

SYDNEY
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EDUCATION

SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND COMMONWEALTH BANK PRESENT
A SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY AND QUEENSLAND THEATRE COMPANY PRODUCTION

THE EFFECT

BY LUCY PREBBLE

OWN GUE

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ABOUT *ON CUE* AND STC

ABOUT *ON CUE*

In 2014, STC Ed is developing a new suite of resources located on our website to enrich and strengthen teaching and learning surrounding the plays in the STC season. Each show will be accompanied by an On Cue e-publication which will feature all the essential information for teachers and students, such as curriculum links, information about the playwright, synopsis, character analysis, thematic analysis and suggested learning experiences. For more in-depth digital resources surrounding the ELEMENTS OF DRAMA, DRAMATIC FORMS, STYLES, CONVENTIONS and TECHNIQUES, visit the STC Ed page on our website.

Such resources include:

- videos
- design sketchbooks
- podcasts
- worksheets / posters
- games / quizzes / surveys

ABOUT SYDNEY THEATRE COMPANY

In 1980, STC's first Artistic Director Richard Wherrett defined STC's mission as to provide "first class theatrical entertainment for the people of Sydney – theatre that is grand, vulgar, intelligent, challenging and fun."

Almost 35 years later, under the leadership of Artistic Director Andrew Upton, that ethos still rings true. STC offers a diverse program of distinctive theatre of vision and scale at its harbourside home venue, The Wharf; Sydney Theatre at Walsh Bay; and Sydney Opera House, as its resident theatre company.

STC has a proud heritage as a creative hub and incubator for Australian theatre and theatre makers, developing and producing eclectic Australian works, interpretations of classic repertoire and great international writing. STC strives to create theatre experiences that reflect Sydney's distinctive personality and engage audiences.

Strongly committed to engagement in the community, STC's Education and Communities programs aim to inspire theatre appreciation and participation not only in theatres but also in schools, community halls; wherever people get together. STC offers an innovative School Drama™ program; partners with groups in metropolitan Sydney, regional centres and rural areas; and reaches

beyond NSW with touring productions throughout Australia. Through these partnerships and initiatives, STC plays a part in ensuring a creative, forward-thinking and sociable future by engaging with young people, students and teachers.

The theatre careers of many of Australia's internationally renowned artists have been launched and fostered at STC, including Mel Gibson, Judy Davis, Hugo Weaving, Geoffrey Rush, Toni Collette, Rose Byrne, Benedict Andrews and Cate Blanchett.

STC often collaborates with international artists and companies and, in recent years, the company's international profile has grown significantly with productions touring extensively to great acclaim.

STC is assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, by its arts funding and advisory body, and by the New South Wales Government through Arts NSW.

www.sydneytheatre.com.au

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

FOR *THE EFFECT* AND THE EDUCATION RESOURCES

SUITABLE FOR

Students in years 11 and 12

SUBJECTS

Drama

DRAMA STAGE 5 (HSC PRELIMINARY)

Outcome P2.2

Understands the contributions to a production of the playwright, director, dramaturg, designers, front-of-house staff, technical staff and producers.

Outcome P2.3

Demonstrates directorial and acting skills to communicate meaning through dramatic action.

Outcome P2.6

Appreciates the variety of styles, structures and techniques that can be used in making and shaping a performance.

Outcome P3.2

Understands the variety of influences that have impacted upon drama and theatre performance styles, structures and techniques.

Outcome P3.4

Appreciates the contribution that drama and theatre make to Australian and other societies by raising awareness and expressing ideas and issues of interest.

DRAMA STAGE 6 (HSC)

Outcome H1.2

Uses performance skills to interpret and perform scripted and other material.

Outcome H2.2

Uses dramatic and theatrical elements effectively to engage an audience.

Outcome H3.2

Analyses, synthesises and organises knowledge, information and opinion in coherent, informed oral and written responses.

Outcome H3.3

Demonstrates understanding of the actor-audience relationship in various dramatic and theatrical styles and movements.

Outcome H3.4

Appreciates and values drama and theatre as significant cultural expressions of issues and concerns in Australian and other societies.

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THE EFFECT

BY LUCY PREBBLE

TOBY
EUGENE GILFEDDER

CONNIE
ANNA MCGAHAN

DR JAMES
ANGIE MILLIKEN

TRISTAN
MARK LEONARD WINTER

DIRECTOR
SARAH GOODES

DESIGNER
RENEE MULDER

LIGHTING DESIGNER
BEN HUGHES

COMPOSER & SOUND DESIGNER
GUY WEBSTER

VOICE & TEXT COACH
CHARMIAN GRADWELL

PRODUCTION MANAGER
KATE CHAPMAN

STAGE MANAGER
CHARLOTTE BARRETT

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
AMY BURKETT

THEATRE TECHNICIAN
CAMERON MENZIES

REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHER
STEPHEN HENRY

PRODUCTION PHOTOGRAPHER
ROB MACCOLL

2 HOUR 30 MINUTES, INCLUDING
INTERVAL

THE SYDNEY SEASON OF THIS
PRODUCTION PREMIERED AT WHARF
1 THEATRE ON 12 JULY 2014. THE
PREMIERE PERFORMANCE OF THIS
PRODUCTION TOOK PLACE AT THE
BILLE BROWN STUDIO, BRISBANE, ON
12 JUNE 2014.

