

2005—2006 SEASON

# WU?<sup>@</sup>therep

## ALL THE GREAT BOOKS (abridged)

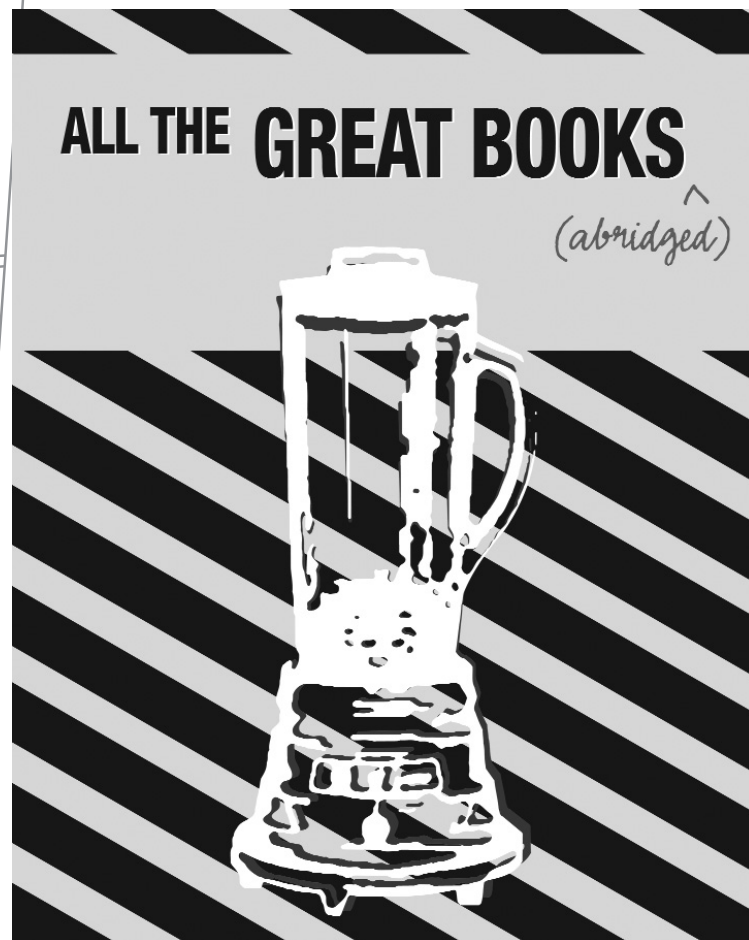
By Reed Martin and Austin Tichenor

Additional Material by Matthew Croke  
and Michael Faulkner

Directed by Reed Martin

### CONTENTS

- 2 The 411
- 3 A/S/L, ABCs & RMAI
- 4 FYI
- 5 RBTL
- 6 IRL1
- 8 IRL2
- 10 F2F
- 12 SWDYT?



STUDY GUIDES ARE  
SUPPORTED BY A  
GENEROUS GRANT  
FROM CITIGROUP



# the 11

At The Rep, we know that life moves fast—okay, really fast.

But we also know that some things

are worth slowing down for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together **WU? @ THE REP**—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (**A/S/L**), a plot summary (**FYI**), background information on the playwright (**F2F**) and other NTK information. Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means **IRL**, anyway.

## CU@therep!

### The Teacher's Lounge



In an effort to make our educational materials more accessible to students and easier for educators to incorporate into the classroom, we have adopted a new, more student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and post-performance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, [www.repstl.org](http://www.repstl.org) for additional information regarding the production elements, such as scenery, costumes, and lighting. Any materials, either from this guide, or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom. As always, we appreciate your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

**NEATO!**

Show Me Standards: CA 1, 2, 5, 6, 7; FA 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; SS 2, 6 and Illinois Learning Standards: 1, 2, 4, 5, 18, 25, 26, 27, SEL 1.

## MIHYAP: TOP TEN WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED AT THE REP

10. **TBA** Ushers will seat your school or class as a group, so even if you are dying to mingle with the group from the all girls school that just walked in the door, stick with your friends until you have been shown your section in the theatre.

9. **SITD** The house lights will dim immediately before the performance begins and then go dark. Fight off that oh-so-immature urge to whisper, giggle like a grade schooler, or yell at this time and during any other blackouts in the show.

8. **SED** Before the performance begins, turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers and watch alarms. If you need to text, talk, or dial back during intermission, please make sure to click off before the show resumes.

