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THE PLAY

It's 1967 and **Matt** and **Christina Drayton** are enjoying their Wednesday afternoon in a white, upper-class San Francisco neighborhood, when they are surprised by the arrival of their daughter **Joanna**. Johanna has returned from overseas with a guest, **Dr. John Prentice**.

Johanna has another surprise: she and John are engaged! Joanna's parents are suddenly faced with an issue that they never saw coming: John is African American.

Tensions flare as the table is set for an evening where race, class, and family values are served as the main dish.

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

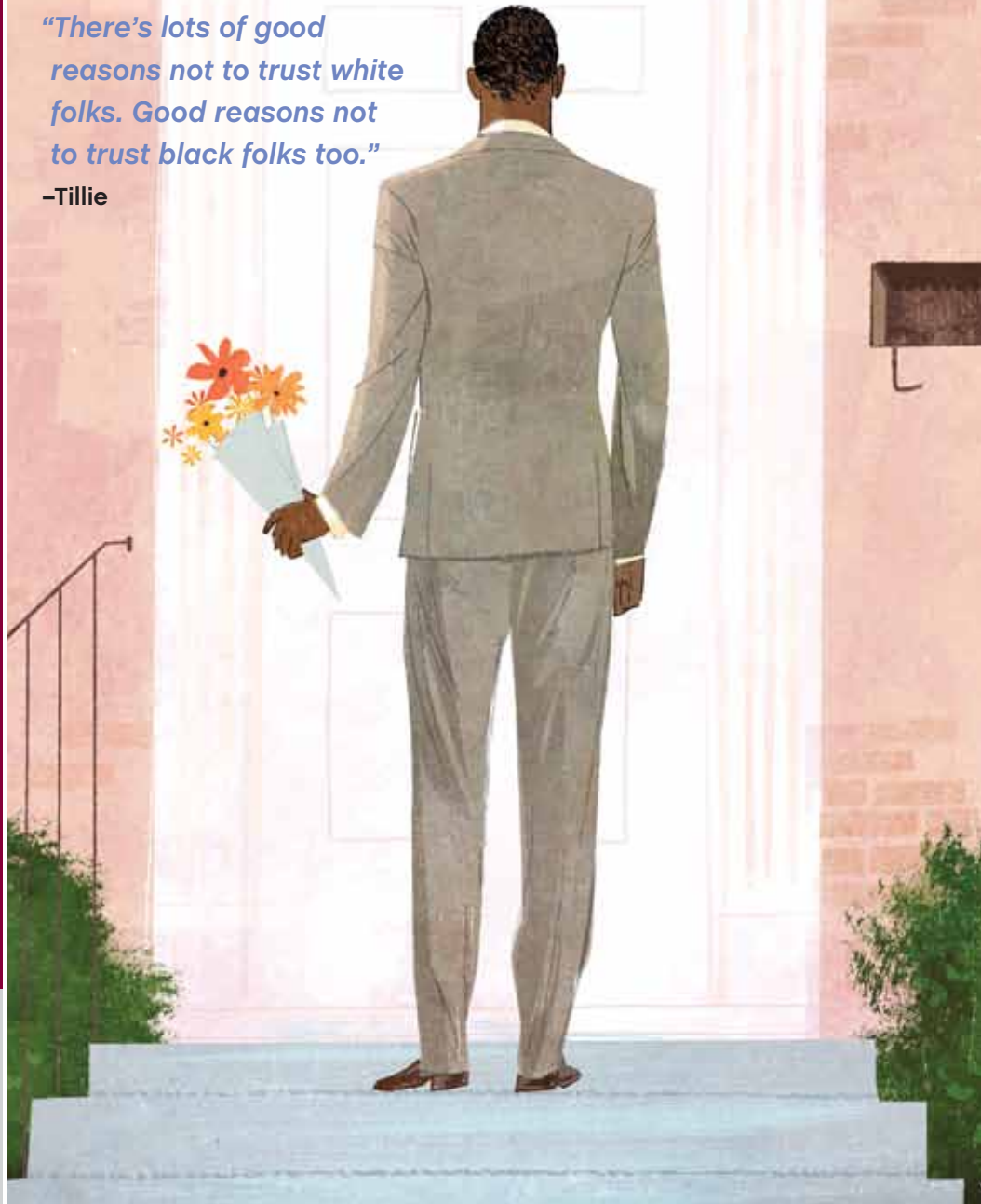
Now Playing in the Fichandler Stage
November 29, 2013 - January 5, 2014

By Todd Kreidler

Based on the screenplay by William Rose
Directed by David Esbjornson

"There's lots of good reasons not to trust white folks. Good reasons not to trust black folks too."

-Tillie



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MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT



Todd Kreidler

Todd Kreidler is a playwright, **dramaturg** and director. His adaptation of the film *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* premiered at the True Colors Theatre Company in Atlanta in 2012.

