



P.L.A.Y.  
PERFORMING FOR LOS ANGELES YOUTH

# BLOODY

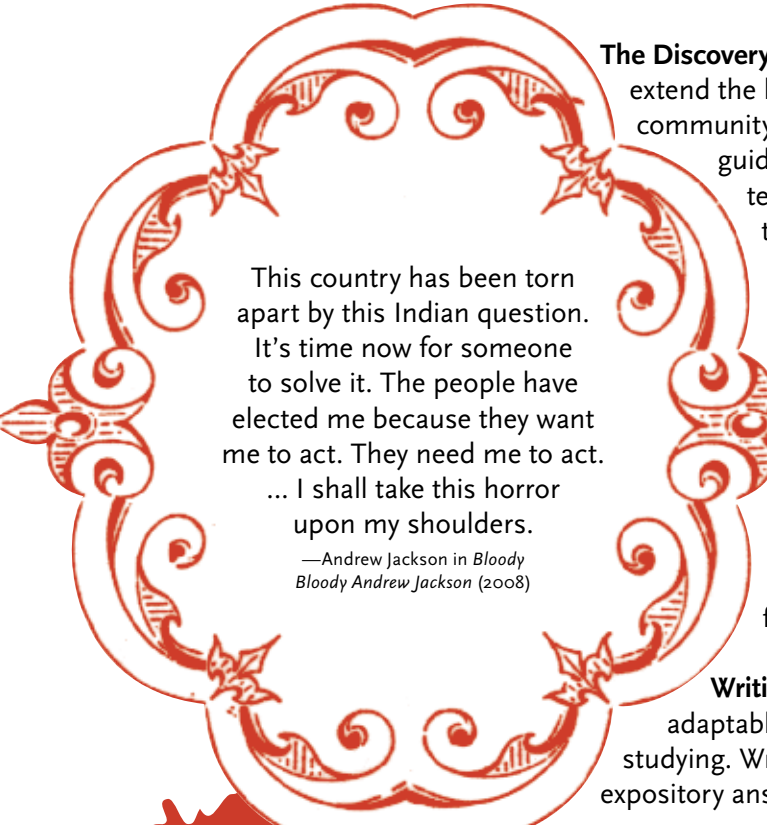
TEACHING INSTRUCTIONS

Written by Alex Timbers    Music and Lyrics by Michael Friedman  
Directed by Alex Timbers

*Bloody Bloody  
Andrew Jackson*

Jan 13–Feb 17, 2008  
Kirk Douglas Theatre

# How to Use the Discovery Guide



This country has been torn apart by this Indian question. It's time now for someone to solve it. The people have elected me because they want me to act. They need me to act. ... I shall take this horror upon my shoulders.

—Andrew Jackson in *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* (2008)

## TO THE TEACHER

The Discovery Guide for *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* has been developed as a prompt-book for a standards-based unit of study appropriate for grades nine through 12. The specific learning activities in theatre arts can be readily integrated with other content areas, particularly Language Arts and History/Social Sciences, to accelerate teaching and learning.

**The Discovery Guide is a starting point.** Please adapt the material and extend the learning activities to meet the needs of your particular community of learners. Our hope is that the structure and content of this guide will not be merely functional, but also inspiring – and that teachers and students will share the thrill of learning through theatre arts.

**The Discovery Guide is not designed as an independent workbook.** It is a resource for learners to develop skills in storytelling, literary analysis and collaboration that are essential in Theatre Arts, Language Arts, History/Social Sciences and other content areas. Oral discussion and writing prompts are designed so that students may relate key ideas to their personal experiences and the world around them. Teachers are expected to adapt or extend the prompts. Teachers may choose some prompts for small group discussion and others for the whole group.

**Writing Applications:** Many of the prompts in the Guide are easily adaptable to match writing objectives your class might already be studying. Written responses to the prompts may range from short expository answers in complete sentences to formal, five-paragraph essays.

In any case, teachers at all grade levels are encouraged to design at least one rigorous, standards-based written performance assignment in conjunction with their unit on *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*.

**Oral Applications:** Andrew Jackson was the first Presidential candidate to travel by railroad on his campaigns in order to truly reach the people. Public speaking engagements were crucial to his popularity. Several exercises in the Discovery Guide are designed to give your students an opportunity for oral presentations, whether interpretive, persuasive or informational.

**Scope and Sequence of the Lessons:** In order to provide a comprehensive and sequential unit of study, we suggest that students have the opportunity to explore the whole variety of lessons in the Discovery Guide.

**The activities are designed to be completed in sequence.** The activities on pages 4 through 11 are to be completed before the students see the production of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. The discussion and writing prompts on pages 12 through 14 and the Resources on page 15 are intended to stimulate reflection, analysis and further inquiry after students attend the play.

**Vocabulary:** Introduce the key vocabulary words on each page as they occur. Help students pronounce the words correctly; provide opportunities to use the words in complete sentences.

# The Goals

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Regardless of grade level, the unit is designed to teach **enduring understandings** that students will take with them for life. The enduring understandings for *Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson* are:

- History is in the eye of the beholder.
- The use of humor/satire in a theatrical performance can convey a serious message; it can be a catalyst for change.
- Reflecting upon what we have learned helps to reinforce our learning.