THE EFFECT WAS FIRST PERFORMED AT THE NATIONAL THEATRE, LONDON, DIRECTED BY RUPERT GOOLD AND COPRODUCED WITH HEADLONG ON 13 NOVEMBER 2012.

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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

LUCY PREBBLE

Lucy's latest play *The Effect* won best new play at the Critic's Circle Awards. It played at the National Theatre directed by Rupert Goold and co-produced with Headlong in the winter of 2012 to superb reviews. Lucy was selected as a finalist for the 2013-14 Susan Smith Blackburn Prize.

Lucy is currently under commission to The Royal Court Theatre and writing a drama for the BBC with Tiger Aspect. She is also developing a project with Nick Hytner and working with the gaming company Bungie.

Her play, *Enron*, transferred to the West End and Broadway in 2010 after sell out runs at both The Royal Court Theatre and Chichester Festival Theatre. Lucy is currently adapting it for Sony Pictures. In addition to the critical acclaim it has received, *Enron* also won the award for Best New Play at the TMA Theatre Awards, and was shortlisted for The Evening Standard Award and Olivier Award for Best New Play.

'Michael Frayn did it with quantum mechanics, Simon McBurney did it with maths, now Lucy Prebble has done it with accounting. She and her director Rupert Goold have achieved the remarkable feat of making fiendish corporate fraud not just comprehensible to the layman but also dramatically exhilarating'. Financial Times on *Enron*.

Lucy created the TV series *Secret Diary of a Call Girl*, starring Billie Piper. *Secret Diary of a Call Girl* enjoyed three

series and was sold to Showtime, the major US channel famed for its daring dramas.

Lucy won the prestigious George Devine Award 2004 for her play *The Sugar Syndrome* in May 2004, followed by the TMA Award for Best New Play in October 2004.

She also won the 2004 Critics' Circle Award for Most Promising Playwright. 'If there's a funnier, sadder, wiser play looking at paedophilia and prejudice this year, even this decade, I'd be amazed.' The Daily Telegraph on *The Sugar Syndrome*.

Lucy's first one act play, *Liquid*, was selected for performance at the National Student Drama Festival 2002 where Lucy received the PMA Most Promising Playwright Award.

Sydney Theatre Company (2014). *The Effect*, Program. Wharf 1, Sydney Theatre Company.



ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

SARAH GOODES

Sarah is a Co-Resident Director at Sydney Theatre Company.

She graduated with a Postgraduate Diploma in Theatre Directing from the Victorian College of the Arts. For STC, she has directed *Vere* (Faith) by John Doyle, *The Splinter* by Hilary Bell and *Edward Gant's Amazing Feats of Loneliness* by Anthony Neilson.

Other directing credits include *What Happened Was...* by Tom Noonan, *Vertigo* and the *Virginia* by Sven Swenson, *Hilt* by Jane Bodie and *The Shelling Point* by Ron Elisha, all at the Old Fitzroy Theatre.

In 2003, Sarah formed the Splinter Theatre Company and directed and co-produced three productions as part of B Sharp at Belvoir St Downstairs: the Norwegian play *Elling* by Alex Hellstenius, *Black Milk* by Vassily Sigarev, *The Small Things* by Enda Walsh and *The Sweetest Thing* by Verity Laughton. Sarah directed a one-man show by Nicholas Hope called *The Colour of Panic* at The Studio, Sydney Opera House, which then toured to Norway.

She directed a production of Henning Mankell's play *The Unscrupulous Murderer* at the Darlinghurst Theatre, which received funding from Arts NSW.

Assistant directing credits include Ray's *Tempest* by Steve

Rogers directed by Richard Roxburgh for Belvoir, *Elling* directed by Pamela Rabe and Joanna Murray-Smith's play *Honour* directed by Lee Lewis, both for Sydney Theatre Company.

Sydney Theatre Company (2014). *The Effect*, Program. Wharf 1, Sydney Theatre Company.



Q & A: DIRECTOR SARAH GOODES

WHAT DREW YOU TO DIRECT THE EFFECT?

The Effect is set in a clinical drug trial and the claustrophobic nature of this is fascinating. You have two people enclosed in a space they can't leave, while two doctors give them the medication and monitor the effect it has on them. But like all trials, some people have been given the drugs and some have been given a placebo. So are the feelings they experience real? Or is it the drugs? Or just a placebo? We get to watch the chemical reactions between all of them.

The scientific and medical ideas the play explores are embedded in the drama of two young people falling in love, as well as the two doctors running the trial. The play explores the nature of depression, what causes it and how we treat it. One of the reasons I like the play so much is that you never get the feeling that it's taken sides. With things like medicine, neuroscience and anti-depressants everyone has an opinion but the beauty of this play is that it's able to present this story without judgment. That means everyone in the audience is going to have their own interpretation of it and their own experience of the play and I know they'll talk about it afterwards.

WHO IS LUCY PREBBLE?

Lucy Prebble is a young British writer, in her 30s, and *The Effect* is her fourth play - she was also the creator of the TV

series *Secret Diary of a Call Girl*. She's a very exciting writer who takes a lot of risks and often deeply investigates the subject she's writing about. She's got a fabulous sense of humour, so she's able to mine the big ideas and reflect the dark side of life with this wonderful warmth and sense of the ridiculous.

AND YOU'VE GOT ANGIE MILLIKEN BACK AT STC FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE...