7. **TMI** Not to sound like your mom, but "if you need to go now, you needed to go then." Leaving the theatre during the performance is disruptive, so take care of any personal needs before the show starts.

6. **RIM** When you arrive at the theatre, read the production program. It's like a deluxe version of liner notes and a free souvenir, all in one.

5. **P-ZA? NW!** Though your ability to eat ten slices at one sitting may impress your friends, no one wants to listen to you chew, slurp, or smack, so please leave all food, drink, and gum outside the theatre.

4. **TLK-2-U-L-8-R** We know that you will be dying to discuss what you see onstage with your friends, but please wait until intermission. Any talking—even whispering—is very distracting for both the actors onstage and the audience seated around you.

3. **LOL** Without you, we really wouldn't have a show. It's your job to laugh when a scene is funny or maybe even shed a tear or two in a tender moment. However, since you are not the audience at *The Jerry Springer Show* please refrain from inappropriate responses such as talking, whistling, making catcalls or singing along with the performers.

2. **SOP** While it's great that you want a celeb picture of your day at The Rep, the theatre is off-limits to the paparazzi. Flash photography interrupts the performance and along with videorecording is prohibited by Actors Equity rules. You can sneak a peek at production photos on our website, [www.repstl.org](http://www.repstl.org).

1. **LLTA** Let the actors know that you respect their work by remaining for the curtain call at the end of the performance. Show your appreciation through applause.

# A/S/L

COACH'S enthusiasm and work ethic hardly compensate for his inaccurate and incomplete knowledge of literature, but they do make him likable enough.

DUSTIN is an idealistic and under prepared young student teacher who routinely exercises poor judgment.

PROFESSOR, better known as Mr. Baldwin, is barely a teacher and certainly not a professor, but his flare for the dramatic makes him an entertaining addition to this trio.



## READ MORE ABOUT IT

In addition to the works included in The Syllabus, we encourage you to explore the following websites for more information.

<http://books.mirror.org/gb.home.html>

<http://www.centerforbookculture.org/>

<http://home.comcast.net/~dwtaylor1/theocraticcanon.html> *The Theocratic Age*  
Part I of Harold Bloom's Western Canon

<http://www.thegreatideas.org/>

## ABCs of Literary -isms

**ABSURDISM:** A philosophical attitude pervading much of modern drama and fiction, which underlines the isolation and alienation that human beings experience, having been thrown into what absurdists see as a godless universe devoid of any religious, spiritual or metaphysical meaning. Conspicuous in its lack of logic, consistency, coherence, intelligibility and realism, the literature of the absurd depicts the anguish, forlornness and despair inherent in the human condition. Absurdism denies the existence of universal truth or value.

**AESTHETICISM:** A late nineteenth century movement whose characteristic slogan, "art for art's sake," stresses the uselessness of art and divorces aesthetics from any moral, social, political or practical concerns.

## EXISTENTIALISM

**EXISTENTIALISM:** A philosophical, religious and literary term, emerging from World War II, for a group of attitudes surrounding the pivotal notion that existence precedes essence. According to Jean-Paul Sartre, "man is nothing else but what he makes of himself." Existential literature manifests an awareness of the absurdity of the universe and is preoccupied with the single ethical choice that determines the meaning of a person's whole existence. A drama of situations rather than a drama based on psychological motivation or character, it is antideterministic in the extreme and rejects the idea that heredity and environment shape and determine human motivation and behavior.

**EXPRESSIONISM:** A movement in art, drama and literature which sought to objectify and "express" inner experience by rejecting canons of realism and representation. Such drama was characterized by antirealistic settings, nightmarish actions, fragmented dialogue and a general distortion of external reality.

**FORMALISM:** According to the precepts of Russian Formalism, content is the "motivation" of form, and the literary work is an assemblage of devices which function within a total textual system. In a general sense, "formalism" is applied to any critical approach that regards the text as a self-enclosed universe of discourse, subject to interpretation without reference to biographical or historical context.

## AESTHETICISM

There's MORE on page 5!



WHEN  
AM  
I EVER  
GOING  
TO USE  
THIS  
IN REAL  
LIFE?