As an accomplished Broadway dramaturg, Kreidler has worked on August Wilson's *Radio Golf*, *Gem of the Ocean*, and associate directed the Tony Award-winning revival of *Fences*. His work on these shows led him to co-found the August Wilson Monologue Competition, a national program aimed at integrating August Wilson's work into high school curriculum.

Kreidler is currently writing a musical adaptation of the film *Drumline*. He is also working on *Holler if Ya Hear Me*, an original story that includes the lyrics of rap artist Tupac Shakur.

dramaturg – a researcher, adaptor and editor of plays

FROM SCREEN TO STAGE

The film *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* was written by William Rose, an American screenwriter. It starred Sidney Poitier, Spencer Tracy and Katharine Hepburn. Rose wrote the film to break African American stereotypes: Dr. John Prentice is a perfect character so that the only objection could be his race.



Sidney Poitier

Released on December 12, 1967, the film caused great controversy because it was illegal to marry interracial within 17 states at the time. It was a box office success and nominated for 10 Academy Awards, winning for Best Actress (Katharine Hepburn) and Best Original Screenplay.



In 2007 Kenny Leon and the True Colors Theatre Company commissioned Todd Kreidler to adapt the 1967 film into a play. While adapting the film Mr. Kreidler said, "What's more current than a story set in a society riven by intolerance and fear? We forget: only a generation ago America drank from separate fountains. This love story offers a way to expose the fear and intolerance and see what happens when a couple attempts to share the water in even the most apparently liberal of homes." ●

a! ACTIVITY *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* is adapted from a film of the same title. As you watch the film, take notes. Discuss the similarities or differences that you notice between the play and film.



Bethany Anne Lind and Malcolm-Jamal Warner in the stage version

INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE: LOVING V. VIRGINIA



Richard and Mildred Loving

In October 1958, two residents of Virginia, Mildred Jeter (a black woman) and Richard Loving (a white man) were charged with violating the Racial Integrity Act of 1924. This act prohibited marriage between races. This is an example of an anti-miscegenation law: a law that enforces segregation by criminalizing interracial marriages and intimate relationships.

On January 6, 1959, the Lovings pled guilty to the charge, and

were sentenced to one year in jail. However, the judge suspended the sentence on the condition that the Lovings leave Virginia and not return together for 25 years.

On June 12, 1967, six months after the film *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* premiered, the Supreme Court ruled anti-miscegenation laws unconstitutional, ending all race-based legal restrictions on marriage in the United States. ●

1960S CIVIL RIGHTS TIMELINE

Outside the Drayton family home, key moments in the Civil Rights Movement are happening. Tensions are high and change is happening.



1960 - Civil Rights Act of 1960 advances the voting rights of minorities, penalizing any who try to obstruct voting rights.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY TODAY



Protestors march in Washington, D.C. for same-sex marriage equality.

The Civil Rights Movement dealt with the inequalities imposed on African Americans. Many believe that today's civil rights movement includes the fight for same-sex marriage equality.

In 2013, the Supreme Court ruled it unconstitutional to deny federal benefits of marriage to married same-sex couples. However, same-sex couples can legally marry in only 14 states (California, Connecticut, Delaware, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington) and the District of Columbia.

On the 40th anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Loving v. Virginia*, Mildred Loving issued a statement commenting on the comparison between interracial marriage and same-sex marriage:

"I believe all Americans, no matter their race, no matter their sex, no matter their sexual orientation, should have that same freedom to marry... I am proud that Richard's and my name is on a court case that can help reinforce the love, the commitment, the fairness and the family that so many people, black or white, young or old, gay or straight, seek in life. I support the freedom to marry for all. That's what Loving, and loving, are all about." ●

a! ACTIVITY Choose a recent event in the local or national news. Explain how it fits into the struggle for civil rights and list five things that you can do to further that cause.

RACE RELATIONS

"The data shows we're becoming more of an integrated, multi-racial society,"
- demographer, William H. Frey, the Brookings Institution

Interracial Marriages in the United States: 1960 – 2010 Census

Year	Total U.S. Married Couples	Total Black/White Interracial Couples
1960	40,491,000	51,000 (.13%)
1970	● 44,597,000	65,000 (.14%)
1980	● 49,514,000	167,000 (.33%)
1990	● 53,256,000	211,000 (.40%)
2000	● 56,497,000	363,000 (.64%)
2010	60,384,000	558,000 (.92%)

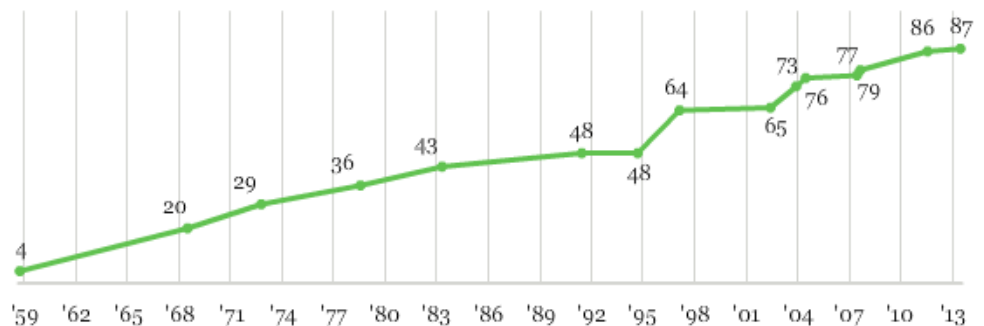
The number of interracial marriages in the U.S. has increased dramatically since the 1960s Source: U.S. Census, Fertility and Family Statistics Branch. Interracially Married Couples: 1960 to 2010.

