bath waters was not the first story Thomas felt the need to share with The People’s Messenger, while the topics of those other stories are never explicitly stated, it can be implied that they were relatively mild in subject matter. However, the article about the contaminated water is the first story that would create a significant backlash within the community. While Thomas sees his work as a public service, his brother, Peter, believes he “…invite[s] controversy” (Ibsen, 2008, p.38). Peter calls Thomas controversial because he encourages the general public to be aware of what is going on and to argue about it. Since the town depends on the Baths as their main source of income, the last thing Peter wants is any trouble that would jeopardize the financial security of the town.

I wanted to highlight Thomas’ intellectual side for Acts 1 & 2. I used a deep blue cardigan and red bow tie to achieve this. This cardigan, aside from the costumes of the Chorus of Women, is the most modern article of clothing within the costume design. It is both modern and classic. For Acts 3 & 4 I chose a dark grey frock coat to reflect the dark turn Thomas’ personality has taken. Then finally, in Act 5, all attention is on him as he is dressed in a deep burgundy smoking jacket; he is broken down, but refuses to give in, even if it means potential ruin for his family.

Catherine Stockmann, Thomas’ wife, played by Ambre Shoneff, is a mother, a wife, and a daughter who cares about the people she loves. She is feminine, but level headed, strong, and selfless; everything a woman in the 1880’s is expected to be. For this reason I took a more traditional direction with her costume, choosing a conservative neckline and silhouette from a 1875 Norwegian dress (See Figure 6 below) to make her
appear older than the actress playing her daughter, Petra. Catherine’s personality is more conservative than her husband’s, but she supports him despite this. Thomas, employed in a steady and well-paying job at the Baths, feels that he can now buy the things that he was not able to provide for his family before obtaining his position at the spa. This would include the clothes for himself and his family. For example, this is why I chose to put more decoration on Catherine’s dress than she would have otherwise chosen. Thomas wants to provide what he was not able to before he received his position at the Baths.

Figure 6: Norwegian Folk Museum, 1875
Catherine is also a woman who often feels torn between her duties as a mother and as a wife. She wants to support her husband, but she has a responsibility to her children. She is a woman who understands the way the world is in 1882. Women do not have a voice in society and are expected to act in a certain way. Catherine feels helpless, without any control in her life, so she does the only thing she knows she can do: stand by her family. When faced with the idea of both Thomas and Petra being unemployed, Catherine pleads to Thomas, “You can make your own living! What about the boys, Thomas? And me? What about us?” (Ibsen, 2008, p.42)

Catherine is a sensible woman. Everyone else is concerned with his or her own problems, while Catherine is primarily concerned with her family. She may be perceived as cold when she tries to convince Thomas to not make a fuss over the Baths when Thomas is threatened with dismissal. She believes that one cannot take on the problems of the world and must focus on the safety and prosperity of one’s family.

Petra Stockmann, the daughter of Catherine and Thomas, as played by Many Mitchell, is very different from her mother. She is a schoolteacher; she loves learning, working, and being independent. Petra is a woman beyond her years; she has the mindset of a modern woman. She knows she is equally as intelligent as the men around her, if not more so, and understands that there are many things she cannot do because of her gender, but still pushes against the restraints society places upon her. She enjoys having a job, drinking with the men, and engaging in intellectual conversations, despite her mother’s disapproval. She is headstrong, loyal, intelligent, and a bit naïve about the world. Because of these characteristics, she is an idealist, similar to her father, Thomas. For Petra’s
costume I chose to dress her in an outfit that would mimic Thomas. Her grey/blue skirt and black over drape coordinated with a black corset and off-white blouse, which mimicked a man’s dress shirt, to give an educated appearance. The cut of her blue suede jacket was designed to give a masculine impression to the actress’ womanly figure.

Petra also has two younger brothers, Morten and Eilif. In the original script the two boys are seen onstage. However, in this production, the two boys never appear onstage, but they hold significance nonetheless. They represent what Thomas wants to protect, and the responsibility that Thomas Stockmann must take into account when he is faced with the ultimatum of dismissal if he does not retract his statements about the contaminated water. They also represent the future: the future generation, the future leaders, and the future minds. Thomas knows he must teach and protect that future.

Peter Stockmann, Mayor and Chairman of the Baths Committee, played by Blake Edwards, is the exact opposite of his brother, Thomas Stockmann. In addition to being Mayor, he is also billed as the Chief Constable. What makes this play particularly dramatic and intriguing is the fact that the protagonist and antagonist of the story are brothers. Family relationships always make matters less black and white, complicating and intensifying emotions.

Peter is a very arrogant man. There are many things he is proud of and he becomes upset and angry when he feels he is not given proper credit for what he does. He is proud to call himself pious and economical; he claims to lead a modest life, with simple meals: nothing decadent. Although he proclaims to lead a humble lifestyle without excess, which is expected of a man in his position in a struggling town, he is not reluctant
to flaunt his authority or money. He is proud of being the Mayor; he enjoys having influence over others, and he likes to keep the town in order. He likes being in charge and having people look to him for guidance on the state of the world. The employees of The People’s Messenger and the people of the town readily believe Peter when he opposes Thomas’ claims that the Bath waters are polluted. This is because Peter tells the employees of The People’s Messenger that the money for the Bath repairs would come from the taxpayers and not from the Baths Committee. Of course, this is an expense that the people of the town would not be able to support. Additionally, Peter claims that the Baths would have to completely close for approximately two years for the repairs to be completed, leaving the town without a source of income. Thomas however did not know this, but he is accused of lying to Hovstad and trying to lead the town to ruin.

I imagined that Peter grew up resenting Thomas for his intellect and carefree nature. Perhaps Peter is even envious of the woman Thomas married. There were moments when I felt Peter seemed to be flirting with Catherine, or perhaps it is simply that he admires her reserved nature. Living in the shadow of his intelligent younger brother brews dark feelings deep within Peter. The way that Peter and Thomas view the world differs greatly. He insists to Thomas in the midst of a heated argument, “The world doesn’t revolve around your science, it’s about money!” (Ibsen, 2008, p.39) Peter is a man who is deeply concerned about appearances as he enjoys flaunting his authority and position. Therefore I believe he would “wear” his money without being ostentatious. To reflect Peter’s influential position, I chose a clean-cut, pale grey cutaway coat with touches of red accents. I added gleaming gold accessories, and an official hat to present
him as the picture of authority and composure. Although he claims to be a man of humble means, it is only an impression he projects for the general public to retain his influential standing as Mayor, Chief Constable, and Chairman of the Baths Committee. Although he is presented as the antagonist of this story, it seems apparent that Peter truly believes that what he is doing is what is best for the town and its people, “I am the moral guardian of this town.” (Ibsen, 2008, p.37) To him, the only plausible answer is to suppress the information about the contaminated water and slowly work on repairs.

What Peter wears he protects closely; he keeps his conservative business suit and shoes pristine. But his money is most clearly seen in the fine quality of his accessories including his official Mayor’s hat and cane. The buttons on his coat, his pocket watch, and tiepin all would be made of quality materials.

Morten Kiil, Catherine’s foster father played by Benito Lara, is a Master Tanner at a local tannery that is located upstream from the town. He does not get along well with Thomas because Kiil’s views are more conservative than Thomas’ liberal advocate of education and change. Kiil does not think that progressive science, for example the idea of the existence of bacteria, is anything more than made up nonsense. Morten Kiil is a very traditional man. He hoards his wealth and does not display in his everyday dress and habits just how successful his business has been.

The people of the town consider Morten Kiil to be a badger with all of its characteristics. Badgers are considered assertive, impulsive, and cunning; however they are also looked down upon as a dirty animals. Once Morten Kiil realizes the damage that will be done to him and his business, he is quick to retaliate with the one thing he knows
best: money. He threatens to take away the inheritance meant for Catherine and her two sons. Thomas makes the mistake of not taking Kiil seriously resulting in Morten Kiil’s ultimatum, in Act 5, to waste Catherine’s inheritance if Thomas does not retract his statements that Kiil’s tannery is the main source of water pollution. As a ploy to get Thomas to recant his statements, Morten Kiil spends his entire fortune on purchasing stocks in the Baths after the news about the contaminated waters is made public. Once he purchased those stocks, all of the money that was meant for Catherine and the children is worth nothing. Morten Kiil then gives Catherine’s “inheritance” to Thomas, and by doing so Kiil physically puts the fate of Thomas and his family into Thomas’ hands. I dressed Kiil in a conservative black frock coat with black and grey striped pants; an outfit that is indicative of the period. That state of his clothing and the careless way that he dresses himself would give to the impression that he has had these clothes for the last 15 years.

Hovstad, played by A.J. Wright, is the editor for The People’s Messenger. He is the young editor who is out to prove himself. He is very self-centered and doesn’t care whom he has to hurt in order to sell papers. When the issue of the infected waters first occurs, Hovstad immediately turns the simple printing of an article into his own personal crusade against the “exclusive clique of bureaucratic civil servants” (Ibsen, 2008, p.27). While he acts as though he is Thomas’ friend, he very quickly turns on him once Peter places a hint of doubt into Hovstad’s mind. Hovstad, like many others, falls victim to the ignorant mob mentality. He is told a “truth” by Thomas, and then a differing “truth” by Peter, but never really checks the information for himself. Yes, he claims to have read the article that Thomas wrote, but how thoroughly did he read it if he was so quickly swayed
by Peter’s claims? I chose to dress Hovstad in rich, warm browns to not only mimic the runoff from the tanneries, but to also show that he is just as impure and fickle as the soil infecting the waters of the Baths. Additionally, Andy Baker wanted to create a warm look for The People’s Messenger’s office, so I chose colors that would be enhanced by the warm amber lighting.