Below is the **essential question** for the program, as well as **key questions** that can be raised before, during and after students' experience at the performance to guide them toward the enduring understandings.

**Essential Question:**

How does exploring history give us insight into today's events?

**Key Questions:**

- What are you capable of doing within the realm of satire?
- What do you believe is the state of the country now? Politically? Socially?
- How has the country changed from then to now?
- What is the role of the citizen?
- Where do we get our news?
- Why is a musical a successful form of satire?

# The Standards

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Teachers should “bundle” one of the recommended theatre focus standards with a focus standard from another content area to help design their classes’ integrated units of study.

For instance, you might be able to “bundle” one of the recommended History/Social Sciences focus standards with a focus standard from theatre and another content area such as language arts, to help design the classes’ integrated units of study.

## THEATRE

### **Artistic Perception:** *Development of the Vocabulary of Theatre*

1.1 Students observe theatrical productions and respond to them, using the vocabulary and language of the theatre.

### **Historical and Cultural Context:** *Role and Cultural Significance of Theatre*

3.1 Identify and compare how film, theatre, television and electronic media productions influence values and behaviors.

3.1 Describe the ways in which American history and culture is reflected in theatre.

## ENGLISH-LANGUAGE ARTS

### **Grades 9–10**

#### **Reading:** *Literary Response and Analysis*

3.7 Recognize and understand the significance of various literary devices, including figurative language, imagery, allegory and symbolism, and explain their appeal.

#### **Written and Oral English Language Conventions:** *Listening and speaking*

1.2 Compare and contrast the ways in which media genres (e.g., televised news, news magazines, documentaries, online information) cover the same event.

1.11 Assess how language and delivery affect the mood and tone of the oral communication and make an impact on the audience.

### **Grades 11–12**

#### **Reading:** *Literary Response and Analysis*

3.1 Analyze characteristics of subgenres (e.g., satire, parody, allegory, pastoral) that are used in poetry, prose, plays, novels, short stories, essays and other basic genres.

#### **Listening and Speaking:** *Listening and speaking strategies*

1.1 Recognize strategies used by the media to inform, persuade, entertain and transmit culture (e.g., advertisements; perpetuation of stereotypes; use of visual representations, special effects, language).

1.2 Analyze the impact of the media on the democratic process (e.g., exerting influence on elections, creating images of leaders, shaping attitudes) at the local, state and national levels.

## HISTORY

### **Chronological and Spatial Thinking**

1. Students compare the present with the past, evaluating the consequences of past events and decisions and determining the lessons that were learned.

### **Historical Research, Evidence and Point of View**

2. Students identify bias and prejudice in historical interpretations.

### **National Identity**

Realize that true patriotism celebrates the moral force of the American idea as a nation that unites as one people the descendants of many cultures, races, religions and ethnic groups.

### **Civic Values, Rights and Responsibilities**

Understand what is required of a citizen in a participatory democracy.

Understand individual responsibility in a democratic system.

# Prior To Workshop #1



**How to Use this Discovery Guide**

Bloody *Bloody Andrew Jackson* is an original musical based on the life of Andrew Jackson, one of the more hotly debated presidents in United States history. The show puts a fresh, contemporary and wildly irreverent spin on Andrew Jackson and his administration, which encourages audiences to draw comparisons to current political affairs. This Discovery Guide will provide historical context for the events and perspectives shared in the play and raise questions intended to continue the political dialogue begun by the performance experience.

Vocabulary words are in bold type. Definitions are within each section.

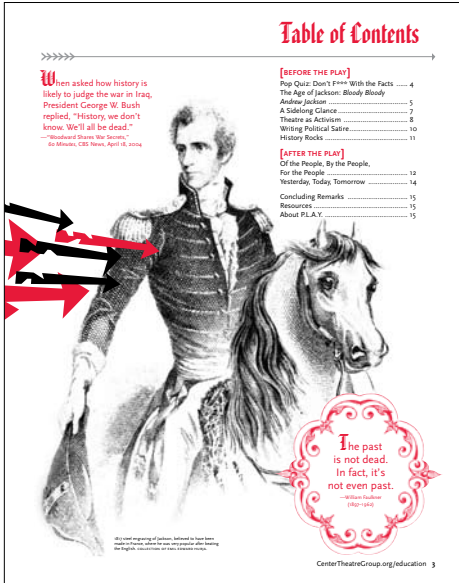
- **Examine the life and times of President Andrew Jackson.**
- **Identify the characteristics of political satire and theatre as activism.**
- **Consider the role of the citizen in a democratic society.**
- **Explore the relationship between art and activism and the significance of satire as a catalyst for change.**

DISCOVERY GUIDE WRITERS  
Doug Casady, Discovery Guide Writer, is a playwright and novelist for young people. His original youth musical *Wrecked* (Book by David Ivers) was adapted from his novel *Wrecked* with actor Mark Martin, performed at the Kennedy Center in October 2012. *Imagine*, a new youth musical, premiered at South Coast Rep in March in July 2014.

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When asked how history is likely to judge the war in Iraq, President George W. Bush replied, "History, we don't know. We'll all be dead."  
—"Shouldn't Drive the Scooter," in *Minuteman*, CBS News, April 16, 2004

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The past is not dead. In fact, it's not even past.