Approval of Interracial Marriage

In July 2013 Gallup conducted its *Minority Rights & Relations* poll, which shows a dramatic change in approval for interracial marriage in America over the last 55 years. Today, 87 percent of people polled approve of black-white marriage versus 4 percent in 1958. See the data in the chart below and the full report at www.gallup.com.

Do you approve or disapprove of marriage between blacks and whites?

■ % Approve



1958 wording: "... marriages between white and colored people"

1968-1978 wording: "... marriages between whites and nonwhites"

a! ACTIVITY Where is there diversity (race, religion, sexual orientation, etc.) in your family tree? Find out what challenges these family members might have faced.

1963

- At the March on Washington Martin Luther King, Jr. delivers the "I Have a Dream" speech.



1964

- Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlaws racial segregation in the United States.

1967

- With the *Loving v. Virginia* decision the United States Supreme Court declares all state laws prohibiting interracial marriage unconstitutional.

1968

- Civil Rights Act of 1968, commonly known as the Fair Housing Act, provides equal housing opportunities regardless of race, religion or national origin.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN PHYSICIANS

"Why do you think I work overseas? Most major research labs here would only let me inside to push a broom." – Dr. John Prentice

Like Dr. John Prentice, many African-American doctors were forced to move to different states and overseas to find work because of prejudice in the United States. In most cases they were equally or more qualified than their white counterparts.

Inspired by the Civil Rights Movement, the National Medical Association (established in 1895 for the advancement of African-American medical professionals) coordinated sit-ins, marches and picket lines to advocate for African-American civil rights. Such protests helped to open more doors for African-American doctors. By 1968 there was an increase in the number of African Americans in medicine. ●

An African-American Doctor's Contributions to Medicine



Dr. Charles Richard Drew (1904 – 1950) was an educator, surgeon and blood bank pioneer. The most prominent African American in medicine of his time, Drew protested the practice of racial segregation in the donation of blood.

PROGRESS FOR AFRICAN-AMERICAN DOCTORS

- 1960 - 12 out of 26 medical schools in the South are closed to African-American students.
- 1963 - 20 black and white physicians picket the American Medical Association's (AMA) annual meeting.
- 1964 - The Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes discrimination illegal in hospitals that receive federal funds.
- 1965 - Medicare and Medicaid legislation mandates hospital integration.
- 1968 - The American Medical Association implements a policy to end discriminatory racial exclusion or practices by any medical society and seeks ways to increase African-American membership.

Helpful Hints for Theater Audiences

As an audience member at the theater, YOU are part of the show! Just as you see and hear the actors onstage, they can see and hear you in the audience. To help the performers do their best, please remember the following:

- Arrive at least 30 minutes early.
 - Visit the restroom before the show starts.
 - Before the show begins, turn off your cell phone, watch alarms, pagers and other electronic devices. If anything rings by accident, shut it off immediately.
 - Save food and drinks for the lobby. There is no eating or drinking inside the theater.
 - Walk to and from your seat - no running in the theater!
 - Do not talk, whisper, sing or hum.
 - Do not use cell phones for calls, text messages, pictures or games.
 - Keep your feet on the floor, not on the seat in front of you.
 - Avoid getting up during a show because it distracts your neighbors and the performers. If you must leave, wait for a scene change, then exit quietly and quickly.
 - Performers appreciate enthusiastic applause rather than whistling or shouting.
 - Cameras and videotape are prohibited because they are distracting to the performers.
- Enjoy the show!**

THREE BIG QUESTIONS

1. What is the tension between how people feel about an issue in theory versus how people respond when that issue presents itself in real life?
2. What are your stance and your family's stance on civil rights issues today?
3. How do families react when confronted with conflict?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

FILM

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner: Columbia Pictures, 1967

ON THE WEB

USA Today: "Interracial Marriage: More accepted or still growing?"
<http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/health/wellness/marriage/story/2011-11-07/Interracial-marriage-More-accepted-still-growing/51115322/1>

CNN: Defining America:
"Neither black nor white: Three multiracial generations, one family"
<http://www.cnn.com/2011/US/04/18/multiracial.census/index.html>

PBS: Eyes on the Prize
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eyesonthepize/story/16_vietnam.html



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