Yes, there's actually a great story there. Angie is playing the role of the female doctor and Eugene Gilfedder is playing the male doctor. Eugene is a fabulous actor from Brisbane who's not often seen here in Sydney, but he really is remarkable. When I told Angie that Eugene was going to be playing opposite her, she was delighted because it turns out he was one of the reasons she became an actor in Brisbane. So, I think bringing those two together is going to be very special. They've got very different qualities to them but they'll be perfectly matched as the doctors.

WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE CHARACTERS WHO FALL IN LOVE?

Oh yes, Connie and Tristan. They're from completely different worlds, with very different outlooks on life. Connie is a real stickler for detail, she's very cautious. And Tristan has this kind of blistering optimism. They're

thrown together in this drug trial, where they're part of a group of young people who aren't allowed to leave, or use their mobile phones, or have physical contact with each other or the outside world. They just have to stay there and be given these anti-depressant drugs and be observed by the doctors. So, you're watching these people interact, and you don't know whether the drugs are responsible for what they feel. Does it matter if they are? The internal and external tensions this creates are fabulous to watch on stage. I think the two actors playing the young couple, Anna McGahan and Mark Leonard Winter, will be an exciting match for each other as they thrash out these effects like two fighting fish in the same bowl!

Sydney Theatre Company (2014). *The Effect*, Program. Wharf 1, Sydney Theatre Company.

ABOUT THE PLAY

THE EFFECT BY LUCY PREBBLE

When people fall in love we often talk about the ‘chemistry’ between them. But what is this ‘chemistry’ and what causes it? In *The Effect*, acclaimed British playwright Lucy Prebble incisively examines the world of drug-testing clinics and neuroscience. And, perhaps, true love.

Two young volunteers, Tristan and Connie, take part in a drug trial examining the effects of a new anti-depressant. However, as their doses become stronger, they start to fall in love. But is their newfound passion real? Or just another side effect?

Sarah Goodes directs a superb cast led by Angie Milliken as the trial’s overseeing physician who must contend with the unruly feelings of her charges while debating the ethical implications of their work with her superior. It’s soon clear that this pair have a complex past, and neither is objective about the thorny issues that entangle them.

Interweaving reason and passion, science and art, Prebble’s funny, tender and provocative play is guaranteed to keep you debating long after the lights come up.



CHECK OUT OUR PRE-SHOW IN-THE-KNOW FACT SHEET
FOR ALL THE ESSENTIAL INFORMATION YOU NEED TO
KNOW BEFORE WATCHING THE PERFORMANCE!



Angie Milliken and Anna McGahan, in STC's *The Effect*, 2014. Image Stephen Henry. ©

SYNOPSIS

THE EFFECT BY LUCY PREBBLE

The Effect opens with Dr. Lorna James routinely questioning participants Connie and Tristan as part of the admissions process for a drug trial testing the effects of a new anti-depressant. The pair participate in various psychological tests. Toby, another Psychiatrist, enters the clinic and briefly analyses the current results with Dr. James. Toby and Dr. James' past relationship is briefly questioned and he reveals he is now engaged to another woman. Toby presents at a 'Trial Awareness' seminar outlining that mental illness should be treated the same way as a bodily illness, calling psychiatry the 'Cinderella of medicine.'

Connie and Tristan sneak out to a nearby abandoned asylum. Connie tells Tristan that she is starting to feel the rush and exciting effect of the anti-depressant, but insists that their growing feelings towards each other are the effect of the drug, rather than real emotions. Tristan argues he can tell the difference between a side-effect and who he really is and that the circumstances under which a couple meet do not effect whether their love is real or not. Tristan performs a tap dance and leans in to kiss Connie just as Dr. James finds them. Toby and Dr. James look at brain scans of the participants and Toby concludes that their brains are reacting to the anti-depressant. Dr. James thinks Toby is seeing what he wants to see in the results.

Dr. James insists that the physical attraction between Connie and Tristan is causing the chemical reaction in the

brain.

Tristan and Connie text each other late one night, using phones that they have snuck into the trial. Tristan appears in Connie's room where they profess their love for one another and make love. The drug dosage is increased and Connie begins to experience more side-effects such as hair loss, Tristan also believes that similar effects are happening to him. However, Dr. James tells Connie that Tristan is on a placebo. Connie begins to be cold towards Tristan as she thinks his love towards her is part of the placebo effect. Tristan reacts by portraying a growing sense of unease and aggression. Dr. James considers removing him from the trial. Toby then tells Dr. James that Tristan is not on a placebo and that she is also being tested for practitioner bias. Dr. James and Toby have a heated debate surrounding the cause of depression. Toby believes it is a chemical imbalance of the brain, treatable with drugs. Dr. James believes that depression is not a disease, cannot be treated with medication and is instead caused by external factors.

The final dosage is issued to Connie and Tristan. Connie believing that Tristan is taking another placebo kisses Tristan and transfers her tablet into his mouth, unknowingly giving him a double dosage of the drug. Tristan begins to stagger, falls to the ground and has a fit before bleeding from his mouth and losing consciousness. In the next scene Tristan wakes up in a hospital bed with Connie by his side; he has lost his short-term memory. Dr. James

is also in a hospital bed with Toby by her side after suffering a depressive episode. Toby tells Dr. James that he loves her. Tristan and Connie leave the hospital together and Dr. James decides to take the medication next to her bed. The play ends with the overlaid sounds of an ECG and an EEG machine – the activity of the brain and the beating heart – the sounds of human love.