All used images of Jackson, Andrew Jackson, and the Great Seal of the United States are in the public domain. All other images are the property of Center Theatre Group.

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## Pages 2–3: How to Use this Discovery Guide

**Rationale:** Students will be able to optimize their learning if they have a clear understanding of the layout of the Discovery Guide and objectives of the exercises contained in the unit. This will help them describe their learning process.

**Exercise:** Read and discuss the objectives of the Discovery Guide with the class.

**Exercise:** Have the students identify the name of the Discovery Guide writer and graphic designer.

**Exercise:** Read and discuss the quotations on page 3 by author William Faulkner and President George W. Bush. Add this Andrew Jackson quote to your discussion: "I've got big shoes to fill. This is my chance to do something. I have to seize the moment."

Ask the students if they understand, identify or agree with the statements. Ask why or why not.

**Exercise:** Note the years assigned to the quotations. Andrew Jackson was a 19th century leader describing the opportunities available to him in the present day. William Faulkner was a 20th century author waxing on the present impact of history. George W. Bush is a 21st century leader speculating on the historical impact of his actions. Ask the students for their perspectives on the lessons to be learned from history and whether history is "alive" or "dead."

# Prior To Workshop #1

**BEFORE THE PLAY**

## Pop Quiz: Don't F\*\*\* With the Facts

When Andrew Jackson became the seventh president of the United States, he was:

- A. A 20-something rock star with a broken heart
- B. A 60-year old career soldier with a musket ball lodged in his lung that made him cough so hard that his whole body shook and he often spat blood
- C. A 6'11", 155-pound war veteran with a shock of grey hair, piercing blue eyes, and so full of buckshot that he walked around rattling like "a bag of marbles"
- D. A threat to the nation, according to the late Thomas Jefferson

As a public speaker, Andrew Jackson would:

- A. Grab the microphone and launch into a big number
- B. Speak real good
- C. Speak with terrible diction because he had lost most of his top teeth
- D. Tend to curse and swear inappropriately

Which of the following is not true? Andrew Jackson was the first president:

- A. To be born in a log cabin
- B. To launch a campaign tour
- C. To be elected by a popular vote
- D. To win the popular vote and not be elected
- E. To ride a railroad train
- F. To be targeted in an assassination attempt
- G. To have running water in the White House
- H. To own slaves during his administration

TRUE OR FALSE: During the Creek War, Andrew Jackson found a Native American baby in the arms of its dying mother on a battlefield and adopted the boy as his own son.

TRUE OR FALSE: At President Andrew Jackson's funeral in 1845, his pet parrot, Polly, was removed for swearing.

**EMBARRASSING TRUTH OR A DISREPUTABLE LIE:** Andrew Jackson's wife, Rachel Donelson Robards, was already married when he married her.

When Andrew Jackson was shot and wounded in a famous duel with Charles Dickinson, the best shot in Tennessee, Jackson:

- A. Passed out and was rushed to the hospital
- B. Perched on one elbow and sang a song about it
- C. Calmly took aim and shot Dickinson through the heart

**TRUE OR FALSE:** When Andrew Jackson was 13 years old, he was taken prisoner by the British forces, mangled off to the British commander and got hit in the head with a saber that inflicted a scar he carried until the day he died.

**As president, Jackson used his veto power to put the kibosh on legislation:**

- A. Once
- B. Okay, twice
- C. Never
- D. More often than all the previous presidents put together

**TRUE OR FALSE:** During his presidency, Jackson bought 20 spittoons for the East Room at \$750 each. Critics said it was a waste of government money but supporters praised the move, saying it would save White House carpets.

Throughout his life, Jackson was believed to have been afflicted with heavy metal toxicity, a reference to lead and mercury poisoning and not to Queen M' Roses. To address this health condition, Jackson's physicians prescribed pharmaceutical drugs and:

- A. Two aspirin
- B. Aerobic exercise
- C. A stiff belt of whiskey
- D. Frequent and rigorous bloodletting

**Elevate those guns a little lower.**  
—Andrew Jackson

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Page 4

## Page 4: Pop Quiz: Don't F\*\*\* With the Facts

**Rationale:** In the playful spirit of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, we offer a historical context that includes the thornier aspects of Andrew Jackson's public and personal life. The play examines the life of Jackson in the context of contemporary celebrity culture. It is important for students to appreciate the outrageous and often notorious aspects of Jackson's personal history that distinguished him from preceding American statesmen. Many of the anecdotes and factual tidbits included in this exercise are referenced in *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. Students with advance knowledge of Jackson's eccentricities will be better equipped to appreciate the satirical tone of the material.

**Exercise:** Ask students to complete the quiz individually. Discuss the answers. Answers to the Pop Quiz: 1. B, C and D; 2. C and D; 3. H; 4. True; 5. True; 6. True; 7. C; 8. True; 9. D; 10. True; 11. D.

# Prior T Workshop #1

**The Age of Jackson: Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson**

ANDREW JACKSON BARGED INTO THE HISTORY BOOKS long before he became the seventh president of the United States (1829-1837). As a general leading the Battle of New Orleans (1815) during the War of 1812, Jackson savagely slaughtered the British troops and became an instant national hero. It was only a matter of time before he set his sights on the White House.