Billing, played by Joe Kopyt, is a writer for The People’s Messenger. Billing is an opportunist. He does things simply for reaction. For example, in Act 3, it is revealed that Billing has applied for the position of secretary to the magistrate. He claims to have only done this so that when (not if) he is rejected, he will “have something to kick against… [Because]…Nothing ever happens here.” (Ibsen, 2008, p.51) It seems that this town is quiet and peaceful, as a spa town should be, not the exciting, scandalous, metropolitan town Billing would like it to be. Billing is not after the truth or behind any moral cause; he just wants to have something to occupy him for a time. Billing comes off as a bit of a drunk. He is bored with the slow pace of a small town and cannot wait for something, anything to happen. Once Peter addresses everyone at The People’s Messenger with the possibility that Thomas may have over exaggerated his claims that the Bath waters are contaminated, Billing is the first to jump on this development. He too falls willingly into the mob mentality. I chose to dress Billing in grey trousers, a brown plaid vest, a blue striped button down shirt, brown tie, and a modern blue and green plaid jacket. I chose to dress him in browns and greens to mimic the pollution in the waters.

Aslaksen, played by Gabriel Simms, is the type-setter for The People’s Messenger. He takes pride in his work and his principles. Aslaksen is a man of restraint;
he is the embodiment of self-control. He is a man who has just enough in life; just enough food, money, and clothes; he does not indulge in luxuries. He is a member of the Board of the Temperance Society and Chairman of the Property Owner’s Association; he prides himself on his community service and leadership roles and likes to look presentable. Like Hovstad and Billing, Aslaksen is easily swayed by authority figures. Until this particular incident, Aslaksen openly shows and announces his support for Thomas Stockmann, but just as easily and quickly turns on him. He claims to be loyal to the people of the town and their interests, so it is not surprising that he believes Peter Stockmann when he tells *The People’s Messenger* that Thomas was exaggerating the situation. I chose to dress Aslaksen in brown trousers, a striped button down shirt, blue vest, brown tie, and a modern brown and green plaid jacket; for when he is working at *The People’s Messenger* he has a inked apron and sleeve guards. I chose to dress Aslaksen in browns and greens not only to connect him with the other employees at *The People’s Messenger*, but to also mimic the polluted waters for the Baths.

Captain Horster, played by Isaiah Johnson, is a sea captain who has come to the town to check on his father’s accounts and household, since his father recently passed away. He could be considered the only person in the play who is not selfish in his motives. He stands outside of the politics of the town. He does not vote in the elections and likes his ability to come and go as he pleases. He is a kind, even-tempered man who genuinely wishes to help the Stockmann family. He is a man of few words, and prefers to speak with his actions. He is fond of the Stockmann family, Petra in particular. He seems content to stand by the Stockmann family even as the entire town turns on him and his
ship is taken from him. I chose to dress Captain Horster in modern jeans, navy turtleneck, a pea coat, and a captain’s hat to reflect his position as a seaman and a captain.

Natalie Davis, Kelsey Frustere, Mohammad Quteifan, Alex Wilson, and SangChul “Sean” Woo played the Townspeople; together they worked as a unit. In the script they are referred to in different ways such as, “Man 1, Man 2, Voices” (Ibsen, 2008, p.66), etc. This lack of distinction leaves the distribution of lines up for open interpretation, allowing each production to have as many or as few actors for these roles as required. In this production, Ferris opted to have eight actors play the Townspeople; five were integrated into the audience, while three were dressed as members of the stage crew. Although there were only eight actors cast as the Townspeople, they represented the hundreds of people who lived in the town. The Townspeople are portrayed as buying into the mob mentality. This means that they all think and react as a unit; the extreme opinion of one is adopted by all and under these circumstances, people have been known to do things that they would not normally do (Donley, 2011). A scientific study by scientists at The University of Leeds has found that it takes a mere “5% to influence a crowd’s flow” (Nauert, 2008). The character of The Drunk was credited separately from the Townspeople in the script. In this version, The Drunk’s lines were assigned to Alex Wilson. The two actors dressed as members of the stage crew were used at the beginning of Act 4 to break the fourth wall with the audience and introduce the convention that the audience was going to be addressed directly. By integrating the Townspeople into the audience, the entire theater space became a part of the town meeting in that the scene appeared as if the audience was in attendance and Thomas Stockmann was speaking.

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directly to them. The Townspeople act as the last piece of the visual bridge between 1882 and 2015, therefore the actors playing the Townspeople used their own modern clothes as their costume. The concept was to incite the same energy amongst the audience as were present in the audience that stormed the stage in Paris in 1905 (Appendix A: Director’s Concept).

Although not written into the original script, the Chorus of Women was the concept of the director, Lesley Ferris. She added them not only to extend commentary on the production, but also to supply more opportunities for female actors. Leqi “Jackie” Zeng, Claire Snode, Daneyliz Rodriguez, and Abigail Johnson were excited to work as the Chorus of Women. The purpose of the Women was not clear in the beginning of the production process, even to Ferris, but developed as the play took shape in rehearsals.

The Chorus of Women went through a progression of varying purposes throughout the production process. It was a collaborative process between Lesley Ferris, Karen Mozingo (movement choreographer), and the actresses playing the Chorus. Primarily movement based, the Chorus had little direct contact with the main characters besides two instances when one of the Women hands Thomas Stockmann a letter or document. The development of the Chorus of Women’s was a continuously revised aspect of the production. Their aspects of their costumes, choreography, and specific meaning developed parallel to one another rather than together. This is because setting the choreography for these characters, and subsequently their specific purpose and commentary, did not become solidified until the last three weeks of production.
Visually, Ferris wanted a ghostly, ethereal feeling present in the Chorus of Women. She wanted the Chorus to act as a part of the physical setting, and aid the tone of the scenes. A clear example of this is in Act 2, when Petra and Catherine are sent to the dining room to allow Peter and Thomas to talk and argue privately in the living room. The Women sit or stand in the dining room performing simple tasks such as drinking tea or smoothing fabric. These tasks are all reminiscent of submissive actions, which Catherine and Petra are expected to exemplify. Contradictory to this idea, Petra eavesdrops at the door. When Petra hears a particularly large outburst from Peter, Petra rushes into the room to defend her father. Catherine follows Petra and after Catherine, the Chorus of Women follows to the doorway of the dining room. This is the only instance in which the Women move quickly. The expression of surprise and worry that the Women show set the tone for the scene at hand.

I used the same Vilhelm Hammershøi paintings that Quinlan and Baker used for inspiration as evocative research for the Chorus of Women. The women in those paintings evoke a feeling of ghostly lingering as they stand or sit in corners, never facing the viewer. With the idea of this ghostly presence in mind, Ferris wanted to experiment with the idea that they appear as though they were wet, to link them to the issue of the infected Baths. This was accomplished through the use of varying textural treatments of the clothing. I discussed with Ferris what the costumes would look like so that I could move forward on distressing them, if necessary. Ferris and I agreed that the Chorus of Women should look as though they had been trudging through dirty water, rained on by dirty water. Additionally there would be no green color use in their costumes due to the
fact that it would have caused the Women to disappear into the scenery, which was largely painted pale green.
Chapter 4: The Process

After final designs were submitted and approved, and the actors were cast and accepted their roles, the first major change that was made to the overall design involved the costume for Morten Kiil. My initial sketch, as seen in Figure 7 below, made him look as though he was a man of high socio-economic status who flaunted his money through his clothing choices. After talking about his character with Ferris, we came to the agreement that although he was a wealthy man, he would not show it in his clothes. I then found a photograph of Stafford Dean Marlatt (Figure 8), who fit Morten Kiil’s character perfectly. Marlatt’s outfit is traditional and well-worn; he looks like a man who has worked hard all of his life.
Figure 7: Initial rendering for Morten Kiil.

Figure 8: Photograph of Stafford Dean Marlatt.
With revised designs in hand, I met with the Costume Studio Manager, Rebecca Turk, to discuss the logistics of what would be pulled, purchased, rented, or constructed. We initially discussed building Catherine’s overdress and skirt, Petra’s skirt, over drape, and jacket, as well as Thomas’ frock coat, smoking jacket, and hat. All other costumes would need to be acquired by alternate means. This list changed, however, when I found a suitable smoking jacket in OSU’s costume stock. Additionally, Ferris and I decided to cut Thomas’ smoking hat for Act 5.

Due to the lack of built costumes needed for Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays and Good Kids, Turk, along with resident costume designer, Kristine Kearney, expressed a need for costume build projects for the TH 5531: Intermediate Costume Construction course. As a result, more pieces were made than originally intended. The costume construction class made all of the built costume pieces. The only exception was Petra’s over drape. I made Petra’s over drape because I had expressed an interest in working on it in conjunction with the draping course that I was enrolled in autumn semester of 2015. A skilled student enrolled in the TH 5531 class, Travis Bihn, was assigned to make Thomas Stockmann’s frock coat, supervised by Kearney. This article of clothing was made because Thomas is the focal point within the play, and thus needed to have a very skillfully made garment. This garment was particularly essential during Act 4, when Thomas addressed the room during the town meeting. The other students in the TH 5531 class made Catherine’s blouse, skirt, and over-dress; Petra’s blouse, skirt, and jacket.
At the start of the production process, one of the first tasks I addressed was inform the men of the cast to discontinue shaving and to grow out their facial hair. Within the first month of rehearsals, two of the six actresses originally cast decided to no longer be a part of the Chorus of Women. I was then told that these two roles would not be re-cast, leaving me with four actresses in the Chorus. However, this did not have a major effect on my design for the Chorus as I had originally rendered three outfits for the women, with the intention that I would clothe two actresses in each of the three outfits. As the Chorus was reduced to four women, I decided to create four separate looks, instead of repeating any of the looks. My budget was affected positively, which allowed me to re-allocate $90 to another character.

My initial budget of $2,530 allowed $2,230 towards costume purchases, rentals, and materials with $300 remaining as contingency. For this reason I was careful about what I purchased and rented as I needed to supply 30 costumes. I immediately started gathering costume pieces by going through OSU costume stock, to see what would work without major modification, and what could be modified to fit my design. One of my challenges was to pull modern clothing that would blend with a Victorian setting. I fortunately found many clothing items that complimented my design scheme. In order to visually blend and combine Victorian clothing with modern day clothing, I searched for flat-front trousers and coats with a medium-width lapel.