A COACH, a drama teacher, and a student teacher walk into the school theatre—sounds like the beginning of a weird joke, right? Well, it is. Coach (Think of him as Cher in gym shorts.), Mr. Baldwin (who prefers to be known as Professor), and Dustin (who is simply, Dustin) have been charged with teaching all of the great books of the Western canon to the school's worst students in a mere one hour and forty-five minutes. The result is exactly what the title promises: *All the Great Books (abridged)*. This triumvirate may not be the most prepared or the most capable team to complete the task, but they

are easily the most enthusiastic. With gusto, they plunge headlong into the meatiest compositions the literary world has to offer, quoting (and misquoting) authors from Alcott to Yeats and offering some of the most notable (if not noteworthy) interpretations of the titles everyone should have read but most likely didn't. This (mis)education is a non-stop verbal tennis match that provides the hilarious answer to that oft-asked question heard by so many English teachers, "When am I ever going to use this in real life?" The syllabus for books covered includes:

1984

*The Aeneid*  
*Alice in Wonderland*  
*Animal Farm*  
*Anna Karenina*  
*Autobiography of*  
*Alice B. Toklas*  
*Beowulf*  
*The Bible*  
*Brave New World*  
*Bridges of Madison County*  
*The Brothers Karamazov*  
*The Canterbury Tales*  
*A Christmas Carol*  
*The Count of Monte Cristo*  
*Crime and Punishment*  
*Das Capital*  
*David Copperfield*  
*Death in Venice*  
*Dianetics*  
*Diary of Anne Frank*  
*The Divine Comedy*  
*Don Quixote*  
*Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*  
*Dracula*  
*Fahrenheit 451*  
*Fathers and Sons*  
*The Feminine Mystique*  
*For Whom the Bell Tolls*  
*The Fountainhead*  
*Frankenstein*  
*Gone with the Wind*

*The Grapes of Wrath*  
*Great Expectations*  
*The Great Gatsby*  
*Green Eggs and Ham*  
*Harry Potter and the*  
*Sorcerer's Stone*  
*Heart of Darkness*  
*Hound of the Baskervilles*  
*Huckleberry Finn*  
*Hunchback of Notre Dame*  
*The Idiot*  
*I Know Why the Caged Bird*  
*Sings*  
*The Iliad*  
*Interpretation of Dreams*  
*The Invisible Man*  
*Jane Eyre*  
*Jaws*  
*Leaves of Grass*  
*Little Women*  
*Lolita*  
*Lord of the Flies*  
*Metamorphosis*  
*Middlemarch*  
*Moby Dick*  
*The Odyssey*  
*Of Mice and Men*  
*Oliver Twist*  
*On the Road*  
*One Flew over*  
*the Cuckoo's Nest*  
*The Origin of Species*

*Orlando*  
*Paradise Lost*  
*The Picture of Dorian Gray*  
*Plato's Republic*  
*Pride and Prejudice*  
*Remembrance of Things Past*  
*Samuel Johnson's Dictionary*  
*The Satanic Verses*  
*The Scarlet Letter*  
*Sense and Sensibility*  
*Silas Marner*  
*Silent Spring*  
*Sons and Lovers*  
*The Sound and the Fury*  
*The Story of Genji*  
*A Tale of Two Cities*  
*Tao Te Ching*  
*TekWar*  
*Tess of the D'Urbervilles*  
*The Three Musketeers*  
*Thus Spake Zarathustra*  
*To Kill a Mockingbird*  
*To the Lighthouse*  
*Treasure Island*  
*Ulysses*  
*Valley of the Dolls*  
*Walden*  
*War and Peace*  
*White Fang*  
*The Wizard of Oz*  
*Wuthering Heights*

# MORE -isms

**HUMANISM:** A man-centered rather than a god-centered view of the universe. In the Renaissance, Humanism devoted itself to the revival of classical culture: the life, thought, language and literature of ancient Greece and Rome. In literature the main virtues are seen to be restraint, form and imitation of the classics, the ultimate authorities being Aristotle and Horace.

**IMAGISM:** A school of poetry prominent in Great Britain and North America between 1909 and 1918. According to T. E. Hulme, poetry should eliminate excess verbiage and concentrate on the absolutely accurate presentation of a concrete and precise image. The objectives of Imagism were accurate description, objective presentation, concentration and economy, new rhythms, freedom of choice in subject

matter, suggestion rather than explanation and the absence of clichés. In Ezra Pound's phrase, the natural object is always the adequate symbol.