In the early 1800s, America offered a new beginning for the common man. Until that time, the gentleman farmers of the eastern aristocracy controlled almost all the land and finances. With westward expansion, men did not need to rely on family title or noble birth to make a name; instead, the era of the frontiersman had arrived, and a new breed of self-made men created their own destinies with swagger, braggadocio and unrelenting competition.

Andrew Jackson was just such a man. Born and raised as an orphan in a log cabin in the Carolina backwoods, he lacked both social class and family. Instead, he vaulted himself into leadership roles with a military career distinguished by its savagery and ambition.

Election laws changed to allow more of the populace to vote, and these common men identified with Jackson. In his first run at the White House in 1829, Jackson carried a plurality of both the popular vote and the Electoral College. However, since no candidate received a majority, the election decision was referred to the House of Representatives. The passing power came open to preserve the status quo of the nation by designating John Quincy Adams as president, most likely they finished at the prospect of handing the reins to a reckless hooligan like Jackson.

In 1832, Jackson mounted a second run at the White House, cultivating populism as a political movement, actively forging the beginning of the Democratic Party and promising to clean up the corruption in Washington. Identified as a "man of the people" and still golden from the Battle of New Orleans, Jackson was handily elected and became the first president not descended from the eastern aristocracy or the original colonies. **More...**

**JACKASS**  
In 1830, opponents referred to Democratic presidential candidate Andrew Jackson as a "jackass" so often that Jackson embraced the nickname. They used the Democratic Party was symbolized by a donkey in Thomas Nast's political cartoon for Harper's Weekly. Since then, the donkey has been widely used as a symbol of the party, though unlike the Republican elephant, the donkey has never been officially adopted as the party's logo.



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## Pages 5–6: The Age of Jackson: Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson

**Rationale:** Students will be better positioned to appreciate the jokes and the substantial issues raised by *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* if they arrive with some prior knowledge regarding the actual man. Since the production contains so much biographical information about Jackson, the comments here provide a thumbnail sketch of the man. The synopsis also attempts to put Jackson into a historical context relative to his own presidency. In addition, the play utilizes several structural innovations as a “documentary drama.”

**Exercise:** Have students review the sidebar titled “The Trail of Tears,” concerning the forced relocation of Native Americans. Ask students if they can think of other examples in which groups of people have been forcibly relocated. In each case, ask students to consider the apparent injustice of such actions as well as the apparent necessity.

**[Introduction]**

...Continued. During his administration, Jackson faced monumental challenges in advancing his own agenda, such as the elimination of the Second Bank of the United States and the nullification of tariffs, much less managing the “Indian Problem.” Jackson believed the country during eight years of sweeping cultural change. Land issues boiled large as Texas, Arkansas and Michigan

added to the Union, on the heels of Maine and Missouri less than a decade before. On a local level, the country experienced the Second Great Awakening, a nationwide religious revival consisting of renewed personal salvation at evangelical revival meetings. Dominant social causes included prison reform, temperance, women’s suffrage and the crusade to abolish slavery.

Popular culture of the day witnessed the best-selling novels of Charles Dickens, the poetry of Edgar Allan Poe, Davy Crockett’s death at Alamo, Samuel Morse’s electric telegraph, Queen Victoria’s ascension to the throne of England, young Abraham Lincoln’s entrance into Illinois politics and Abner Doubleday’s first baseball.

**Vocabulary**  
Majority: A number more than half of the total, greater than 50%  
Plurality: The largest part of a total, but not exceeding 50%  
Populism: A political philosophy supporting the rights and power of the people in their struggle against the privileged elite.

**THE TRAIL OF TEARS**  
As a direct result of Jackson’s administrative resolve regarding the “Indian Problem,” some 30,000 Native American tribal peoples were removed to the American West. The Cherokee Nation maintained a strong but beleaguered foothold in Georgia, but they were eventually expelled by means of a treacherous mid-water route, but they were eventually expelled by means of a treacherous mid-water route, but they were eventually expelled by means of a treacherous mid-water route, but they were eventually expelled by means of a treacherous mid-water route. Mortality totaled between 4,000 and 8,000.

Movies and television create the mistaken impression that Native Americans were a primitive people living in teepees. In fact, by the early 1800s, many generations of Cherokee Indians in Georgia lived side-by-side with their white neighbors in European-style homes and farms, with a written language and their own newspaper. Georgia sued to get the land back. Even though the Supreme Court eventually ruled in favor of the Cherokee Nation, President Jackson turned his back on the court’s decision. The Cherokee Nation was ordered off the land.

The “Trail of Tears” is not the only legally sanctioned forced relocation in American history, others include the deportation of Mexican Americans during the Great Depression, and the Japanese American Internment Camps of World War II.

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**Exercise:** Review the article. Here is a simple way to introduce the play to the students:

- The play tells the story of Andrew Jackson’s rise from a disadvantaged boy in Arkansas to the 7th president of the United States.
- The play uses rock music to convey what a “rock star” Andrew Jackson was in his day, meaning an almost-celebrity candidate who rode his popularity to acquire more power.
- Although based on historical characters and events, the play uses a contemporary approach to the material, as well as contemporary references, to offer satirical comment on current events.