I designed the Chorus of Women to be dressed exclusively in contemporary clothing, although I wanted them to appear as if they lived in a world separate from the primary characters. To achieve this separate yet cohesive look, I purposely searched for
clothing that could pass for that worn by lower class women in the late 1800s. These women are dressed as peasants or mill workers, as pictured in Figure 5. I found that this look could be realized through incorporating loose maxi skirts and blouses that are available in stores today. When searching for clothing for the Chorus of Women in OSU stock, I was only able to find one blouse that fit my design scheme and was deemed acceptable to distress by the costume studio manager.

I then contacted Otterbein University’s Costume Studio Manager, Julia Ferreri, at the beginning of September 2015 to set up an appointment to search their stock for possible items to use for the show. I went with the intent of finding a pea coat for Captain Horster, a smoking jacket and frock coats for Thomas, Peter, and Morten Kiil, as well as vest options for all of the male characters. I saved money by renting these items because of the exchange agreement between Otterbein University and The Ohio State University, which allows our departments to borrow from one another free of charge.

What I could not find in OSU stock or rent from Otterbein University, I decided to purchase. I wanted a pale gray frock coat for Peter Stockman that would button closed in the front. Before the semester began I searched the OSU stock, but was unable to find the style and color preferred, so after failing to find a suitable frock coat at Otterbein University, I made the decision to have the coat made by Tuxedo Wholesalers, a company based in Arizona. Company policy allows one the option to use stock fabric, or to alternatively customize a garment with fabric supplied by the customer. Due to time constraints and a lack of suitable fabric readily available at JoAnn Fabrics (a local fabric store), I felt that the best option would be to use fabric from Tuxedo Wholesalers’ stock. I
placed the order for a dove grey, single button, cutaway frock coat. The coat was not due to arrive until two to three weeks before tech rehearsals, so I was not concerned that the coat would be late or that I would not have ample fitting time.

In the meantime, I shopped for fabric so that the TH 5531: Intermediate Costume Construction class could begin fabric fittings as soon as the built costumes were ready to fit. There were not many changes in fabrics, as most of what I had originally swatched in late April of 2015, was still available. I struggled to find the embossed suede textile I wanted to purchase for Petra’s jacket, but was able to track down the last 3.5 yards in the city of Columbus. Only one fabric needed to be replaced due to unavailability. After discovering that the jacquard lace fabric that I had originally chosen for Petra’s skirt over drape was unavailable for purchase, I was able to find a sheer polyester velvet burnout fabric that was better suited for the over drape than the original fabric I had chosen. This fabric was a lightweight sheer with a dense white on black rose pattern. The density of the pattern made for a lovely texture from 20 feet away. Despite having a lot of fabric to purchase, I was able to save quite a bit of money by making sure I purchased the correct amount of fabric all at once, while also shopping during big sales with many coupons.

The Chorus of Women wore clothing comprised of pale, neutral colors of off-white, beige, or gray, which were then dyed and painted to suggest a worn and wet texture. I took this opportunity to reflect the other end of the social status scale in that all of the Chorus of Women’s clothing was contemporary with only a slight suggestion of period silhouette. I purchased the blouses, skirts, and shoes for all four actresses because there were no options in OSU stock that fit the color palette, the sizes of the actresses, or
that I was able to successfully distress. Fortunately, when I was purchasing these items it was the end of the summer season; therefore the items I was searching for were available in stores in the color palette I desired. I did find it difficult to locate maxi skirts in the color palette I needed, and a skirt option I purchased from Forever 21, a local clothing store, proved to be inadequate, therefore it was necessary for me to use one type of skirt on two actresses. Otherwise, I was able to compile four different yet cohesive looks. The distressing of these items was delayed for as long as possible, allowing Ferris the opportunity to more clearly develop a specific idea of what she wanted visually for the Chorus of Women; whether it be moving forward with my original design, or allowing her the option to alter her decision as to the level of distressing she desired for the Women.

As part of the original concept, Ferris suggested that the Chorus of Women might pour water on themselves onstage. This idea was cut due to the logistics of having water poured onstage or in the wings of the stage. There were concerns for the actors’ safety on a wet floor, as well as their health as they would be damp for extended periods of time in fluctuating temperatures (on and off stage).

Before I began the first round of costume fittings, I fit Catherine and Petra into their rehearsal garments, consisting of a corset, bustle, and skirt. This would allow the actresses to become accustomed to moving with an altered silhouette and give the director an idea of what the actresses would look like and how they would move onstage. It was of particular importance to me to get these garments to fit properly right away because the two actresses were both rather busty and so it was important to understand
how their shape would change with the altered silhouette. During this fitting new measurements were taken over their foundation garments to use in the construction of each actress’ costumes.

I started with fabric dye tests early in the semester and it seemed as if something was being dyed or tested to be dyed throughout the entire production process. This experience helped me to further understand the dyeing process, as well as the benefits and drawbacks of dyeing extensive amounts of textiles for a production. The first dye test occurred in April when Ferris and I were in discussion about the clothing treatment for the Chorus of Women. We spoke of whether we should use green in the treatment to make the clothing look sickly and polluted; the subsequent plan, was to use a lot of green in their dye treatment. However, later in the autumn as the clothing was viewed onstage under appropriate lighting, it was determined that green would not be used in the dye treatments for the Women because the clothing (and actresses) would disappear into the scenery, especially when they were viewed from behind the scrim. This is because there was a lot of green used in the color treatment on the scrim stretched over the walls comprising the Stockmann home.

During the spring semester (2015) I had also completed a dye test on the linen fabric I planned to use for Petra’s skirt. Since I knew what color I wanted the linen to be, the fabric was ready to be dyed immediately after the yardage was purchased in autumn. Petra’s jacket trim was also dyed a burgundy color to connect her with Thomas as he was wearing a red smoking jacket in Act 5. Fellow graduate teaching assistant, Rebekah Priebe, dyed the linen for Petra’s skirt, and all trims. Although the type of trim changed
from a floral applique to a corded trim, the color did not change. This color was determined after Petra’s jacket was changed from a red jacket to a blue jacket. I will discuss this change in a later section of this chapter.

I began principal fittings the second week in September. I first fit the actors portraying Billing and Aslaksen because I was able to pull most of their costume pieces from stock. Ensuring that those fit, I was then able to move forward with sourcing and locating the remaining items that were needed. In these two particular cases, the jackets I pulled for them did not coordinate as well as I thought they would, so I proceeded to find other options. I also needed to pull shoes in an alternate size for Aslaksen. During this first round of fittings, I was able to fit all of the actresses portraying the Chorus of Women. I fit them into a number of blouse/skirt combinations and took photos so that I could later decide which actress would wear which combination. I then saw Isaiah Johnson, the actor portraying Captain Horster. His fitting did not go as well as planned. The turtleneck sweater I pulled from OSU stock was too short in the waist, and the jeans I purchased were too large due to an improperly taken measurement. I took a more accurate measurement and later exchanged his jeans for the proper size. I also found a suitable knit turtleneck sweater online and purchased that for his next fitting.

Mitchell’s muslin mock-up fitting for all of Petra’s costume pieces occurred the following week. Each item fit well with only minimal alterations to be made to the mock-up. I placed an option for a lace applique on her jacket as well. The jacket was fit over her rehearsal corset because her performance corset had not yet arrived. I was very pleased with how everything looked. Additionally, Shoneff was fit in a mock-up during
this week. The fitting went very well; I was able to determine more specific style lines on the overdress that Rebecca Turk had draped. The length of the train on Catherine Stockmann’s skirt was shortened significantly, not only because it looked better, but also to accommodate the action of Thomas embracing and spinning her around at the end of Act 1. Otherwise, Thomas risked stepping on her dress. It was also determined that the overdress would be attached to the corset using a series of hooks and bars to keep the dress in place. Zack Meyer’s mock-up fitting proceeded equally as well as the previous two fittings. Style lines of Stockmann’s coat hem were determined and only minor alterations had to be made to the fit. I enjoy fittings, especially for the costumes being built because I can really see my vision come to life.

One difficulty I encountered was finding and coordinating detachable collars for the men. While I wanted to be authentic to the time period in this aspect, I had difficulty finding detachable collars that fit the actor. After struggling with this, I eventually opted for using shirts with attached collars, with Thomas wearing the only detachable collar for Acts 4 & 5 because he becomes disheveled by the end of Act 5.

I originally envisioned Hovstad, portrayed by A.J. Wright, in a burgundy corduroy suit but was unable to find a suit in corduroy. I did, however, find a velveteen burgundy suit jacket at K&G Men’s Store in Columbus. In Wright’s first fitting I found that the color and the fabric made the character Hovstad look as though he were wealthier than I intended, so that jacket was quickly cut. Upon my return to the store, I found three jacket options in a warm brown color that I thought were much more suitable for Hovstad’s character. I also purchased coordinating flat front trousers. Flat front trousers
have a smooth front and lie close to the body. During the late Victorian era, as well as in present day, flat-front trousers were and are the popular style for men’s trousers. In Wright’s subsequent fitting I decided to use the brown tweed suit jacket. I then decided to add coordinating elbow patches to give the impression that it was a well-worn suit, but also to mimic a popular jacket style of today.

One actor that I struggled to fit was Blake Edwards who was to portray the character of Peter Stockmann. While I waited for his cutaway coat to be made and arrive from Tuxedo Wholesalers, I fit Blake in the remainder of his costume. His first fitting was a disaster. Nothing fit or looked right. All of the costume pieces I pulled or purchased for him were too small. I speculate that he may have gained weight from when he first had his measurements taken, but that was not confirmed. I had to go back to re-pull or purchase the correct sizes. Due in part to his unusual shape (his hips being smaller than his waist), I purchased a number of different sized trousers in a variety of shades of grey for him to try on since I did not have to the coat in hand or a swatch of the exact color for me to properly coordinate the trousers. Fitting these trouser options on Edwards allowed me to be able to quickly coordinate his outfit once the coat arrived without requiring Edwards to return for an additional fitting.