CONTEXT OF THE PLAY

PLACEBOS

A placebo is a simulated medical treatment for an illness that can have a medically beneficial effect on the patient. The recipient is unaware that they are taking a placebo. Sometimes patients given a placebo have a perceived or actual improvement of a medical condition, this is known as the placebo effect.

The placebo effect is triggered by the person's belief in the treatment and their expectation to feel better. This does not necessarily mean that the illness was imaginary. The mind can contribute to a physical disorder, just as it can contribute to its cure. The placebo effect comes down to what the patient wants to think or feel. It is estimated that one third of people who take placebos believing they are medication, experience an end to their symptoms.

Watch the following video of Professor Val Curran from the University College London demonstrating the placebo effect.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=dhMgnIEIRL4

Discuss:

1. Why is it important to have people on placebos in drug trials? (Think about the idea of a 'control' in a science experiment.)
2. Should people be given placebos before being prescribed medication?
3. The word placebo comes from the Latin word meaning 'I shall please.' Discuss how the etymology of this word is relevant to the effect of placebos on patients.

HUMAN GUINEA PIGS: PEOPLE WHO TAKE PART IN DRUG TRIALS

Visit the website Guinea Pig Zero. Guinea Pig Zero is dedicated to professional drug trial participants. The website documents diary entries from people inside drug trials and discusses major issues.

www.guineapigzero.com

Read the article The Secret Lives of Guinea Pigs.

www.indyweek.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A13968

Watch the following video of Aimee Dumbleton, who took part in a drug trial in the United Kingdom.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqboCU51zno>

Discuss:

1. What do you think about people who do drug trials for money?
2. Would you take part in a drug trial? For what reason?

Context of the play (cont.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF DRUG TRIALS

Watch the following video of Dr. Mark Payton, CEO of biopharmaceutical company, Oxagen.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hi7BaYTuVuQ>

Read the following comment from Dr. Payton.

“...it’s partly about yes, how can I recoup my costs, because we are a business and we’ve got shareholders and we have to do it.”

Discuss:

1. How does this quote affect your thoughts about the findings of drug trials? How does this relate to the play?
2. Would the head of a pharmaceutical company have a different reason for thinking drug trials are important compared to a doctor, scientist or patient? What would these differences be? How is this idea explored in the play?

DEPRESSION AND MENTAL ILLNESS

Anti-depressants are one of the most commonly prescribed drugs in the world. Prescriptions have increased eight to ten fold in the last decade.

Watch the following video of Dr. Gareth Smith, a Psychiatrist in the UK discussing mental illness.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZITjOYmiXvg

Discuss

1. Psychiatrist Dr. Gareth Smith states that Nurofen will take your headache away quicker than a ‘no-brand’ packet because it is in a shiny box. What does this suggest about treatment of illnesses and the way the brain influences treatments?
2. “If you can still work, you don’t have depression.” Discuss this statement from Dr. Gareth Smith. How does this relate to the world of the play?

WHAT IS LOVE?

Read the article A Natural History of Love.

www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2013/04/29/a-natural-history-of-love/

Contemplate the quote from Professor Val Curran “As a scientist it is very difficult to define or measure love. It is better left to poets.”

Discuss

1. What does this quote suggest the cause of love is?
2. How would you describe love in one sentence?
3. Is love emotional or chemical? Does playwright Lucy Prebble answer this question in the play?

Context of the play (cont.)

THE NORTHWICK PARK DRUG TRIAL DISASTER 2006

In 2006 a drug trial at Northwick Park Hospital in London resulted in several participants in the trial experiencing organ failure, losing fingers and toes and eventually developing cancer or auto-immune diseases.

Read the following articles about the drug trial disaster.

www.bbc.com/news/health-22556736

www.theguardian.com/society/2007/feb/17/health.lifeandhealth

Discuss:

1. Should drug trials be conducted on humans?
2. What type of measures should be in place to prevent such an event happening again?



CHECK OUT THE CLASSROOM POSTER AND HANDOUT ABOUT DIFFERENT PLAYS THAT HAVE SCIENCE AS THEIR FOCUS!



Mark Leonard Winter and Anna McGahan, in STC's *The Effect*, 2014. Image Stephen Henry. ©

ANALYSIS OF MAJOR THEMES

The themes and ideas in *The Effect* are based around opposites that have been cleverly constructed by playwright Lucy Prebble. These opposites allow the play to present both sides of the arguments, leaving the audience to create their own opinion.

INTERNAL VS. EXTERNAL

The idea of internal and external is explored in *The Effect* through different perceptions of both Dr. James and Toby on the causes of depression. Dr. James believes that depression is caused by external factors and therefore cannot be treated with drugs. She also believes that the effect of the drug shown in the results is caused by the external behavior of Connie and Tristan and their flirtation with one another.

Toby believes that depression is caused by an internal chemical imbalance of the brain and can therefore be treated with drugs. He also believes that it is the drug that is causing the anti-depressant effects and Tristan and Connie's feelings towards one another.

MIRRORING

The RELATIONSHIP between Toby and Dr. James is mirrored in the RELATIONSHIP between Connie and Tristan. Both RELATIONSHIPS experience TENSION because of their differing beliefs towards the effects of the drug. As the trial continues the RELATIONSHIPS become tense as the characters grapple with desire and reality and what the trial means to them. At the end of the play both couples end up together and are mirrored in hospital rooms by each other's sides.