# Prior To Workshop #2

## A Sidelong Glance

**SATIRE IS OFTEN USED AS A TOOL OF POLITICAL CRITICISM.** Successful satirists use humor to indirectly expose the follies or faults of targeted policies or individuals. Critics say that satire is nothing but a license to insult. Fans of satire find entertainment value in the ridicule and usually agree with the point of view expressed. Satirists who skillfully treat their subjects are often presented to be reliable sources of information – which heightens the persuasiveness of their satirical arguments. Modern audiences get regular doses from such television shows as *The Simpsons*, *South Park* and *The Daily Show* and films such as *Shrek* and *Best Cultural Learnings of America for Make Believe! Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*.

The lampoon factor in satire typically uses exaggeration, *incongruity*, reversal and parody to win laughs. *Reversal* is a comic device that flips expectations, such as in the animated film *Shrek* with its unexpectedly sweet-hearted ogre and

a damsel-in-distress who knows karate. In *Bloody Andrew Jackson*, for example, the incongruous characterization of a president as a “rock star” makes a statement about the impact of celebrity culture on contemporary elections. The creators exaggerate Jackson’s reputation for violence with comic stage combat.

Satirists often use *anachronism* to add contemporary resonance or irony to a comedic situation. An anachronism is anything that is or seems misplaced in time. The principle works both ways: historic figures might speak contemporary slang, or a contemporary character might be depicted in historical garb. In *Bloody Andrew Jackson* you will notice contemporary costume elements, music and slang.

Of course, anachronisms are in the eye of the beholder: Andrew Jackson curses a blue streak in the play, and while this may seem incongruous, who is to say that he swore any differently than we do today?



**EXERCISE**  
Attach a current political cartoon to this page and explain below why it is funny. Be prepared to present the cartoon to the class.

**A RECIPE FOR BLOOD**  
Using only ingredients you find in your kitchen, make stage blood. How realistic looking is it? How usable is it? Answer the following questions about the blood you produce. What color is it? Does it splatter and drip convincingly? Does it harden? Will it stain? Can someone put it in their mouth? Bring a sample to class for demonstration.

**Vocabulary**  
**Anachronism:** the presentation of someone existing or something happening outside its chronological, proper or historical order  
**incongruity:** incompatibility; something not in keeping or inconsistent with what is proper or expected  
**Satire:** irony, sarcasm or wit used to attack or expose folly, vice or stupidity

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## Page 7: A Sidelong Glance

**Rationale:** High school students are probably well-acquainted with satire from *South Park*, *The Daily Show* and *Saturday Night Live* on television. Teachers might encourage students to share examples of funny sketches or lampoons they have seen. Our interest here, of course, is in the use of satire as an instrument of social criticism or activism, so each example should be subjected to further scrutiny to gauge whether the student appreciates the contemporary figures and factual issues underlying the satire. It may be useful to reference examples of satire from *The Onion*, a satirical mock-newspaper available on newsstands or the internet.

**Additional Information:** Satire and parody have long served as a means of engaging in topical criticism by

targeting public figures, exposing political injustices and espousing social ideologies. The flip side of this attack is that satirists sometimes find themselves subjected to lawsuits for slander or libel. (Libel is a false insult that is published in media-form, whether television or newspaper. Slander applies to false spoken statements that injure a person’s reputation or standing in a community.) Students may be surprised to learn that the First Amendment protects satire and parody as a form of free speech and expression.

During the 1980s, the United States Supreme Court considered a lawsuit brought by Reverend Jerry Falwell, a popular television evangelist, against *Hustler* magazine for a cartoon parody that depicted Falwell engaging in a drunken sexual encounter with his mother in an outhouse. The magazine had “covered” itself by contextualizing the cartoon as a parody of a popular advertisement campaign for Campari Liqueur. The United States Supreme Court ruled that public figures and public officials could not recover damages without showing that “the publication contains a false statement of fact which was made with ‘actual malice,’ i.e., with knowledge that the statement was false or with reckless disregard as to whether or not it was true.” The Court recognized the importance of allowing the free flow of ideas despite a possible negative emotional impact on the target of ridicule, when the individual had already thrust themselves into the public arena.

**Exercise:** Review the vocabulary with the students. Discuss in particular the meaning of the word “anachronism” to gauge students’ comprehension of the concept.

**Exercise:** Study the political cartoon entitled “King Andrew the First,” which appeared during the 1832 election campaign. Discuss its implications with the class.

**Exercise:** Students are expected to open a newspaper and find a political cartoon. The Resources section includes a link to a website that culls political cartoons from around the world. In the spirit of the exercise, students might be encouraged to tackle a cartoon that they don’t “understand” or “find funny” and research the underlying issues and context so that they can explain the joke to the class.

**Exercise:** In addition to his bloody reputation in battle, Jackson was bled regularly for medical reasons. Both of these aspects are portrayed in the play. To get your students into the spirit of the musical, ask them to concoct a sample of stage blood from their own kitchens. The particular questions raised in the exercise have to do with the design demands of the blood utilized by the actors in performance.



# Prior To Workshop #2

**BEFORE THE PLAY**

## Theatre as Activism

Of course, the themes or subject matter of a play do not need to be overtly political for a play to be considered political. Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* contains not a word of politics and still resonates as a sharp indictment of small-town America. Other realist dramas rely on allegory to make their political point. Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* is about the Salem Witch Trials, but remains an unmistakable attack on the blacklisting tactics of the House Un-American Activities committee. More recent examples of political theatre include Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, David Hare's *Stuff Happens*, and the works of Anna Deavere Smith, Caryl Churchill, Tom Stoppard, Dario Fo, Jean Genet, Harold Pinter and Caryl Churchill.