The first fitting for the actor, Benito Lara, who was to portray Morten Kiil, took place in early October and it went very smoothly. I was able to fit all of his costume pieces including, his shirt, vest, trousers, frock coat, hat, and shoes. The only major alteration that had to be made was that I needed to pull a smaller pair of trousers. During
that fitting I discussed hairstyles with the actor; we agreed that he would keep his hair long, and continue to grow out his facial hair.

In this production, Catherine and Petra were the only characters wearing false hairpieces. Each had a fall that matched their hair color and aided in achieving a hairstyle typical of the late 1800s. This was especially necessary for the actress playing Catherine, Ambre Shoneff, as she had short, thin hair. I styled Shoneff’s hairpiece into a bun, which was then nested into her own hair. The actress’ hair is naturally curly so I bought a curly hair piece to match. I designed Petra’s hair to be styled with half her hair in a bun while the rest hung in loose curls to coordinate with her mother, Catherine. While the actress playing Petra, Mandy Mitchell, had thick enough hair to achieve the desired hairstyle, the ends of the actress’ hair were significantly lighter; so to avoid Mitchell cutting her hair or dyeing it, the hair with the lighter color was put into a bun, which acted as an anchor for the hair piece.

Benito Lara’s hair was sprayed each night with a matte grey hair color spray. He also applied heavy age makeup to convey the advanced age of his character, Morten Kiil. Meanwhile, Blake Edwards and Zack Meyer (the actors portraying Peter and Thomas respectively) applied grey on their temples and also applied some age make up to make them look slightly older than the rest of the cast. Gabriel Simms, the actor playing Aslaksen, applied age make up but did not grey out his hair because the actor’s hair is thinning which aged him enough for the purposes of his character.

The actor playing Hovstad, A.J. Wright, approached me in early September with a suggestion about his beard. Wright, naturally bald, wanted to know what I thought of a
sideburn-less beard. After looking at some example images I told him to try it for the following rehearsal and I would tell him what I thought. This would be early enough that if I wanted him to have sideburns there was still time for him to grow them. Ultimately, I decided to keep the sideburn-less beard because I thought it was a subtle way of adding modern style to the character.

As stated before, dyeing and distressing the costumes of the Chorus of Women was held off for as long as possible to allow Ferris the opportunity to fully develop just how distressed she wanted the Women to appear. Costume Studio Manager, Rebecca Turk assisted with the dyeing and distressing of the Women’s costumes. Turk and I decided to use a dark ombre dye bath on the clothing to get the look of walking through dirty water or being doused in rain. Ombré is a color gradient from one analogous color to another, or value gradient from a light shade of a color to a darker shade. The intensity of the ombré varies based upon the amount of dye used and time in the dye vat. The bandanas for the Chorus of Women were also dipped in a grey dye bath to reduce the brilliance of the fabric.

Fabric fittings occurred the third week in October. I decided during the fabric fitting of Mandy Mitchell’s jacket for Petra Stockmann to add a burgundy trim instead of a full lace applique. I decided this because I realized that the jacket needed more trim than the oval buttons I had chosen, and the floral applique I had originally chosen was too feminine for her character. The new trim also served to create a more masculine silhouette, which fit Petra’s inner desire to have the same rights and influence as a man.
After the designer run-through I began to doubt my choice of an off-white lace fabric for Petra’s blouse. During that rehearsal Mitchell (the actress portraying Petra) rehearsed without her corset and bustle to see if she would discover more about her character. I also spoke with Mitchell on how she was feeling in the costume. While she expressed that the corset and bustle did not make a significant difference in how she felt as a character, I noticed just how much of a tomboy Petra is as Mitchell portrayed her. For this reason I believed the lace fabric I had originally chosen was too feminine for Petra. Therefore I approached Turk about the possibility of making the blouse out of a different fabric. I was in luck that the student making this garment was willing to move forward with the new fabric. I bought the fabric that morning and I helped as much as I could to move the process along so that the student would not fall behind in the work schedule. I helped by cutting out the pieces and prepping them to be sewn together. This fabric choice was ultimately a better one as it more closely aligned to what I had originally designed.

Ambre Shoneff’s fabric fitting proceeded very smoothly. Her purple overdress had close to 30 yards of trim outlining the edges. This trim was comprised of three layers of ruffled lace. The bottom layer was a dark purple lace, the middle layer was black lace, and the top layer was a lighter purple lace. The top and bottom layers were gathered using a ruffle attachment on a sewing machine, while the black lace was already pre-ruffled. The top and bottom layers were purchased from Hobby Lobby and originally came in white. The black lace was available out of OSU’s trim stock. The top and bottom layers of lace were dyed to their respective colors. These layers of lace were machine
sewn together and then hand stitched in place. Beneath her overdress she wore a purple taffeta skirt with three tiers of ruffles, and a black corset and a black lace blouse. I was ecstatic to see all of the pieces and details come together to create a beautiful costume.

Zack Meyer’s fabric fitting went smoothly as well. We finalized the shape of the jacket collar, determined the final hem length, and adjusted the skirt line on the side seam that was slightly crooked. I determined where buttons would be placed, as well as what size buttons were needed.

Meyer’s trousers need to appear as if they were torn following Act 4 as his family moved through the riot on their way home. I designed trousers that would be rigged to look as if the trouser leg had just been torn. Thomas Stockmann comments on the trousers, “They tore my best trousers. The first lesson in freedom fight, never wear your favorite clothes when you go to meet the mob.” (Ibsen, 2008, p. 82) I was able to fit these trousers on Meyer so that I could hem and rig the right trouser leg to tear. The faux-tear was created by opening the seam of the trouser leg to the desired height, attaching faux ripped pieces to give the illusion of a rough tear and then rigged close so that the audience would not see until after the transition between Acts 4 and 5. The rigging was accomplished by sewing a single thread, with a bead attached at the end, over the seam of the torn leg to hide the faux ripped pieces within the seam. When it was time for the trouser leg to tear, Meyer pulled on the bead to release the faux-tears. I was very happy with how all of the fabric fittings proceeded. They each turned out just as I had envisioned.
I was excited to receive the coat I purchased from Tuxedo Wholesalers for Blake Edwards in the second week of October. This coat was one of the last costume pieces I needed to acquire, so it was a relief when the package finally came. However, the coat was not at all what I had thought it would be, in fact, it was an awful disappointment. The color of the coat didn’t match the sample online, it fit the actor poorly, and the overall quality was unsatisfactory. I ultimately decided to dress Edwards in the cutaway coat he wore in the publicity photo call. I was unable to return the coat to Tuxedo Wholesalers, but I would be willing to employ their services again, however next time I would provide them with fabric to see if my choice would make a difference in the quality of the garment. I will also be more cautious when sourcing in the future. The compromise with the coat pulled from stock was that it did not button closed. This was addressed by adding button embellishments to the front of the coat to suggest that the coat was meant to be worn open. This ultimately supported Peter’s character. Because the coat did not button purposefully, it appeared more presentational. As stated in Chapter 3, Peter is a man who is very concerned with appearances, therefore this coat ultimately worked well for his character.

Due to budget constraints, it was agreed in the first production meeting that the addition of extra Townspeople into the cast would only be done if those actors provided their own costumes. However, I still instructed the Townspeople on what types of clothing to wear. I gave each actor written guidelines for both the Townspeople planted amongst the audience, as well as the Townspeople who were portraying crew members
(See Table 5: Crew Members and Townspeople Guidelines). These guidelines were distributed at the start of Crew Watch, one week prior to first dress rehearsal.

After the first technical dress rehearsal quite a few changes occurred. I saw that from the audience, Hovstad’s striped long sleeve button down shirt was blinding in its contrast to his brown suit jacket, so the shirt was darkened in a dye bath to make his outfit more cohesive. The distressing was barely visible on the Chorus of Women’s costumes; therefore Turk suggested using diluted fabric paint in shades of grey and black to darken the original ombré on the skirts. Petra’s light colored brooch was not visible from the audience, so I pulled a larger, darker cameo brooch as a replacement for the next rehearsal. Ferris expressed a concern with the light color of Petra’s blouse, so Turk dipped it in a blue/grey dye bath to reduce the brilliance of the blouse. Lastly, Ferris also did not care for the look of jeans onstage (worn by Isaiah Johnson as Captain Horster), which I agreed with, so I pulled a dark blue pair of trousers instead.

After the second technical dress rehearsal, a few other issues were raised. Ferris did not care for how modern Thomas’ hat looked, so I pulled a more period appropriate homburg hat for him to wear. I think it was a good choice. I originally gave him a fedora as a way to blend a contemporary costume piece in with his primarily Victorian costume, but onstage it looked out of place, creating a dissonance in the cohesion of the design. By dressing Meyer in a hat characteristic of the time period, I was able to achieve a more cohesive blending of the period and contemporary elements in his overall costume. The jewelry I chose for The Chorus of Women was ultimately cut because the gold chains and charms were catching too much light on stage and did not fit their character. The clothing
for the Chorus of Women’s costumes also needed to be distressed for a third time, and even further, with a concentration on their hems to make their skirts look as though they had been trudging through dirty, muddy water. During this rehearsal, Mitchell’s second cameo brooch was too heavy and kept poking her in the chest; causing her to take the brooch off immediately after the first act. Thus, I pulled a third, lighter weight brooch. Ferris wanted Petra’s blouse to be dyed even darker, so Rebecca Turk dyed the blouse in another grey/blue dye bath to deepen the color. I instructed Turk to dye the blouse lightly so that the glow of the blouse would diminish, but it would not become a dark blouse. I wanted to maintain a contrast between the blouse and skirt, without losing the value differences within her costume. Wright’s long sleeve button down striped shirt needed to be lightened a little bit because after dyeing it darker, he looked as though he was dressed in one single color. By dressing him in a lighter shirt, I was able to break up his costume from being one shade of brown; even his dark red vest appeared closer to brown when worn with the brown trousers and jacket.