HEAD VS. HEART

The cause of love is explored in the play through the different opinions of Connie and Tristan. Connie believes that love is a construction of the mind. She believes love is rational, practical, circumstantial and comes and goes. This is also illustrated in Connie's belief that it is the drug's effect on the brain that is causing the feelings between her and Tristan. Toby also believes that love is created in the mind and in the final moments of the play tells Dr. James that he has built his brain around her.

Tristan believes that the heart controls love and his feelings. He believes that what he feels is part of his identity and cannot be created or fabricated by the brain.

In the final moments of the play, the sound of an ECG machine that monitors a heart beat can be heard alongside the sound of an EEG machine that measures the electrical activity of the brain. This is a symbolic portrayal of love perhaps being controlled by both the head and the heart together, encapsulated in the stage direction which states 'these are the sounds of human love.'

Analysis of major themes (cont.)

BIOLOGY VS. SOUL

The Effect explores questions about identity and what defines a person. The play raises questions such as “Are you your feelings or are you biological matter?” and “What defines our identity?”

Rational Connie believes that humans are just matter and cells and says “We are our bodies, our bodies are us.” (Pg. 37). Similarly, Dr. James also believes that humans are biological fact, “Everything you feel and think you feel is just your brain explaining away the awful simplicity of your body.” (Pg.100). While Tristan believes more in feelings than in biology saying, “I don’t want to reason with you. I want to know right now, in this moment, what you feel.” (Pg. 88).

The concept of how identity is constructed is also touched on in the play. Dr. James admits that her depression is a part of her and Toby urges Dr. James to not let it define her saying “Call it what you like, just don’t let it define you.” (Pg. 97).

BELIEF VS. TRUTH

The drug trial and the relationship between Connie and Tristan is a constant struggle between what the characters want to believe and what the reality is, creating the concept of bias in the play. The concept of bias is first flagged in the beginning of the play by Dr. James who says “In most cases being aware of your own bias doesn’t actually mean you can affect that bias.” (Pg. 18).

Dr. James believes that Toby sees what he wants to see in the effect of the drug, as it is good for business. Meanwhile Toby believes that Dr. James refuses to see the effect of the drug because she believes the cause of depression is external.

Throughout the trial both Tristan and Connie experience various side effects such as feeling ‘high’. There is a sense that they are unsure if what they are feeling is real or just meeting the desired outcome of the trial. This is seen in the quote: “And I don’t know if this is the kind of thing you are after.” “And I don’t know if this is the sort of thing you want.” (Pg. 59).

OPTIMISM VS. PESSIMISM

The four characters each distinctively have either optimistic or pessimistic perspectives on life. Dr. James and Connie are pessimists. In the story about the dry-cleaner Connie attributes success to lack of competition, which is the answer commonly given by people likely to suffer from depression. When Toby and Dr. James are discussing the effects of the drug, Toby accuses Dr. James of wanting depression to remain grand and tragic as one of life’s mysteries. Both Connie and Dr. James have morbid outlooks on life, Dr. James also describes herself as feeling ‘dead’ while Connie says “...everyone you love is definitely going to die.” (Pg. 43)

Toby and Tristan are optimists. In the story about the dry-cleaner Tristan attributes success to his business plan; he is also described by Connie as ‘sunshine.’ Tristan has a sense of adventure, seen in his plans to travel. Toby is an optimist as he believes that a cure for depression can be found and soon there could be a blood-test to detect depression. He doesn’t blame himself for Dr. James’ depressive episode and says that he is happy with his life now. He speaks about psychiatry being the ‘Cinderella of medicine’ and Cinderella going to the ball thanks to medical advancement.

CHARACTER ANALYSIS

CONNIE

Connie is a psychology student who has entered the trial on a journey of self-discovery. She has strong convictions. Connie has a logical and rational explanation for her thoughts and feelings. She believes that people are their bodies and there is nothing more to people than what is pumping around them. She also believes that love can come and go. Connie thinks that the drug is causing a heightened state of emotions and influencing the feelings that she and Tristan are experiencing towards each other. When she is told that Tristan is on a placebo, Connie becomes cold and agitated towards him as she believes that she doesn't love him the same way that he loves her. Throughout the play Connie is drawn to Tristan's carefree attitude and in the end lets go of her fixation with reason in order to be with him. Ultimately, Connie begins to see that the logic and reason behind their love is perhaps not important.

TRISTAN

Tristan regularly participates in drug trials. He is participating in this trial to earn money to go on an overseas holiday. His life is described by Connie as a 'gap-life' as he is spontaneous and fun-loving. Connie describes Tristan as 'sunshine.' In the story about the dry-cleaner, Tristan attributes success to his hard work and is an optimistic person. He breathes fresh-air into the lives of both Dr. James and Connie with his relaxed attitude. Tristan believes that he is falling in love with Connie and that it is not an effect of the drug, he believes feelings are what define our identities. Tristan also believes that the reason people fall in love is insignificant and the point is that they are in love. When Toby is led to believe he is on a placebo he enters a state of agitated confusion, unable to justify his thoughts and feelings.



Anna McGahan and Mark Leonard Winter, in STC's *The Effect*, 2014.
Image Stephen Henry. ©

Character Analysis (cont.)