Another form of political theatre takes a more aggressive and "activist" approach. Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956) developed a style called epic theatre, overtly intended to further Marxism and to cultivate communist sympathies. Brecht's brand of "epic" theatre delivers political theory and economics to the audience with little interest in emotional response to the story or its characters. Similarly, Augusto Boal (1931–) in his "Theatre of the Oppressed," engages the audience as "spect-actors" moving them from passive observers of a play to active participants directly voicing their own personal views and opinions during the performance.

**Vocabulary**  
**Allegory:** Political propaganda, disseminated through literature, drama, art or music and encouraging its audience to take action.  
**Allegory:** The representation of abstract ideas or principles by characters, figures or events in narrative, dramatic or pictorial form.

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## Pages 8–9: Theatre as Activism

**Rationale:** Students' experience of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* will be enhanced by an understanding of political theatre and the ways in which theatre is used to express opinions and to encourage social change. Again, students may be well acquainted with examples of political satire used as political theatre from their experience of *The Daily Show* or *South Park*. It is important here that students appreciate the long-standing tradition of political activism in the theatre and its deep roots in the art form.

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**EXERCISE**

Television and film are also sources for political "theatre." Many current offerings take barbed jabs at contemporary issues, and they don't always wear their politics on their sleeve. *Happy Feet*, for example, makes a statement about global warming in a movie otherwise preoccupied with tap-dancing penguins.

Choose a political play, movie or a television program and answer the following questions.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the political perspective or point of view of the creator?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Does the show urge you toward particular behavior or action? What?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you rely on the program for information or insight?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Do you repeat information you acquired from the program when you talk with friends?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

How have the perspectives of the program changed you?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

How is the experience of watching a political program different from watching something that is not political?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

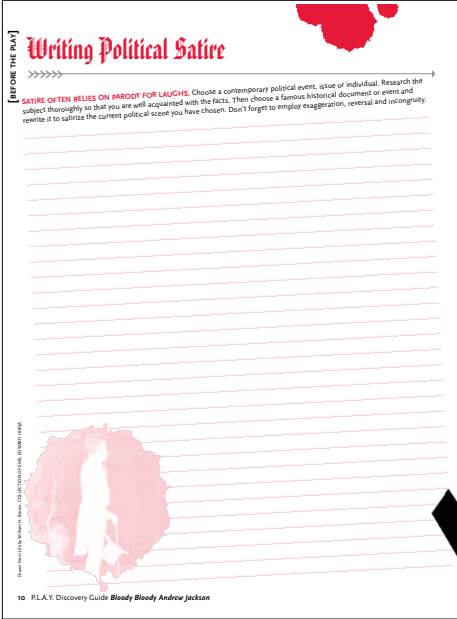
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**Exercise:** Review the vocabulary with the students. Discuss in particular the meaning of the word "allegory" to gauge students' comprehension of the concept.

**Exercise:** Ask students to identify an example of political theatre from their own viewing experience of theatre, television or film. Students should respond to the "fill in the blank" exercise with full sentences. The successful student will have applied a rigorous subjective analysis as to whether the program identified fits a definition of political theatre.

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# Prior To The Performance



## Page 10: Writing Political Satire

**Exercise:** Review the instructions to the exercise on writing your own satire. Before starting the satire exercise, review the handout regarding the elements of satire and the general advice in tackling a piece of satirical commentary. Ask students to identify the subject of their satire and to be especially clear about the satirical perspective they intend to address. Review the concept of parody, anachronism, exaggeration, reversal and incongruity. Remind students that if the target of their satire is a public figure, they will most likely not be able to sue for slander or libel – so have at it.

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# Prior To The Performance

**History Rocks**

EARLY 20th-CENTURY STAGE MUSICALS were mostly song and dance variety shows with the main emphasis on spectacle, like *Ziegfeld Follies*. Actual storytelling did not become part of the mix until Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein's *Show Boat* (1927) which adapted Edna Ferber's novel into song and dance. After that, "book musicals" became the norm on Broadway, epitomized perhaps by Lerner and Loewe's smash hit *My Fair Lady* (1956), based on George Bernard Shaw's play *Pigmalion*.

In 1955 the "rock musical" shattered all the old conventions and created new ones. Hair arrived on Broadway with a new sound, the embodiment of a rock concert, dancing in the aisles and a mad-as-hell finale. After that, rock artists began creating concept albums known as "rock operas" like The Who's *Tommy* and *Quadrophenia*, Pink Floyd's *The Wall* and Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody*. Contemporary musicals typically combine elements of the original song-and-dance spectacle, the book musical and the rock concert while tackling such unlikely subjects as a Puritan opera (*Jesus*), a transgender rock singer (*Hedwig and the Angry Inch*) and coming of age in 19th-century Germany (*Spring Awakening*).