**MODERNISM:** A term used to describe the characteristic aspects of literature and art between World War I and World War II. Influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche's annunciation of the death of God Karl Marx's view of consciousness as a product of sociohistorical factors, Sigmund Freud's view of the unconscious as the determinant of motivation and behavior, and the dislocating effects of the carnage and devastation of the war, modernism embodies a lack of faith in Western civilization and culture—its humanism and rationalism. In poetry, fragmentation, discontinuity, allusiveness and irony abound; in fiction, chronological

disruption, linguistic innovation, the stream-of-consciousness device, and point-of-view narration; in art and theater, expressionism and surrealism.

**REALISM:** A literary movement of the nineteenth century which sought to represent human experience and society in a way that seems true to life.

**ROMANTICISM:** A movement of the late eighteenth century and the nineteenth century that exalts individualism over collectivism, revolutionism over conservatism, innovation over tradition, imagination over reason, and spontaneity over constraint. According to romanticism, art is essentially self-expression, a spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions.

# SYMBOLISM

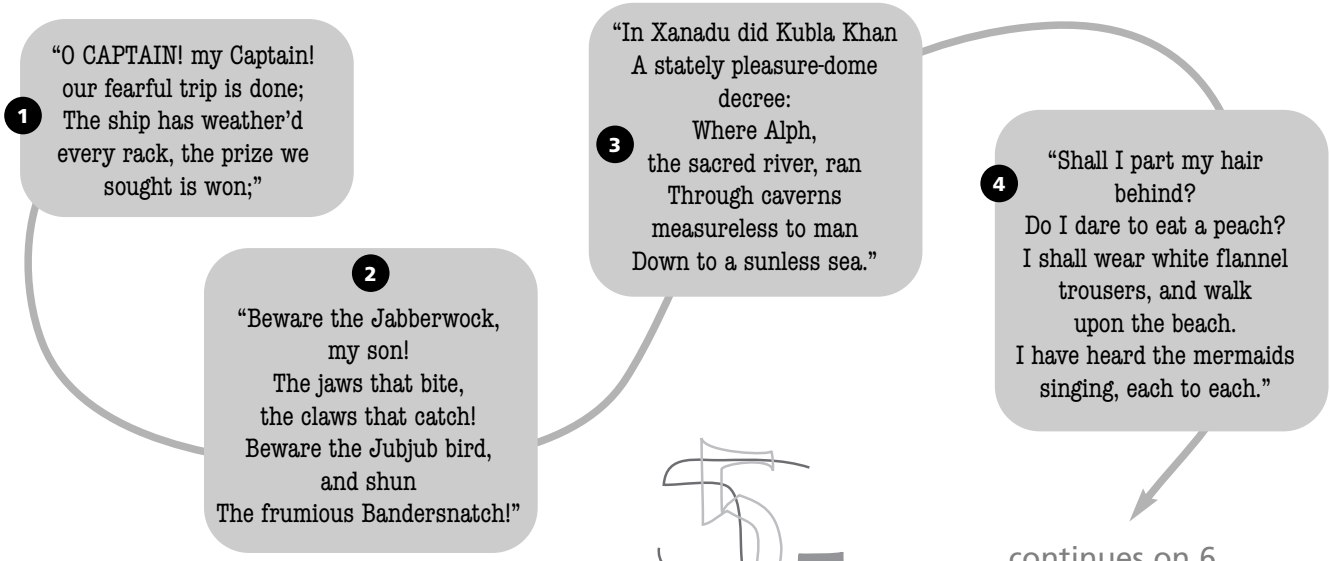
**SYMBOLISM:** A literary movement encompassing the work of a group of writers working in France in the latter half of the nineteenth century, a group which included Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, Paul Verlaine, Paul Valéry, Arthur Rimbaud and others. According to Symbolism, there is a magical and mystical correspondence between the natural and spiritual worlds. By exploiting the connotative, associative and evocative power of words, the poet, through his own suggestive private language, can obliquely express this correspondence and trigger a sympathetic vibration in the reader. The Symbolists had a great influence on British and American poets, especially on William Butler Yeats and T. S. Eliot.