DR. JAMES

Dr. James is a Psychiatrist who is running a drug trial to test the effects of a new anti-depressant drug. Dr. James herself has suffered manic depression episodes in the past. She does not expect the drug to have any effects on the participants as she believes that depression is caused by external factors and is not a medical illness. She therefore believes that the flirtation and feelings of the participants towards each other are causing the anti-depressant effect of the drug. Her last major depressive episode came after she had a relationship with Toby while at a conference then discovered that he had been sleeping with many different women. The current relationship between the pair is awkward and heated as they have opposing views towards the reasons for the drug's effects. Towards the end of the play, Dr. James is told that the trial is a double-blind trial and she is being tested for doctor bias. At the end of the play, Dr. James is seen lying in a hospital bed suffering severe depression. In the final moment she reaches over and takes medication from her bedside table.

TOBY

Toby is a Psychiatrist who is monitoring the drug trial. He believes that depression is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain and should be treated like any other bodily illness. Toby also believes that depression is no great mystery and that it can be treated with drugs. He believes that the drugs are having an anti-depressant effect; however Dr. James believes that Toby sees what he wants to see, as depression as a disorder is good for business. Toby says that he ended his relationship with Dr. James because of her depression, rather than her depression being the result of their relationship. At the end of the play Toby sits by the bedside of Dr. James and tells her that he loves her and that his brain is wrapped around hers.

Ultimately both Dr. James and Toby are looking at the effects of the trial as evidence for their own beliefs.



Angie Milliken, in STC's *The Effect*, 2014. Image Stephen Henry. ©

STYLE

Director Sarah Goodes defines the **STYLE** of *The Effect* as **Stylised Naturalism**.

NATURALISM

Naturalism is a **STYLE** of theatre that creates the perfect illusion of reality in the **TIME** and **PLACE** that the play is set. **CONVENTIONS** and **TECHNIQUES** used in Naturalism include three-dimensional setting and a **STYLE** of acting that recreates reality. In Naturalism the **CHARACTERS** are psychologically motivated which impacts on the **Dramatic Action**. The fourth wall is also created when the **Dramatic Action** does not acknowledge the existence of an audience and the audience feels as though they are ‘flies on the wall.’

The Effect can be defined as Naturalism as it utilises the fourth wall and a realistic **STYLE** of acting. There is also an active ‘inner landscape’ of the **CHARACTERS** that are demonstrated in many of the character’s speeches. Such as when Toby is giving an address at the ‘Drug Trial Awareness’ evening and when Dr. James recalls the depression she experienced at the conference. These speeches provide more information for the audience about the psychology of the **CHARACTERS** and their motivations.



CHECK OUT THE DESIGNER SKETCHBOOK ON OUR WEBSITE FOR INTRICATE SKETCHES AND PICTURES OF THE PRODUCTION SET!

STYLISTED NATURALISM

Lucy Prebble’s script is written as stylised Naturalism, while the design by Renee Mulder also creates a stylised space. The set is not an intricately detailed drug trial unit. It is an expression of a clinical trial room rather than a detailed reconstruction. The set is minimalist allowing it to be transformative. The set is the trial room, the abandoned asylum, the results lab and a hospital. The set consists of fluorescent lights, chairs, plasma TV screens and a hospital bed positioned on a large white light box in the centre of the stage.

While the **STYLE** of acting is Naturalistic, **DRAMATIC TECHNIQUES** such as the reflection of the **CHARACTERS** on different surfaces around the stage and words appearing on TV screens are not Naturalistic, rather they are **SYMBOLIC**.

Naturalism is usually climactic in **STRUCTURE**, whereas *The Effect* follows an episodic **STRUCTURE**. Traditionally in Naturalism scenes begin with characters entering and end with characters exiting. In *The Effect* scenes at times start halfway through and are ‘snippets’ of larger moments in the world of play.

THE ELEMENTS OF DRAMA

ROLE AND CHARACTER

ROLE and CHARACTER are two different elements. ROLE is one-dimensional and involves representing a point of view and identifying with a particular set of values and beliefs. CHARACTER is the complex personality and background of a character. A CHARACTER'S complexity is developed through interaction and relationship with others and demonstrated through VOICE and MOVEMENT choices.

TAKE YOUR CUE:

What do each of the ROLES represent within the drug trial?

How are the different CHARACTERS communicated to the audience through voice and movement?

At the end of the play both sets of CHARACTERS end up together despite opposing views towards the trial. Explain each CHARACTER's reasoning for being together.

DRAMATIC TENSION

TENSION is the force that drives all drama and moves the Dramatic Action forward. In *The Effect* all four TENSIONS are operating. Together the TENSIONS strengthen the AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT as they motivate the audience to continue watching while influencing their opinions about the major questions of the play. The DRAMATIC TENSION of the piece grows as the dosage of the drug increases.

The initial TENSION established in the play is the TENSION OF TASK to discover the effects of the anti-depressant drug. The TENSION OF TASK causes the TENSION OF MYSTERY and TENSION OF RELATIONSHIPS between Toby and Dr.

James and Connie and Tristan as they have opposing views about the effect of the drug.

TENSION OF SURPRISE occurs at several points throughout the play and each time impacts on AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT as the story takes an unexpected twist and influences the audience's opinion about the trial and the effects. TENSION OF SURPRISE first occurs when it is revealed that Tristan is on a placebo, and is then re-established when Dr. James is told the trial is a double-blind trial and she is being tested for bias.