Typically, songs in a "book musical" move the story forward by presenting characters' declarations of what they want, who they are or what's happening. In *The Lion King*, for example, characters sing "I Just Can't Wait To Be King," "Can You Feel The Love Tonight?" and celebrate "The Circle of Life." Songs in rock musicals often have a different purpose, serving as personal anthems of raw emotion or offering ironic commentary on the action or the world at large. For example, in *Tommy*, the hero sings "I'm Free" and "See Me, Feel Me," and the world responds, "We're Not Gonna Take It."

**EXERCISE**  
Choose a song played in class from *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* and write a short paragraph describing how you imagine the song functions in the actual production. Does it tell the story? Does it describe a character? Does it describe the spirit of the country at the time? Does it provide an opportunity for a character to make a decision? Does it provide an ironic commentary on the action of the play?

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## Page 11: History Rocks

**Rationale:** Students' enjoyment of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* will be enhanced with an understanding of the development of the rock musical in musical theatre. After students read the essay, ask them if they have seen any stage productions or film adaptations of any of the musicals listed. Perhaps they have seen other examples of rock musicals; television and animated films count. Ask students if they can identify the difference between a rock musical and a typical musical comedy. Ask students if they prefer one form over another and why.

**Exercise:** Review the instructions in the exercise concerning the score of the musical. If your class did not hear CD selections of the music, samples of songs from *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* are available on the Internet. Play a few selections for your students and ask them to consider the questions raised in the Discovery Guide. Does the song have a dramatic action or does it merely describe a situation? Do they have an emotional response to the song? Does the music sound like something they would listen to on their own? Alternately, this exercise may be completed after seeing the play.

# After The Performance: Prior To Workshop #3

**Of the People, By the People, For the People**

In his inaugural address, President Kennedy famously said, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country."

As Milton Friedman observes in his book, *Capitalism and Freedom*, neither half of Kennedy's oft-quoted statement expresses a relationship worthy of free men in a free society. "What your country can do for you" implies a paternalistic system in which the government is the provider and the citizen is the ward. "What you can do for your country" implies that the citizen is beholden to service a masterful government. Instead, Friedman asserts, a truly free man will ask, "What can I and my fellow citizens do through government to meet our responsibilities, realize our goals and protect our freedom?" Furthermore, Friedman asks, "How can we keep the government we create from becoming a Frankenstein that will destroy the very freedom we establish it to protect?"

In the age of Andrew Jackson, American democracy was still a toddler finding its legs. The Founding Fathers had initiated an unadmitted experiment—democracy—dedicated to the creation of a free society in a world otherwise governed by tyranny, servitude and misery. Only seven presidents later, the country was challenged to live up to its words. The common man wanted his share in the advantages of a free society too.

But what is the role of the citizen? Are we obliged to stay informed as to every legislative action, judicial ruling or presidential decision and to voice our opinion? Or does individual responsibility end with the casting of a ballot? In *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, the citizens insist that "something needs to be done" about the "Indian Problem," yet no one steps forward with a tangible solution. President Jackson is charged with the task of coming up with a solution and shouldering the blame. Today, polls regarding the war in Iraq indicate that Americans favor an end policy. But who is expected to come up with the terms of that policy?

The fact that these questions remain unanswered shows how little democracy has advanced over the years. If we were a toddler in the Age of Jackson, perhaps it is a surly teenager today.

**Exercise:** Hear me out in it, thou great democratic God!—Thou who didst pick up Andrew Jackson from the pabbies, who didst haul him upon a war-horse, who didst thunder him higher than a throne!

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*

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**EXERCISE**  
List five elements of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* that remind you of current political issues or events. For each example, describe what your responsibility as a citizen is, relative to that issue or event.

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**Vocabulary**  
Austere: Fearlessly, often resistively doing best.  
Paternalistic: Treating or governing people in a condescending manner, especially by providing for their needs without giving them rights or responsibilities.  
Tenable: Capable of being maintained in argument; rationally defensible.

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## Pages 12–13: Of the People, By the People, For the People

**Rationale:** *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* raises questions about the role of the citizen in a democratic society. The essay on citizenship raises rhetorical questions for discussion. Not yet old enough to vote, students may feel disconnected from the issues of citizenship raised for discussion. Cultivate an awareness of the mutual rights and duties of citizens living in a free society. Students who have experienced other forms of government may be able to share their experiences in order to foster an enhanced appreciation for the opportunities created by a representative government.

**Exercise:** Review the quotation from Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* that references Andrew Jackson. Ask students if they have a context for Melville's reference after having attended *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. Ask students to exchange ideas as to what Melville's reference implies about the president.

**Exercise:** Review the vocabulary with the students. Discuss in particular the meaning of the word "paternalistic" to gauge students' comprehension of the concept. Discuss the political cartoon of the "Great Father" on page 12. Also note the picture on the wall behind Jackson of "Columbia," an early symbol of the U.S., standing over Great Britain.

**Exercise:** Review the instructions in the exercise requesting students to identify contemporary allusions in *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. The musical is chockfull of examples. Students may think of topical comments in the spoken dialogue and lyrics used in the production. Review the concept of anachronism in this context. Students should also be encouraged to think beyond the text of the play and to look for contemporary references in the costumes, props, settings, situations, music and performances. With each example, ask students to consider their responsibility as a citizen, if any, to that item or issue. Use the space provided in the Discovery Guide.