During the third and final technical dress rehearsal, I simply took wardrobe, accessory, and designer notes. As the designer, all I had left to do in the studio was distressing the aprons and bandanas of the Chorus of Women even further for a fourth time, as well as dyeing Mitchell’s blouse even darker for a third time. On this night, Matt Hazard, the Lighting Studio Manager, took production photos for the Theatre Department’s archives.

Following the opening performance, Ferris was still concerned with the color of Petra’s blouse, despite my efforts to over dye it in a gray dye bath each preceding
technical rehearsal. Ferris approached Kristine Kearney to voice her concerns. She wished to change the blouse and under-bust corset completely for Petra Stockmann’s costume. She felt that the blouse had become even lighter than before and was concerned that the under bust corset pushed the actress’ chest up too high, causing too much focus on her ample bosom. This lift also resulted in a more feminine figure than is fitting to the character. Fortunately, I was able to find a waist-cincher and purple blouse in stock that coordinated with the skirt and over drape. It was also very fortunate that the actress was available to come in for a fitting that day (See Figure 9 below). It was even more so fortunate that the items I pulled fit the actress well, and I was able to complete the alterations in time for the performance that evening. These alterations to the costumes ultimately worked well with the overall design. The purple of Petra’s blouse tied her in with her mother more clearly, and the smaller waist cincher created a softer silhouette that fit her tomboy personality, but still supported her identity as a women. It should be noted that Mitchell was not wearing contact lenses, shoes, or wig and makeup during this fitting.
The remainder of the performances proceeded without incident. On November 8, 2016, following the 3:00pm matinee, *Afterwords: A Post Performance Discussion with Dr. Merrill Kaplan* was held in the Thurber Theatre. Dr. Merrill Kaplan is an Associate Professor of Folklore and Scandinavian Studies, and Director of the Scandinavian Program in the Departments of English & Germanic Languages and Literatures at The
Ohio State University. The talk included discussion on the critical reception of *An Enemy of the People*, as well as the effect of The Chorus of Women in this production. The production closed on November 15, 2015.
Chapter 5: An Evaluation of the Design

I enjoyed designing the costumes for *An Enemy of the People*, and gained valuable knowledge from the challenges I encountered. For example, I had to address the challenge of communicating that time has passed without full costume changes. The play takes place over the course of four days. The transition from day one to day two happens almost instantly. There was no time for Meyer, Shoneff, or Mitchell to change; therefore I made the decision to work with the notion that people would sometimes wear the same outfit multiple days in a row. I followed this notion throughout the play with all of the characters to maintain a cohesive convention. The addition of coats and hats as people re-entered the home in the opening of Act 2 (Day 2) communicated to the audience that time had passed from when the actors were last seen without their outerwear. A bigger costume shift occurs in Act 4 (Day 3) when Thomas is wearing a new pair of trousers, vest, and cravat for the town hall meeting. These new clothing pieces may not denote that a full day has passed, but it does signify a passage of time. Again, there is little time during the transition from Act 4 to Act 5. However, during this transition, Meyer pulls the string of his rigged trousers to open the seam keeping a portion of his pant leg together. This suggests his trousers were torn escaping the riots. Shoneff removes her overdress and Mitchell also removes her over drape for Act 5, again, to indicate the passage of time. In retrospect, Shoneff’s change would have been more successful if she had been
wearing a dressing gown or robe over her skirt and blouse. This would have more clearly indicated that it was early morning. I was also faced with the challenge of creating costumes for the Chorus of Women. Another challenge I faced was guiding the actors who portrayed the Townspeople to dress in appropriate clothing that would work cohesively with those on stage without looking contrived. Working with these challenges has provided me with invaluable knowledge of working with actors and directors that I will undoubtedly utilize in future productions. For example, working with director Lesley Ferris provided me with the opportunity to collaborate with a seasoned theatre professional. I learned the importance of being clear in my ideas and asking the right questions in production meetings and in one-on-one conversations. Throughout my time here at The Ohio State University, I have learned that this clarity in communication is vital on all levels with everyone involved in a production. I also learned that I need to be more aware of the status of the costume materials budget total throughout the entire production process.

I thought the production, as a whole, was executed very well. This was my second collaboration with scenic designer Joshua Quinlan, the first was a previous production at OSU, the MFA Acting devised show, *In Here Out There*. I believe we worked well together and our growth since that production is evident. We worked closely to develop our color palettes to ensure that the costume and scenic designs complimented one another and defined a cohesive world. This was especially important when I was developing the paint treatments for the Chorus of Women. I often went to the scenic studio with my latest clothing dye test to see how the clothes looked in front of and
behind the scrim walls. As a result of these tests, I decided that I would use as little green in my color palette as possible. Otherwise, we found that the costumes tended to blend in with the scenery, which was not the intention of the ghostly figures.

This was my first collaboration with lighting designer Andy Baker. I found that Baker’s extensive experience in the field prior to coming to The Ohio State University helped me to learn a great deal about how to collaborate at a high level. Baker, Quinlan, and I had to work closely together to accomplish the fluid world that Ferris envisioned. The process was supported by the fact that the three of us had a clear vision of our designs so that we were able to efficiently work together from the start.

I was also pleased with my design process. I felt that any changes in a costume’s design that occurred during the production process were handled smoothly. This included the major change in Petra’s costume the day after opening. Even though the last minute change of Petra’s costume was a challenge, I learned a lot from addressing that one problem. I learned that I was not asking Ferris the right questions when she voiced her concerns during technical rehearsal; I should have had a more in-depth conversation with her about what was truly bothering her about Petra’s clothes. With less than ten hours to remedy the situation, I learned to find a solution for a design problem quickly. The results can be seen in Figure 9.

I was happy with my costume designs for An Enemy of the People. I believe the silhouettes and color palette I designed supported the characters and time period, while successfully updating and merging Victorian and modern fashions. I was also pleased
with how the costumes looked onstage under performance lighting. I felt that I worked successfully with the rest of the design team to create a cohesive world.

That does not mean that my design was without flaws. Looking back at the production, I think that Thomas Stockmann’s Act 1 costume did not work as well as I had anticipated. Although the idea was to blend the two time periods, the cardigan he wore was perhaps a bit too contemporary. I think a vest would have better suited the character and the story. Looking back, I would have shortened the train on Catherine’s over dress even further. I noticed that during dress rehearsals and performances a number of different actors occasionally stepped on the train. I also would have distressed the Chorus of Women’s clothes even further to give the clothes more of a wet and muddy texture, instead of looking as if the Chorus of Women were covered in dried mud. This would require further experimentation in distressing techniques. Additionally, I found that there was difficulty getting the actors portraying the Townspeople to adhere to the guidelines I gave them for their clothing. The problem may have been that I was not specific enough in my instructions. While I did consider pulling a range of clothing from OSU stock, and I ultimately needed to pull a proper shirt for one of the actors, I did not believe that providing costumes for the Townspeople was not within the scope of resources allotted for the production, at least at the start of the process. This situation was discussed during the first few production meetings and it was agreed upon that Ferris could add Townspeople as long as I did not have to purchase items for them or have fittings with them. If I had known that I would come in so far under budget, with $401.90 remaining, I would have purchased clothes for the actors playing the Townspeople. I would have also
spent the money on a pea coat for Captain Horster, as well as the vests used for Hovstad and Billing, instead of renting one from Otterbein University. I could have also purchased higher quality fabrics for the costumes that were built. Additionally, more accessories could have been purchased instead of made. I now know that I was too cautious with the costume materials budget. I realize that I could have provided the Townspeople with clothing and could have possibly purchased more, or items of higher quality. I believe that more thorough sourcing during the initial budgeting stage will help overcome that challenge.

I am pleased with the overall look of the show, but there are a few things I would change if I had the opportunity to design this production again. First, I would have further distressed the clothes of each character to further suggest lifestyle. For example, I think that while Hovstad looked handsome and attractive, I think he also looked too clean. I think his clothes should have been dirtier, looked older, and more worn. Secondly, I would have provided costumes for the five actors portraying Townspeople, who were integrated amongst the audience. I found that the actors had difficulty following my guidelines and the wardrobe crew was busy elsewhere, so they did not always have time to enforce the guidelines. However, I did provide my wardrobe crew with a few shirts from stock that worked with the color palette of the show, in case any of the Townspeople showed up in clothing that did not follow the guidelines. The process of clothing the Townspeople would have been easier for the wardrobe crew and myself if the clothing had been provided. Lastly, I would have been more efficient in the questions I asked when talking to the director and design team. I found that there were times when I
was not entirely clear in my explanations, or did not ask the right questions, and it caused confusion or misunderstanding.

After further research I found that Ibsen might have based Thomas Stockmann after himself. If I had this information going into the design process I may have used Henrik Ibsen as the visual inspiration for Stockmann’s wardrobe and appearance. Stockmann and Ibsen share the same ideals and viewpoints. Since this play was written as a reaction to the media and audience backlash from *Ghosts*, it is not surprising that Ibsen’s own frustrations regarding the backlash are revealed within *An Enemy of the People*, especially during Act 4 when Thomas is addressing the Townspeople, as well as the audience. As Thomas proclaims in Act 4,

> There are only a few amongst us who discover new truths... Those who seek the truth, they have to wait for the herd to catch up... Truth shifts...
> The majority encourage stagnation, ignorance, they balk against anything that’s other, that’s more elevated than the average worker’s house... There is only one real truth. That no society can grow if it feeds on beliefs that were in vogue in biblical times. (Ibsen, 2008, p.74-75)

Ibsen also believed that a man is progressive and strongest when he is alone. Thomas says exactly this in Act 5, “Alone. The strongest man. He’s always alone” (Ibsen, 2008, p.95). Although Ibsen may have been a heavy inspiration for his leading character, perhaps Ibsen’s distinct appearance would have only further informed Stockmann’s hair and facial hair. Moving forward, I will be sure to look into such connections at the beginning of the design process.
Following the close of *An Enemy of the People*, the production team met for a post-mortem discussion. During this meeting the production team gathers to talk about what was successful about the production and what could have been done better. Ferris expressed her impressions of a positive, productive, and smooth production process and result. *An Enemy of the People* received reviews from the ColumbusUnderground.com, BroadwayWorld.com, and Lifefullofcheese.com. Each raved about the acting and directorial focus, as well as the technical aspects. Only Lifefullofcheese.com mentioned the Chorus of Women, and Chuck III, writer for Lifefullofcheese.com, was not impressed, “None of it was clear, and perhaps it shouldn’t be – but in a play with so many strengths and impassioned scenes, this kind of interpretive element I found distracting” (2015). *An Enemy of the People* was overall well received by critics, the costume design gained recognition as well, Richard Sanford from the Columbus Underground noted, “Ferris’ finely tuned direction is aided greatly by Sarah Fickling’s costumes…” (2015) and Amanda Etchison from Broadwayworld.com said, “…striking costumes (designed by Sarah Fickling) contain enough theatrical magic to wow audiences; however, generally, Ibsen's play is more thought-provoking than whimsical.” (2015). It was wonderful to see that my work had been noticed.