TAKE YOUR CUE:

How does the TENSION OF MYSTERY impact on the RELATIONSHIP between Tristan and Connie? What other ELEMENTS OF DRAMA make the TENSION OF MYSTERY explicit to the audience?

How does the TENSION OF TASK build and become more complex throughout the play? What factors impact the potential resolution of the TASK?

The Elements of Drama (cont.)

AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

The AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT in *The Effect* is driven by the fact that the play asks many questions but does not give definitive answers. As the play progresses the audience are made to think about what causes depression, how love is stimulated between a couple and how our biases influences our thoughts and opinions.

SYMBOL

SYMBOLS enhance the DRAMATIC MEANING of a performance. SYMBOLS can be created by objects, visuals, LANGUAGE, MOVEMENT and design.

In *The Effect* the psychological testing stories are SYMBOLIC of the CHARACTER personalities and support the audience's understanding about CHARACTER motivations. The test about the dry-cleaner portrays Tristan as an optimistic person, while Connie's answer is 'lack of competition', showing her to be more pessimistic. Furthermore, the word/colour test also gives insight into the personalities of Connie and Tristan.

Dr. James tells Connie a story about a medic at a conference who has fallen for a girl that has not shown any interest in him. The medic sets up his own experiment by trying to stimulate dopamine in the girl through parachuting, as dopamine is a hormone triggered when falling in love. His attempt is unsuccessful as the girl falls for the instructor. This portrays the idea that a reaction can't be forced and perhaps that love also can't be fabricated, which feeds directly in to the major questions of the play.

TAKE YOUR CUE:

Has your perception of the cause of depression changed since watching the play? If so, how?

What are your views on how love develops between a two people? Which plays a bigger role in love – the head or the heart?

TAKE YOUR CUE:

The design of *The Effect* is predominantly black and white. What is the SYMBOLISM behind this design choice?

When Tristan suffers his fit, he bleeds from his mouth. This is one of the only splashes of colour in the production. What MEANING can be deciphered from this choice?

The Elements of Drama (cont.)

FOCUS

FOCUS is where the Dramatic Action is directed and where the audience's attention is aimed. A theatre production can use SPACE, LIGHTING and MOVEMENT to establish focus.

FOCUS also assists in the creation of strong MOMENTS of DRAMATIC MEANING. In *The Effect* SPACE is manipulated to show the mirroring of the CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS between Toby and Dr. James and Connie and Tristan.

TAKE YOUR CUE:

How was SPACE and LIGHTING manipulated to FOCUS on the mirroring of the CHARACTER RELATIONSHIPS?

How were the TV screens used to FOCUS the audience's attention and strengthen DRAMATIC MEANING? What is the purpose of using TV screens as opposed to a projection or a whiteboard?

SOUND

SOUND enhances a performance by creating ATMOSPHERE and TENSION. In *The Effect* SOUND also layers the DRAMATIC MEANING. SOUNDS used in the play include the beeping of ECG and EEG machines and other medical technologies.

TAKE YOUR CUE:

In the very last MOMENT of the play the simultaneous sounds of EEG and ECG machines can be heard. What DRAMATIC MEANING does this portray?

What other ELEMENTS OF DRAMA are created through the use of SOUND?



ANALYSE HOW THE PERFORMANCE TECHNIQUES STRENGTHENED DRAMATIC MEANING USING THE WORKSHEET AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE!

The Elements of Drama (cont.)

DRAMATIC MEANING

DRAMATIC MEANING is created through the ELEMENTS OF DRAMA that are interrelated and interdependent. DRAMATIC MEANING is what is communicated between the performers, the world of the play and the audience.

DRAMATIC MEANING is always open to interpretation and there is never one set meaning in a production. Consider the following possible DRAMATIC MEANINGS:

- Love is created through both the head and the heart.
- You see what you want to see, and believe what you want to believe.
- Whether depression is a chemical imbalance or caused by external factors remains a mystery.
- Is depression a normal human experience or a disorder that needs to be medicated? If it is the former, are pharmaceutical company's profiting from human frailty?
- Psychiatric is the 'Cinderella of medicine.'

TAKE YOUR CUE:

What other DRAMATIC MEANINGS can be derived from the performance?

Make a list of the ELEMENTS OF DRAMA that are manipulated to portray the meaning that 'Love is created through both the head and the heart.'

What is meant by depression being the 'Cinderella of medicine'?



Anna McGahan, in STC's *The Effect*, 2014. Image Stephen Henry. ©

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

LEARNING EXPERIENCE ONE

PRACTICE LINK:

Scaffolding for Responding.

FOCUS:

Understanding the context of *The Effect*.

RESOURCES:

The 'Context' section of this On Cue resource, whiteboard, scrap paper and pencils.

TAKE YOUR CUE: Debate

DEBATE ONE:

The focus of this activity is for students to think about the issues and questions that arise in the world of the play.

1. In the 'Context' section of this resource watch the video of Dr. Mark Payton, CEO of biopharmaceutical company, Oxagen.
2. Divide the class into groups of three.
3. Write on the whiteboard the following statement.

“ The people who benefit most from drug trials are pharmaceutical companies, not patients.”
4. Define each group as either 'affirmative' or 'negative'.
5. Students have 15 minutes in their groups of three to discuss and put together four main points for their argument using evidence from the world of the play. Such evidence could include dialogue from the characters, the characters and their backgrounds and the Dramatic Action of the play.