# MODERNISM

# ROMANTICISM

RBTL

In reviewing the "Great Poets", the Professor manages to butcher several weighty (and a few light) lines of verse. Using an Internet search or, gasp, the library, see if you can match up these corrected bits of poetry with their true sources.



continues on 6

# ALL THE GREAT ENGLISH MAJORS (abridged)



AFTER YOU HAVE seen *All the Great Books (abridged)*, you will, most likely, be so psyched that you will rush to your counselor's office, request an immediate transfer into all available lit classes, and bite your nails until that blissful day that you can declare yourself an English major at the distinguished university of your choice. However, you may still hear a little nagging voice (that sounds a lot like your parents) in the back of your head asking, "What do English majors do when they grow up...read?" The answer is "Yes, and a whole lot more!" While there certainly are thirty-something English majors still mooching off of Mom and Dad, chances are

that these are folks who would still be in the nest whether they were wannabe novelists or rocket scientists. So, you can put your (and your parents') fears to rest and start exploring career options that literary pursuits can hold for you.

THE FLASHING-NEON-SIGN choices are teaching, going to graduate school or writing professionally, but if these don't appeal, you needn't stop here. Reading, analyzing and responding to literature prepares you to apply communication, critical thinking and problem-solving



5  
"Let us go then, you and I,  
When the evening is spread  
out against the sky"

7  
"Star Light Star bright,  
The first star I see tonight,  
I wish I may, I wish I might,  
Have the wish I wish  
tonight."

9  
"I shall be telling this  
with a sigh  
Somewhere ages  
and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged  
in a wood, and I—  
I took the one  
less traveled by,  
And that has made all the  
difference."

6  
"Tiger, tiger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful  
symmetry?"

8  
"And you, my father, there  
on the sad height,  
Curse, bless me now with  
your fierce tears, I pray.  
Do not go gentle into  
that good night.  
Rage, rage against the  
dying of the light."

continues on 8



skills in almost any context, so the employment door is wide open. Beyond the traditional forays into mass communications, non-profit organizations, social work and the arts, English majors frequently pursue careers in business, law and medicine.



WHILE IT MIGHT seem essential to hold a business degree for a business position, most employers have very detailed corporate training programs that orient new hires to the specifics of their company. What they are seeking is people who are effective communicators and aggressive problem solvers. Positions in this field could range from sales to management to marketing. Likewise, law school admissions officers typically do not recommend a particular

major for potential candidates, simply a degree program that requires rigorous analytical skills. Because the law is, largely, a pre-existing set of statutes, the close reading techniques and ability to interpret both literal and implied meaning developed in literary study are invaluable to a future attorney, as are the insight into human behavior and motivation derived from character analysis. The number of physicians who have backgrounds in the liberal arts is also increasing amidst a growing concern for the emotional and psychological preparation of those in the medical profession. Identification with and empathy for others gained from reading literature benefits future MDs as much as the critical thinking skills it affords.

In case you aren't persuaded, below are a few notable former English majors and their more well-known careers.

- Alan Alda—actor, writer
- Russell Baker—journalist
- Dave Barry—humorist, writer, actor
- Linda Bloodworth-Thomason—televisionwriter/producer (*Designing Women*, *Evening Shade*)
- Carol Browner—Head of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Chevy Chase—comedian, actor, writer
- Mario Cuomo—Governor of New York
- Michael Eisner—Walt Disney CEO

- Donald Regan—former president of Merrill Lynch, Secretary of the Treasury
- Jodi Foster—actress, filmmaker
- Kathryn Fuller—World Wildlife Fund CEO
- A. Bartlett Giamatti—President, Yale University and Commissioner of Baseball
- Cathy Guisewite—cartoonist (“Cathy”)
- Chris Isaak—songwriter, singer
- Stephen King—novelist
- Paul Newman—actor, food entrepreneur
- Joe Paterno—football coach (Penn State)
- Sally Ride—astronaut
- Joan Rivers—comedienne
- Diane Sawyer—broadcast journalist

- Paul Simon—songwriter, singer
- Steven Spielberg—filmmaker
- Marty Shottenheimer—Coach of Kansas City Chiefs
- Christopher Reeve—journalist, lobbyist for disabled rights, superhero (*Superman*)
- Clarence Thomas—U.S. Supreme Court Justice
- Grant Tinker—TV Executive and Producer
- Harold Varmus—Nobel laureate in medicine, Director of National Institutes of Health
- Barbara Walters—broadcast journalist
- Sigourney Weaver—actress
- Pete Wilson—Governor of California
- Bob Woodward—journalist (*All the President's Men*)