My time at The Ohio State University’s Department of Theatre has felt cyclical in nature, especially as I designed, opened, and closed *An Enemy of the People*. Three years ago, I came to OSU to visit as a potential MFA graduate student in costume design. During that time I was invited to dinner with the current graduate students and attended the preview showing of *The Visit*. This play, also directed by Lesley Ferris, is a
production that has many similarities to *An Enemy of the People*. Accordingly, I felt it was quite fitting and cathartic when I was assigned to design *An Enemy of the People* for my thesis project. This catharsis was not only felt with the costume design for *An Enemy of the People*, but also with the camaraderie and support I feel now from those around me.
References


Selected Bibliography


Appendix A: Director’s Concept
**Preliminary Director’s Concept** by Lesley Ferris

Henrik Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People* (1882)

A version by Rebecca Lenkiewicz (2008)

From a literal translation by Charlotte Barslund

March 2, 2015

*An Enemy of the People*—or the story of a Stand Alone Man.

Henrik Ibsen = Dr. Stockman = history is important to understanding the play

Unlike his previous works—*A Doll’s House* (1879) and *Ghosts* (1881)—that focused on households in crisis, this play examines a controversy that claims an entire town. Ibsen criticized the engrained belief in his society that the community was an honorable, moral institution that could be trusted. *An Enemy of the People* challenges this by exposing not only the conservatives but the liberals; both ends of the social spectrum are portrayed as equally self-serving.

The play responded to the wide-spread rejection and censorship of *Ghosts*. Both *A Doll’s House* and *Ghosts* were scathing commentaries on the moral bankruptcy in society. *Ghosts* exposed this through the story of a son dying from venereal disease passed on to him from his philandering father. Taken aback by the vehemence, the censorship of this work, and the scandal that followed, Ibsen broke from his characteristic work habits and wrote *An Enemy of the People* with a fury of energy in six months.

…I firmly believe that an intellectual pioneer can never gather a majority around him. In ten years the majority may have reached the point where Dr. Stockman stood when the people held their meeting. But during those ten years the doctor has not stood stationary; he is still at least ten years ahead of the others. The majority, the masses, the mob, will never catch him up; he can never rally behind him.
myself feel a similarly unrelenting compulsion to keep pressing forward. A crowd now stands where I stood when I wrote my earlier books. But I myself am there no longer, I am somewhere else—far ahead of them—or so I hope. [Ibsen in a letter to his friend Georg Brandes, who rebuked him for isolationism and not putting his shoulder to the progressive wheel, June 12, 1883; in Meyer, 509].

“An Enemy of the People is an attack, not merely on those who lead people by the nose, but on those who allow themselves to be thus led.” [Meyer, 510]

The Plot: The story takes place in a vacation spot whose primary draw is a public bath. The town’s doctor discovers that the water is contaminated by the local tannery. He expects to be acclaimed for saving the town from the nightmare of infecting visitors with disease, but instead he is declared an 'enemy of the people' by the locals, who band against him, throwing stones through his windows. The play ends with his complete ostracism from his community.

Genre: Is it a comedy? What is it?

"I am still uncertain as to whether I should call it a comedy or a straight drama. It may [have] many traits of comedy, but it also is based on a serious idea.” [Ibsen writing to a friend; source tbc]

“Ibsen’s view seems to have been that a mixture of wisdom and folly was to be found among the best of men. Even his admiration for his embattled hero’s sentiments is qualified by mordant awareness of the complexity of human motivations and a comic appreciation of Stockmann’s boyish naiveté and boisterous over confidence.” [John Gassner, intro to the play in Four Great Plays by Ibsen, 1971, p.129]

“I have enjoyed writing this play. . . Dr. Stockman and I got on so well together; we agree on so many subjects. But the doctor is a more muddle-headed person than I am; and because of this and other
peculiarities of this, people will stand hearing a good many things from him, which they perhaps would not have taken I good part if they had been said by me.”

[Ibsen to his published quoted in *Six Plays by Henrik Ibsen*, translated and introduction by Eva Le Gallienne, 1957, xxi]

Le Gallienne describes Dr. Stockman as a “comedy-character part” and later she explains how Ibsen was “disgusted and disappointed by the attacks the so-called Liberal Press had hurled against *Ghosts*; he had expected abuse from the Conservatives, but he had confidently looked to the Liberals for support. Now in *An Enemy of the People*, he retaliates, and heaps contempt and ridicule upon the liberal newspapers of the time through his hilarious caricatures of the editor, report and printer of *The People’s Monitor*. It was never wise to invoke Ibsen’s anger. These portraits are as vivid and as full or sardonic rage as Daumier’s drawing of the law courts. The dart of Ibsen’s vitriolic pen must have drawn blood from many a contemporary journalist. “ [xxi—xxii]

_________________ Thinking about design and production __________________

The play was produced in 1888 at the Court Theatre in Meiningen, where, William Archer noted, “the fourth act was naturally found to offer a superb opportunity for the Meinengen methods of stage-management.” [Meyer, 204; Note: stage management meant directing in 1888—the concept of directors as we know them did not exist until the late 19th century and the Duke of Meiningen is often credited as being the so-called ‘first’ director.]

One cannot think about producing Ibsen without considering his own thoughts on his work:

Anyone who wishes to understand me fully must know Norway. The spectacular but severe landscape which people have around them in the north, and the lonely, shut-off life----the houses often lie miles from each other----force them not to bother about other people, but only their own concerns, so that they become reflective and serious, they brood and doubt and often despair. In
Norway every second man is a philosopher. And those dark winters, with the thick mists outside----ah, they long for the sun!


Lesley’s voice: While I was working on developing my preliminary thoughts I read a piece in *The New York Times* on Feb. 27, 2015 entitled “Noted Climate-Change Skeptic Is Linked to Corporate Funding.” The piece explores a contemporary example—not of a Dr. Stockman-like character, but a current event that links to current debates over the environment and social conscience: do we strive to save the planet for those who come after? Or do we expend our resources now to fill the pockets of corporate powerhouses? Such contemporary social and political issues are the center piece of Ibsen’s play.

I am still thinking through the design issues but do have some early thoughts:

Scenic/Lights/Costume/Sound: A suggestion of the period—selective choices versus full-blown realism. A Thurber stage that is mobile, shifting and has the ability to adapt to a new setting or act quickly. Less is more. Can the edge of Thurber stage serve as a liminal space between the Ibsen’s narrative and the spectators who exist in 2015? The play is a merging of 1882 Norway and 2015 Columbus/USA. Can the two eras fuse, spill over into each other, even explode?

Such an explosion occurs in the famous Act Four of the script—the hall in Captain Horster’s house where the town meeting takes place and the townspeople gather to hear Dr. Stockman speak.

It is this scene that ignited a certain theatrical mayhem and lead to political action by members of the audience in Paris, Barcelona, and Petrograd. When the play was staged in Paris at the Théâtre de L’Oeuvre in 1893 outbursts from the audience gave the theatre notoriety as ‘the center of anarchy’. In Barcelona the play was chosen for production in order to organize labor opposition to the established order. And in 1905 when Stanislavsky played the role of Dr. Stockman in Petrograd “the entire audience rose from its seats and threw itself toward the footlights.” Stanislavsky wrote that “I saw hundreds of hands
stretched towards me, all of which I was forced to shake. The younger people in the audience jumped on
the stage and embraced Dr. Stockman. It was not easy to establish order and to continue with the play.
That evening I found out through my own experience what power the theatre could exercise.” (Quoted in
Meyer, p. 509 from Stanislavksy’s My Life in Art. This emotional response was linked to the Kazansky
Square massacre that took place the same day.) The line of Dr. Stockman’s that set this off is in the last act
of the play when he notices his coat is torn: “One must never put on a new coat when one goes to fight for
freedom and truth.” (Meyer p. 508)

As one critic says about An Enemy of the People: this play was “the first political debate which
succeeds in remaining a great play.” (quoted in Meyer, p. 509)

Act Four: This act would be performed as far towards the house as possible. (Yes, I know lighting
positions might be an issue.) Dr. Stockman addresses the audience, our audience. Some of our actors are
embedded in the front rows—they come forward to the edge of the stage. Others (crew?) come from back
stage and join those in the house. All of these ‘towns people’ are in contemporary dress—blacks fro crew
members, regular 2015 clothes—owned by the actors. This is a clash of two eras: the end of the 19th
century and the beginning of the 21st.