# Following Workshop #3

**LETTER THE DAY**

## Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

**A DISTINCTION NEEDS TO BE DRAWN BETWEEN POLITICAL SATIRE,** which offers a quick skewering of its target, and allegorical satire, which attempts to engage its reader in a more empathetic experience of the underlying perspectives. George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is perhaps the most popular example of allegorical satire, tracking the birth of communism in barnyard politics. Political satire sweetens its argument with humor, while allegorical satire sweetens its argument with story.

An allegory is a literary form in which an abstract truth is presented as an extended metaphor through the characters, their actions or the events that comprise a narrative story. More simply stated, an allegory is a story with two meanings: a literal meaning and a symbolic meaning. Fables, myths and legends are often referred to as allegorical. In this manner, a story might be situated in the past, but entangle with contemporary issues – and raise implications for the future. Contemporary examples of allegories run the gamut from *Moby Dick* and *The Wizard of Oz* to *The Chronicles of Narnia* and *Battlestar Galactica*.

Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson tracks Jackson's journey to the White House and his efforts to deal with a significant turning point in the evolution of American democracy. The literal meaning of this story is a history lesson. However, Alex Timbers layers his retelling of Jackson's career with symbolic resonance to contemporary issues and concerns in a manner that suggests the allegory.

**EXERCISE**  
Choose one of the five contemporary political issues or events you identified on the previous page. Create an allegory in narrative form that satirizes some aspect of that political issue or event. Use a familiar fable, myth or legend as a source and use anachronism as well as exaggeration, irony, reversal and parody. Remember that you want your allegorical satire to offer a persuasive argument on the underlying political subject matter – so attack the occupation with an agenda!

**Who cut the cheese?**  
As president, Jackson once received a large round wheel of cheese as a gift. The cheese – at four feet in diameter and two feet thick – stood aging in the White House foyer for two years. As the stench became overwhelming, Jackson scheduled a cheese tasting for the general public. The cheese was consumed in two hours.



The White House © Jackson's time: released of 1790/1800/1810/1820/1830/1840/1850/1860/1870/1880/1890/1900/1910/1920/1930/1940/1950/1960/1970/1980/1990/2000/2010/2020

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## Page 14: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

**Rationale:** *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* could be seen as an allegorical satire addressing the current political climate. Review the essay on political satire and allegorical satire and ask students to offer their own examples. Gauge whether students appreciate the distinction. Ask students to consider whether *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* might be considered an allegorical satire, and if so, how and why?

**Exercise:** Read the instructions on writing your own allegory. Review the elements and guidelines on writing an allegory provided on the separate handout. Encourage students to tackle the assignment as boldly as they feel comfortable – and remind them that the First Amendment protects political criticism.

# Following Workshop #3

## Concluding Remarks

WE HOPE THIS GUIDE HAS ENHANCED your experience of *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* in its examination of the role of humor in conveying serious messages, political criticism and as a catalyst for social change. There is much to be learned here! We hope you will find this guide useful in providing dialogue. Hopefully successful where it provides lively debates on the lessons of American history and the role of the citizen in democratic society today.

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## Resources

**WEBSITES**  
[www.bloodyandrew.com](http://www.bloodyandrew.com)  
 The official website for Los Frescos Conquistador, playwright/director Alex Timbers' theatre company  
[www.bloodyandrew.org](http://www.bloodyandrew.org)  
 Complete Michael Fruman is a founding member of this theatre company  
[profile.myspace.com/profile.asp?userid=4752348](http://profile.myspace.com/profile.asp?userid=4752348)  
 MySpace web profile for *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*  
[www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2008/05/29/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2008/05/29/)  
 Everything you ever wanted to know about Andrew Jackson  
[www.comedycentral.com/shows/showindex.html](http://www.comedycentral.com/shows/showindex.html)  
 The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, a smart and funny "talk show" produced that satirizes current events through interviews, features and Stewart's analysis  
[www.giftguide.com](http://www.giftguide.com)  
 A website containing political cartoons from well-known cartoonists around the world  
**BOOKS**  
*Andrew Jackson* by Sean Wilentz and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. (Times Books/Henry Holt and Company, 2005)  
*Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times* by H.W. Brands (Anchor, 2005) An excellent textbook, retouched on the Age of Jackson  
**FILM & TELEVISION**  
*Bloody and Andrew Jackson* (PBS Home Video/DVD, 2006) A documentary featuring Hesse and scenes read by presidential hopeful Fred Thompson and country-western singing star Loretta Lynn  
 Examples of rock music used as historical soundtracks in film  
*A Knight's Tale* directed by Brian Koppleman (SONY Pictures, DVD, 2005)  
*Just Shoot Me!* directed by Norman Jewison (Universal Pictures, DVD, 2004)

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## Page 15: Concluding Remarks, Resources and About P.L.A.Y.

**Rationale:** Students can be motivated to use skills and knowledge gained from *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* to extend their learning in other curricular areas.

**Exercise:** Beyond the Performance

- Read the Concluding Remarks aloud with the class.
- Encourage students to list moments of rich satire realized in *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*. Post the list on the board.
- Encourage students to list things they learned about Andrew Jackson that they hadn't known before. Post that list on the board.

**Exercise:** After the students have seen the play, have them write a letter using one or more of the following elements of writing: narrative, descriptive, expository, response to literature or persuasive. Mail their responses to P.L.A.Y.

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