# IRL<sup>2</sup>

SO YOU ARE probably wondering, “Where is this literary canon that everyone is talking about and more importantly, is it loaded?” Relax. Although the Western Canon is a topic of much debate among academics, the threat of physical violence is very low. The Canon is a loosely assembled collection of books and art that, according to its proponents, has been crucial in the development of Western civilization. Most selections include both fiction and non-fiction works ranging from epic poems, such as *The Iliad*, to the poetry of Walt Whitman to music, dramatic works, novels and theoretical writings on religion, science, philosophy, economics, politics and history. While there is no single authority determining what is or is not included in this grouping, many universities maintain reading lists for the benefit of their students. In addition, scholars in the field also assemble such lists as Great Books of the Western World and Harold Bloom’s canon.

ONE OF THE first attempts to record such a specific reading plan began at Harvard in

1909 with then president of the university, Charles W. Eliot. What became known as the Harvard Classics operated under the idea that, in the words of Thomas Carlyle, “The greatest university of all is a collection of books.” The Great Books of the Western World program followed suit at the University of Chicago under the direction of president Robert Hutchins and scholar Mortimer Adler and sought to extend this liberal arts education into the public realm by providing suggested reading lists, texts and developmental plans for book clubs.

ON THE SURFACE, this sounds like a noble pursuit, one with which no one could argue. After all, who can complain about efforts to encourage people to ready quality literature? However, the problem lies in who determines what defines quality, and consequently, what is included in the Canon. This has been a matter of serious debate for nearly half a century with no apparent end in sight. The primary concern, one expressed and amusingly addressed in *All the Great Books (abridged)*, is that the Canon represents almost exclusively the works of



10 “How do I love thee?  
Let me count the ways.  
I love thee to the depth and  
breadth and height  
My soul can reach,  
when feeling out of sight”

11 “I think that I shall  
never see  
A poem lovely as a tree.”

12 “Into the valley of Death  
Rode the six hundred.  
‘Forward, the Light  
Brigade!’  
Was there a man  
dismay’d?”

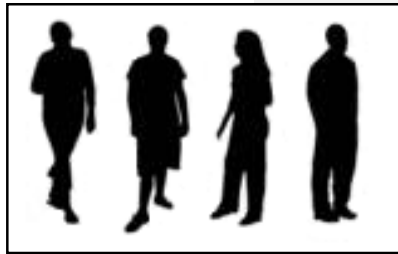
13 “Listen, my children,  
and you shall hear  
Of the midnight ride of  
Paul Revere,  
On the eighteenth of April,  
in Seventy-five:  
Hardly a man is now alive  
Who remembers that  
famous day and year.”

14 “Seventy six trombones  
led the big parade,  
With a hundred and ten  
cornets close at hand.  
They were followed by  
rows and rows,  
Of the finest virtuosos,  
The cream of every  
famous band.”

“dead white European males” and therefore fails to acknowledge the contributions of a global writing community.

THOSE WHO FAVOR such a system claim that their critics are compelled by political, rather than aesthetic motivations, and that the rewards of having a common cultural frame of reference far outweigh the threats of exclusivity. But the bothersome notion of power remains. If such lists continue to exist, someone, whether it is an individual, such as noted academic Harold Bloom, or institutions, such as St. John’s College, will

stand in authority to declare what is—and by default what is not—worthwhile to read and study. Naturally, such curricular decisions do have to be made, regardless of the state of the Canon; teachers and professors can’t discuss every work of literature and students certainly can’t read every known title. But the problem that arises is that if, as many people suggest, art and literature are a means of exploring and knowing ourselves as both individuals and as a collective culture, how accurately can we analyze both our past and our present if our recommended venue is a limited one?



- IS IT POSSIBLE to strike a balance between presenting shaping forces and developing voices within a culture?
- What are the benefits of having most people share a common educational background?
- What are the potential dangers of a list such as the Canon?
- How important is this debate for day-to-day living? Do the books we read and the art we view really impact who we are or how we behave?

15

“O body swayed to music,  
O brightening glance,  
How can we know the  
dancer from the dance?”

16

“The caged bird sings with  
a fearful trill  
of things unknown but  
longed for still  
and his tune is heard  
on the distant hill  
for the caged bird sings  
of freedom.”