Captain Horster’s house transforms to Stockman’s study of Act Five. This transition is
choreographed, fully visible as an uprising of the people, an attack on the Stockman household, the
windows are smashed with rocks. As the stage directions read: “The room is in chaos.” (p. 81)
These are merely beginnings of my thoughts on this production. I will develop this much further once I
have time to engage and collaborate with the design team.
Appendix B: Tables
AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE
By Henrik Ibsen
Setting: Costal town, Southern Norway
Time: 1882

The Ohio State University
Autumn, 2015
Director: Lesley Ferris
Costume Designer: Sarah Fickling

PRINCIPAL MEN

1. Dr. Thomas Stockmann – Navy sweater, tie, shirt, undershirt, trousers, suspenders, socks, shoes, handkerchief, pocket watch
   Act I
2. Dr. Thomas Stockmann - Dark grey frock coat, white cravat, shirt, undershirt, nice trousers, suspenders, socks, shoes, hat, handkerchief, pocket watch
   Act 4
3. Dr. Thomas Stockman – same as Act 4 but trousers become roughed up during trans., dressing gown, smoking hat
   Act 5
4. Peter Stockmann – morning coat, vest, shirt, undershirt, tie, trousers, socks, shoes, hat, handkerchief, pocket watch, hat
   Act 1
5. Hovstad – Coat, vest, shirt, undershirt, tie, trousers, socks, shoes, hat, handkerchief, pocket watch
   Act 1

SECONDARY MEN

6. Captain Horster – dark sailor’s pea coat, turtleneck shirt, undershirt, pants, shoes, shoes, hat, handkerchief, pocket watch
   Act 1
7. Morten Kiil – Double breasted frock coat, vest, shirt, cravat, trousers, suspenders, socks, shoes, hat, walking stick, handkerchief, pocket watch
   Act 2
   Act 1
9. Aslaksen – Jacket, vest, shirt, undershirt, tie, trousers, apron, socks, shoes, handkerchief
   Act 1

PRINCIPAL WOMEN

10. Catherine Stockmann – Overdress, blouse, undershirt, under-bust corset, bustled skirt, bustle, petticoat, hose, shoes, jewelry, chatelaine
    Act 1
11. Catherine Stockmann – Same as Act 1, but add shawl and hat
    Act 4
12. Catherine Stockmann – Same as Act 1, but minus overdress
    Act 5
13. Petra Stockmann - Coat, blouse (l/s), undershirt, under-bust corset, bustled skirt, bustle, petticoat, hose, shoes, hat, gloves, jewelry
    Act 1

Table 1: Costume Plot
Table 1 continued

14. Petra Stockmann – Same as Act 1, but with Act 1 coat, and hat
15. Petra Stockmann – Same as Act 1, but minus over skirt

SECONaARY WOMEN

16. Chorus 1 – blouse, undershirt, maxi skirt, head scarf, apron, hose, shoes
17. Chorus 2 - blouse, undershirt, maxi skirt, head scarf, apron, hose, shoes
18. Chorus 3 - blouse, undershirt, gathered skirt, head scarf, apron, hose, shoes
19. Chorus 4 - blouse, undershirt, gathered skirt, head scarf, apron, hose, shoes
20. Chorus 5 - blouse, undershirt, pleated skirt, head scarf, apron, hose, shoes
21. Chorus 6 - blouse, undershirt, pleated skirt, head scarf, apron, hose, shoes

TOWNSPEOPLE/ CREW MEMBERS ( ? )

22. Hats, t-shirts, pants
23. Hats, t-shirts, pants
24. Hats, t-shirts, pants
25. Hats, t-shirts, pants
26. Hats, t-shirts, pants
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Stockmann House</td>
<td>Stockman House</td>
<td>Print Shop</td>
<td>Townhall Meeting / Riot</td>
<td>Stockmann House</td>
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<td></td>
<td>p.3-22</td>
<td>p.23-43</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
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<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petra</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter</td>
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Table 2: Action Plot
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<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td></td>
<td>12</td>
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<td></td>
<td>13</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>smoking hat</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>shirt</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>5</td>
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Table 3: Initial Costume Materials Budget
### Table 3 continued

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>Pull</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoking pipe</td>
<td>Prop</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morten Kill</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>undershirt Pull/Buy</td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilse shirt</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vest</td>
<td>Pull</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
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<td>Double breasted frock coat</td>
<td>Rent/Pull</td>
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<td>Chavat</td>
<td>Pull</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspenders</td>
<td>Pull</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socks</td>
<td>Pull</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoes</td>
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<td>Hat</td>
<td>Pull</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking cane</td>
<td>Prop</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handkerchief</td>
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<td>- $</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vest</td>
<td>Pull</td>
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<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacket</td>
<td>Pull</td>
<td></td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pants</td>
<td>Pull</td>
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<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Aslaesen</td>
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<td>Apron</td>
<td>Pull</td>
<td>Distress</td>
<td>- $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Stockmann</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Overdress Build</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blouse</td>
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<td>$ 35.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tank top</td>
<td>Pull</td>
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<td>Under-bust corset</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.corsetdeal.com/lancellinsteampunkcorset.html">http://www.corsetdeal.com/lancellinsteampunkcorset.html</a></td>
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<td>Petticoat</td>
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Table 4: Initial Costume Build List and Final Costume Build List
“Crew” Members Clothing Guidelines
- All black – solid black
- Long sleeves
- Long pants
  - No leggings
- No logos
- Basic makeup
  - We want to be able to see your face
  - But nothing over the top or flashy
- Flat shoes
- Clean-shaven face

Townspeople Clothing Guidelines
- Dress as you normally would, while also taking these guidelines into consideration. Remember: you are an audience member.
- Nothing over the top or ostentatious
- No large logos/graphics
- No neon/bright colors
- Avoid solid white
- Hem should be close to fingertips when arms are down
- No crop tops
- Flat shoes
- No unnatural hair colors
- Hair styled so that it will stay out of your face
- Whatever make up you usually wear
- Clean-shaven face
  - Only Alex Wilson can have scruff

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Figure 11: Research for Thomas Stockmann Acts 3 & 4

Figure 12: Research for Thomas Stockmann Act 3 & 4
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Figure 14: Research for Catherine Stockmann

Figure 15: Research for Catherine Stockmann
Figure 16: Research for Catherine Stockmann

Figure 17: Research for Catherine Stockmann
Figure 18: Research for Petra Stockmann
Figure 19: Research for Petra Stockmann
Figure 20: Research for Petra Stockmann
Figure 21: Research for Petra Stockmann
Figure 22: Research for Petra Stockmann
Figure 23: Research for Petra Stockmann
Figure 24: Research for Peter Stockmann
Figure 25: Research for Peter Stockmann
Figure 26: Research for Peter Stockmann

Figure 27: Research for Hovstad
Figure 28: Research for Billing

Figure 29: Research for Billing

96
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Figure 31: Research for Captain Horster
Figure 32: Research for Captain Horster

Figure 33: Research for Captain Horster
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Figure 35: Research for Townspeople
Figure 36: Research for Townspeople

Figure 37: Research for Townspeople
Figure 38: Research for Townspeople
Figure 39: Research for Chorus of Women

Figure 40: Research for texture for the Chorus of Women
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Appendix D: Theatrical Reviews
D1: ColumbusUnderground.com Review

Theatre Review: OSU Theatre’s An Enemy of the People Puts a New Coat of Paint on a Tragically Timeless Story

November 12, 2015 8:30 am

By Richard Sanford

Henrik Ibsen’s *An Enemy of the People*, published in 1882, is an anguished look at the cost of standing outside society to make a stand for what someone believes in, the subtle ways in which we’re all infected by hypocrisy, and the uneasy shifting of alliances of blood and friendship. It’s as important, vital, and gut-churning today as it’s ever been and it’s been given a nimble, vibrant revival by OSU Theatre under the direction of Lesley Ferris using Rebecca Lenkiewicz’s lithe 2012 adaptation.

The play is set in a series of tiny rooms around a Scandinavian tourist town whose economy orbits around their therapeutic baths. We meet Catherine Stockmann (Ambre Shoneff) as a series of town intellectuals including the town newspaper (*The People’s Messenger*) editor Hovstad (AJ Wright), his sub-editor Billing (Joe Kopyt), and a sailor Captain Horster (Isaiah Johnson), arrive at their family’s home for an informal salon/drinking party to discuss the issues of the day. While they wait the arrival of her husband, Thomas Stockmann (Zack Meyer) the door is darkened by his brother, Peter (Blake Edwards), the mayor. As Dr. Stockmann finally arrives home, a ball of nervous energy, we see long-standing tensions rise between he and his brother, amidst relatively light-hearted banter occasionally weighted with the ballast of talk about abstract comments about morality, aided by the arrival of the Stockmanns grown daughter Petra (Mandy Mitchell), a school teacher.

Shortly thereafter, the source of the nervousness becomes apparent: Stockmann’s discovered that the baths are not only not restorative, they’re actually harming people. There is specific discussion of a typhoid outbreak but soon the baths are viewed as a more literal cancer on the town and the countryside, soaking up the corruption of politicians (who rejected Dr. Stockmann’s earlier advice to build the baths
with pipes placed higher and routed differently) and the sins of the previous generations (by way of the
tanneries who are directly polluting the water and soil). The doctor is certain he’ll be viewed as a hero and
high on I-told-you-so hubris so rushes to the newspaper to have his report printed the next day as well as
roping in the printer Aslasken (Gabriel Simms) who also heads the Property Owners Association and his
father-in-law Morten Kill (Benito Lara).

As his brother the mayor tries to offer compromises that seem clear to make everyone else sick,
Stockmann watches his hopes of being viewed as a hero crack and curdle. In denying Aslasken’s nudgings
toward moderation, he burns that bridge. Morten Kill realizes the “fact” of his tannery being the worst of
the polluters makes a mockery out of everything he and three generations before him worked to build. It
doesn’t take much, if any, disinformation to make people less concerned with the health of tourists and
outsiders when an economy could be crippled taking food out of their own children’s mouths. And it’s as
understandable how they rise to hate the man who presents these decisions in black and white strokes and
ignores their humanity as it is understandable how the mix of ego and reason pushes Dr. Stockmann to
entrench further even at his own children’s risk and his family’s world burns around them (in an
astonishingly literal, slow-motion ballet of destruction that’s one of the most striking things I’ve seen on a
stage all year).