17

“I sing the Body electric;  
The armies of those I love  
engirth me, and I  
engirth them;  
They will not let me off  
till I go with them,  
respond to them,  
And discorrupt them, and  
charge them full with the  
charge of the Soul.”

18

“Oh, somewhere in this favored land  
the sun is shining bright.  
The band is playing somewhere, and  
somewhere hearts are light.  
And, somewhere men are laughing,  
and little children shout,  
but there is no joy in Mudville –  
mighty Casey has struck out.”

19

“Leave no black plume as a token of  
that lie thy soul hath spoken!  
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—  
quit the bust above my door!  
Take thy beak from out my heart, and  
take thy form from off my door!”  
Quoth the raven, ‘Nevermore.’”



# face 2 face



**PLAYWRIGHTS** Reed Martin and Austin Tichenor, along with contributors Matthew Croke and Michael Faulkner are members of The Reduced Shakespeare Company, a self-described “three-man comedy troupe known for taking long, serious subjects and reducing them into short, sharp comedies.” In addition to *All The Great Books (abridged)*, their productions for the stage include *The Bible: The Complete Word of God (abridged)*, *The Complete History of America (abridged)*, *Western Civilization: The Complete Musical (abridged)*, and *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*. In various combinations, they tour throughout the United States and Great Britain, performing on both television and radio and in such notable venues as the White House, Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center and London’s West End.

**MATTHEW CROKE**, who serves as the original namesake for the show’s ever-tardy student teacher, is a veteran of the Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus and has studied with the Second City improvisational group in Chicago. He works as a writer and performer for the Company in both the U.S. and the U.K.

**MICHAEL JOHN FAULKNER** performs with the Company’s U.S. tour and claims to have made his stage debut as a pilgrim in his elementary school’s tribute to Johnny Appleseed. His more recent accomplishments include “two one-line parts on television”, multiple commercials and training with the Second City group.

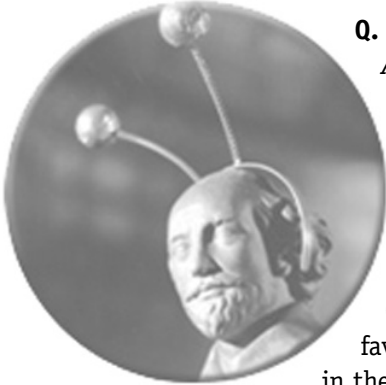
**REED MARTIN** is the original Coach and also co-created and performed in the original productions of *The Bible: The Complete Word of God (abridged)*, *The Complete History of America (abridged)*, *Western Civilization: The Complete Musical (abridged)*. Other writing credits include the BBC, NPR, Britain’s Channel Four, RTE Ireland, Public Radio International, *The Washington Post* and *Vogue* magazine. He and fellow Company member, Austin Tichenor also co-authored the book, *The Greatest Story Ever Sold*. Mr. Martin spent two years touring with Ringling Brothers Barnum & Bailey Circus and can be heard in the animated feature film *Balto*. A member of the Dramatists Guild, his performances have earned him Olivier and Helen Hayes Award nominations. He holds a BA in Political Science/Theatre from the University of California at Berkley, and an MFA in Acting from the University of California at San Diego and is a former professional minor league baseball umpire.

**AUSTIN TICHENOR** is a graduate of the University of California at Berkley and Boston University but still describes himself as “an intellectual welterweight.” His writing and performing career began with a “boldly conceived kindergarten puppet show” but led him on to a seven-season stint as Associate Producing Director of the American Stage Festival in Milford, New Hampshire where he created more than twenty works for children’s theatre. Since joining the Reduced Shakespeare Company in 1992, he has originated the roles of The Conspirator Guy, Moses, Adolph Hitler and the World’s Ugliest Rhinemaiden and currently makes recurring appearances on the television shows, *24* and *Alias*. Mr. Tichenor is a writer and managing partner for the RSC and performs in both the U.S. and the U.K.





# AN INTERVIEW (!) WITH MATTHEW CROKE



**Q.** Name?

*A. Matthew D. Croke.*

**Q.** Age?

*A. 32.*

**Q.** Occupation?

*A. Actor.*

**Q.** Describe your personality in 5 words.

*A. I am without a doubt.*

**Q.** What is your favourite role to play in the shows you have done so far?

*A. Juliet is a fun role but it's an a\*\* kicker because it's soooo early to be running around like an idiot.*

**Q.** Out of the four shows which is your favourite and why?

*A. I like the America show because I think it's the smartest.*

**Q.** What is such a nice guy like yourself doing in with a crowd such as the RSC?

*A. I broke the law, it was either this or old folks homes.*

**Q.** Have you always wanted to be an actor or did you want to be a fireman at age 4?

*A. I wanted to be a truckdriver because of the*

*show BJ and the Bear. That's the best show ever made.*

**Q.** What do you do before a show?

*A. Breathe.*

**Q.** Do you get lots of fanmail? Anything interesting?

*A. No-Yes.*

**Q.** What are the differences between the UK and US audiences?

*A. For the most part they live in different parts of the world.*

**Q.** Do you have any strange or funny talents?

*A. I can balance things on my chin.*

**Q.** Have you ever been unable to stop laughing while performing? What did you do?

*A. Yes, many times. Mostly with Austin and then we can tell if we're getting Reed because the more serious he looks the more he is about to laugh.*

**Q.** If you could be a vegetable what would you be?

*A. Blue.*

**Q.** In your opinion what way should toilet roll be fed?

*A. With a fork.*

**Q.** If you discovered a planet what would you name it and why?

*A. Lisa, because that's the name of my wife and she's outta this world. (Take notes boys, this is good stuff.)*

**Q.** Do you have any bad habits? And do any of the other RSC folk have any you hate?

*A. I play PlayStation 2 too much. And Reed has this annoying habit of speaking when he's on stage.*

**Q.** Have you anything to say to your fans?

*A. Hi fans!*

**Q.** How much do you actually know about Shakespeare?

*A. This is true, I have never seen a Shakespeare play in my life and I have only read Macbeth when I was in high school.*

**Q.** Would you be willing to take a test to see?

*A. Sure, ask me anything. I won't know it.*

©2002 Reduced Shakespeare Company





# SWDYT?



**“...depicting racism is not racist. That’s why [we] should study the book. Because it shows Huck’s growing awareness of and then rejection of racism.”**

- The Professor is referring to the use of a racial slur in *Huckleberry Finn*, a book that has been removed from several school reading lists for this reason. What do you think of the Professor’s response? Is there an appropriate or productive way to depict racism in literature? What can be learned from examining such depictions?

**“You demean what I say by making fun of it. That’s a form of censorship.”**

- Is Dustin right? Are we effectively censoring other people’s thoughts and actions if we make fun of them, or is this just a necessary hazard of living in a free society? Have you ever felt unable to say what you really thought or felt because you were afraid that other people would mock you? Does that change the way you think or act?

**“Books should not be banned. No art should be...”**

- How do you feel about the Professor’s statement? Should all art, regardless of content be available to the public, or are there some works that should be restricted or even banned? If banning is an option, who should make these decisions and what should be the criteria?

**“If you take nothing away from this course, take this: do not be intimidated by the great authors. They were regular guys.”**

- Coach suggests that many people are overwhelmed by literature. Do you agree? What makes it difficult for some people to enjoy “great books”? Why is reading these works important?

**“Forget reason and strategy, and simply have faith in the human spirit. Live your life instinctively with a passion for spontaneity.”**

- How do you interpret Dustin’s paraphrase of Tolstoy? Should we all just react to life on instinct rather than making detailed plans? Are you comfortable with living this way? What do you think the result would be if everyone took this approach?

## ANSWERS TO RBTL

1. Walt Whitman "Oh Captain! My Captain!"
2. Lewis Carroll "The Jabberwocky"
3. Samuel Taylor Coleridge "Kubla Khan"
- 4 & 5. T. S. Eliot "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"
6. William Blake "The Tiger"
7. Mother Goose nursery rhyme "Trees"
8. Dylan Thomas "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night"
9. Robert Frost "The Road Not Taken"
10. Elizabeth Barrett Browning from "Seventy-Six Trombones"
11. Joyce Kilmer "Trees"
12. Alfred Lloyd Tennyson "The Charge of the Light Brigade"
13. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow "Paul Revere's Ride"
14. The Music Man "Casey at the Bat"
15. W.B. Yeats "Among School Children"
16. Maya Angelou "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings"
17. Walt Whitman "Sing the Body Electric"
18. Ernest L. Thayer "Ernest L. Thayer Casey at the Bat"
19. Edgar Allan Poe "The Raven"