An Enemy of the People uses Stockmann as a thinly veiled stand-in for Ibsen, a white-hot rebuke
to the detractors of his earlier masterpiece Ghosts and it’s no surprise Stockmann is one of the richest male
leads in the theatrical canon. Zack Meyer does a fantastic job as the hero who’s self-aware enough to know
how much he’s hurting the people he knows but all-seeing enough to stay focused on the greater good,
whose hypocrisies are minor compared to the other men. Blake Edwards’ Peter, as his main adversary, is a
masterful portrait of the other side of that coin, an almost identical personality but with pragmatism as his
tin god instead of reason.

Wright and Kopyt’s Hovstad and Billing are a delightfully weaselly pair, on the verge of giving lie
to Mencken’s line about going broke underestimateing the public. The greatest rage from Ibsen’s pen in this
work is reserved for the press – there’s an understanding that being The People’s Messenger means a
combination of snake oil sales and sucking up, telling the mob what they want to hear while still thinking
you’re better than they are and cowering under the almighty dollar.

Shoneff and Mitchell do a stunning job, with Shoneff as the rock and Mitchell as the light, making real characters out of a play that (while helped in the adaptation some) takes a very dim view of women in general. Mitchell’s interaction with Hovstad when their paths diverge is electrifying even as I cringed all the way down. The adaptation and direction also help to even this out in the climactic public meeting by placing the townspeople directly in the audience and making several of the strongest, unrelenting voices women (most notably Natalie Davis and Kelsey Catherine Frustere), as a trick it’s breathtaking and helps in some small way to redress the imbalance in the text. A less successful way to show women as the underclass being ground down by the other decision making is the silent chorus of women who appear on the stage in what feels like arbitrary times, usually accompanied by an underlining effect of running water that everything else in this production is too good for.

The adaptation of the play is a very loud, bold colors, knives out at all times read on the play. That volume makes the line between humor and tragedy even harder to walk, but the cast with a couple exceptions of going too broad handle this very well. And the direction keeps an emotional reality grounded without slipping into some soggy realism that might have sunk the metaphorical elements. Ferris’ finely tuned direction is aided greatly by Sarah Fickling’s costumes and Joshua Quinlan’s jaw-dropping set designs – walls that (with the aid of lighting designer Andy Baker) are opaque one minute and transparent the next help underscore how much of life is lived in little boxes and simultaneously create the impression of a wider, greater world all around. It’s the kind of theatre magic that makes jaws drop in the service of the heart of the text, not by selling it out.

While it’s not a perfect production, Lesley Ferris, OSU Theatre, and the cast are to be commended for reminding the world of this story that desperately needs told. It’s a complicated, difficult script given complicated, rich, intense life. A classic refurbished with the kind of care it needs to again shake you by the lapels.

An Enemy of the People runs through Sunday, November 15, with performances at 7:30pm on Thursday-Saturday and 3:30pm on Sunday. For tickets and more info, visit https://theatre.osu.edu/events/enemy-people
The issue of sanitation in a Norwegian town might not seem like the most interesting subject for a play presented to an audience of college students, but the Ohio State Department of Theatre's production of Henrik Ibsen's "An Enemy of the People" surprisingly touches on contemporary questions still prevalent in our modern world.

Originally written by Ibsen in 1882, "An Enemy of the People" addresses the timeless struggle between what is right and what is popular. Based in a coastal spa town in southern Norway, the play centers on a local doctor's discovery that the town's public baths -- its main source of revenue -- are contaminated and pose a serious health risk. Faced with the disapproval of high-ranking members of the local government, as well as the press and many townspeople, Dr. Thomas Stockmann (Zack Meyer), the play's idealistic and science-minded protagonist, must decide whether to obscure the truth in order to bolster public morale or reveal the issues with the baths and prevent future illness.

Meyer excels as Stockmann in Ibsen's dialogue-heavy drama. The contentious relationship he has with his brother, Peter Stockmann (Blake Edwards), who also happens to be the town's mayor, is explored through explosive arguments that develop out of the siblings' different ideas of what is best for the town. The stances both characters take on the issue are not without their own respective merits, and the strained familial relations apparent in each heated conversation only add to the pathos the audience feels toward both brothers.

In addition to the moral questions surrounding public policy, other contemporary issues are introduced by the characters Hovstad (AJ Wright), Billing (Joe Kopyt) and Aslaksen (Gabriel Simms) who...
represent members of the press, as well as a collection of distinct political ideologies. The struggle between the working and privileged classes -- another theme easily applied to modern-day society -- is best seen in the tense, albeit slightly humorous, scenes that include interaction between the Stockmanns and the staff of the local newspaper.

As the play progresses, the situation becomes more dire for Thomas Stockmann and his family, and the abrupt change in the public's opinion of the doctor's recent findings relating the baths further emphasizes his newfound role as a social pariah, or, as it is shouted quite clearly many times throughout the play, an "enemy of the people."

The version of the play performed by the OSU Department of Theatre is by Rebecca Lenkiewicz, and was commissioned and first produced by the Arcola Theatre in London in 2008, according to the program notes. Although the use of this updated version probably helps the collegiate audience understand the fast-paced, rhetorically rich discourses that dominate nearly every scene, at times the translation is too modern for the setting in which the play is presented. Indeed, the use of colloquial terms apparent in today's speech has an unwelcome, almost jarring, effect that detracts from the exchanges occurring on stage.

As college students studying at a university located in a modern metropolis, we can connect to the issues addressed on the stage through our life experiences and observations -- we don't need anachronistic language to force a connection that already exists.

The inventive and impressively versatile set (designed by Joshua Quinlan) and striking costumes (designed by Sarah Fickling) contain enough theatrical magic to wow audiences; however, generally, Ibsen's play is more thought-provoking than whimsical. Although it is unlikely that "An Enemy of the People" will be every student's first choice when it comes to evening entertainment on campus, those whose interests align will be surprised by how much this 19th century play parallels issues apparent in our contemporary world.

"An Enemy of the People" is set to be performed in the Thurber Theatre, located in the Drake Performance and Event Center on OSU’s campus, from Nov. 5 - 15.
D3: Lifefullofcheese.com Review

An Enemy of the People (The Ohio State University Department of Theatre, Columbus, OH)

November 12, 2015

By Chuck III

We all like to think we’d do what is right when faced with a situation involving safety, but Henrik Ibsen’s An Enemy of the People puts forth a situation that has dire consequences no matter the decision. Though first performed in 1882 and set in a coastal Norwegian town, this story about a doctor standing up to show that the lucrative tourist-heavy town baths are cesspools of disease has a lot to say about commerce and health even today in the fine production being performed by the Department of Theatre at The Ohio State University.

Zach Meyer plays Dr. Thomas Stockmann, the man who has proof that the town baths are toxic, with a kind of verve that is admirable. Mr. Meyer is jovial and likable at the beginning, and he is terrific at expressing confusion that others don’t see the correct course of action to take – or even that there is an option. His Dr. Stockmann isn’t afraid to stand alone, even when his wife and some friends have their doubts. Mr. Meyer doesn’t fall into coming off like a sanctimonious martyr, a danger in this material; he’s a doctor and a man of science and wealth – but he’s also quite human and sensitive to the health of the community.

Mr. Meyer is paired against Blake Edwards as Peter Stockmann, the brother who wants to silence Dr. Stockmann’s report as closing the baths would mean financial ruin for the town. Mr. Edwards has some of the best lines in the piece, and so many are delivered with fire and conviction. “The world doesn’t revolve around your science,” he snarls to his brother, “It’s about money!” Mr. Edwards ostensibly plays the villain of the piece, but he isn’t all bad, really. He makes plenty of good points, even though they are morally and ethically questionable. What he says isn’t far off from what I have heard during some of our presidential debates. Mr. Edwards walks and talks with real authority, and one can understand why he tends to get his way. When his brother asks him how he expects the public to respond if he recants his statements
as requested, Mr. Edwards responds simply, “The public is like a woman: fickle.” The audience groans, but
don’t we all know people similarly sexist?

Aside from the excellent performances by Mr. Meyer and Mr. Edwards, the impressive set by
Joshua Quinlan is reason enough to see the show. Constructed of high panels that zigzag across the stage to
represent doorways and walls within the Stockmann home, the set is a real beauty, the panels translucent
depending on the lighting to allow us to see action going on in other rooms. Lighting designer Andy Baker
is also to be commended for illuminating just the rights spots to direct our attention to important action
happening in other areas of the sprawling stage.

Director Lesley Ferris does a marvelous job of taking a play written over a hundred years ago and
making it feel relevant in today’s world (in no small part aided in this adaptation by Rebecca Lenkiewicz,
with dialogue that sounds current but not out of character with the setting). Ms. Ferris ingeniously even
transports the audience at the beginning of the second act into being a part of the action as part of the stage
descends and the audience is plunged into a town hall meeting. Planted actors in the audience stand up and
shout as part of the play, and it’s a thrilling moment that serves to engage spectators environmentally in an
unexpected way.

The only part of this production that rubbed me the wrong way was the use of a chorus of women
that often appear in shadow around the set or dimly lit behind scrims. All they do is stand and stare clad in
rags, and their presence is not acknowledged. It feels too “arty” to me to have this chorus of women (that’s
how they are billed in the program) hiding under chairs and standing in corners, especially during the final
scene. Perhaps they are representing the oppressed workers that are being made to suffer by working at the
town baths, or do they represent the poverty of the past and the impending future? None of it was clear, and
perhaps it shouldn’t be – but in a play with so many strengths and impassioned scenes, this kind of
interpretive element I found distracting.

*An Enemy of the People* is the kind of play – and this the kind of production – that inspires debate
and discussion. So much of it is relevant today, and we can see techniques of public discourse and the
twisting of facts demonstrated here going on in our current political battles. That such a talented group of
students are a part of such a thought provoking production – one that doesn’t attempt to update the source
with cell phones and other anachronisms – gives me hope for the future of theatre.

*An Enemy of the People* continues through to November 15th in the Thurber Theatre at the Drake Performance and Event Center on the Ohio State University campus at 1849 Cannon Drive in Columbus, and more information can be found at [http://theatre.osu.edu/events/enemy-people](http://theatre.osu.edu/events/enemy-people)