6. Starting with an affirmative team each group is to present, with affirmative and negative teams alternately presenting. Each group is to present for two minutes.
7. Teams that are watching are able to take notes.
8. The team that follows is able to incorporate spontaneous rebuttal from the previous debate team.
9. Once each group has presented, the class (or teacher if necessary) can decide whether the affirmative team or the negative team has won the debate.

Learning Experiences (cont.)

DEBATE TWO:

1. In the 'Context' section of this resource read about what a placebo is and watch the video of Professor Val Curran. In the section about Depression watch the video of Dr. Gareth Smith.
2. Divide the class into groups of three.
3. Write on the whiteboard the following statement.

“For non-life threatening illnesses, placebos should first be given to all patients.”
4. Define each group as either 'affirmative' or 'negative'.
5. Students have 15 minutes in their groups of three to discuss and put together four main points for their argument using evidence from the world of the play. Such evidence could include dialogue from the characters, the characters and their backgrounds and the Dramatic Action of the play.
6. Starting with an affirmative team each group is to present one by one, with affirmative and negative teams alternately presenting. Each group is to present for two minutes.
7. Teams that are watching are able to take notes.
8. The team that follows is able to incorporate spontaneous rebuttal from the previous debate team.
9. Once each group has presented, the class (or teacher if necessary) can decide whether the affirmative team or the negative team has won the debate.

Learning Experiences (cont.)

LEARNING EXPERIENCE TWO

PRACTICE LINK:

Presenting

FOCUS:

ROLES and RELATIONSHIPS of the CHARACTERS

RESOURCES:

Long pieces of butcher's paper, pens, script excerpts (supplied).

TAKE YOUR CUE: Role on the Wall

The focus of this activity is for students to investigate the different ROLES in the play and their attitudes, values and beliefs. Students will then explore how the CHARACTER relationships are mirrored.

1. Divide students into groups of five.
2. Give each group a piece of butcher's paper and some pens.
3. One person is to lie down on the piece of paper while another group member traces around them to create a silhouette.
4. Allocate each group the ROLES of either Dr. James, Toby, Connie or Tristan.
5. On the outside of the silhouette students are to write the attitude, values and beliefs of the ROLE. On the inside students are to write how the ROLE feels.
6. Students are also able to write quotes or words used in the play relating to the ROLE.
7. Give students ten minutes to complete the activity and then present each 'Role on the Wall' to the class.
8. As a class discuss the following:
 - How are the ROLES of Connie and Toby similar?
 - How the ROLES of Dr. James and Tristan similar?
 - How are the ROLES of Connie and Dr. James similar?
 - How are the ROLES of Tristan and Toby similar?
 - What are some commonalities that appear on their respective 'Role on the Wall' silhouettes?

Learning Experiences (cont.)

TAKE YOUR CUE: Mirroring

The RELATIONSHIPS in *The Effect* are mirror images of each other. As the TENSION OF RELATIONSHIPS between Connie and Tristan becomes more complex, so too does the TENSION OF RELATIONSHIPS between Toby and Dr. James. The mirroring of the RELATIONSHIPS is portrayed most clearly at the end of the play when both couples sit with their respective partners at their bedside and Toby and Connie take on the ROLE of carers to Dr. James and Tristan.

MIRRORING WARM-UP

1. Students in pairs. Person A and Person B.
2. Students sit facing each other with their legs crossed.
3. Person A starts doing MOVEMENTS with their hands and face at a moderate pace.
4. Person B is to mirror their MOVEMENTS exactly.
5. After two minutes Person A and Person B swap ROLES and Person B leads the MOVEMENTS and Person A mirrors them.
6. Try to keep the MOVEMENTS as sensible as possible to set the tone for the next activity.

MIRRORING A SCENE

1. Divide students into groups of four. If a student is left out, they can take on the ROLE of the director.
2. Two students are to be Connie and Tristan and two students are to be Dr. James and Toby.
3. Using the script extract involving Toby and Dr. James and Connie and Tristan, the two groups are to co-ordinate their scenes to have the same MOVEMENT including gestures, body language and use of SPACE.
4. For example, on the line from Tristan, “I’m losing it”, he might end with his arms crossed. The last line from Toby “...and we need to monitor him as such.”, he will also have his arms crossed.
5. On the script there are asterisks (*). These

Learning Experiences (cont.)

SCRIPT EXCERPTS

Pg. 90 and 91 and Pg. 92 and 93. In this scene Connie reveals to Tristan that he is on a placebo and Toby tells Dr. James that she is being tested for bias.

Tristan: I'm sorry. Sorry. It's the drugs.
Connie: Now it is?!
Tristan: I can't handle it.
Connie: Stop it.
Tristan: I'm losing it.*

Dr. James: Is it me? I'm terrified it's me. Have I done something? The boy has stats off the chart and high risk symptoms but he's clean. It doesn't make any sense.

Toby: Okay, Lorna... Calm down. This isn't what you think. He is a test subject. His symptoms are relevant. And we need to monitor him as such. *

Connie: You're not even on the / drug, Tristan.
Tristan: /I'm having a whitey. He seems about to be sick.
Connie: You're not on the drug. She told me.
Tristan: What?*

Dr. James: I give out the pills, Toby, I know he's / (on placebo) –
Toby: /You don't know what you're giving out. They're active agent just packaged differently. Deliberately. He's on the drug. We're testing practitioner bias, alongside. As well. To see if there's a difference in what you report, according to what you think they're being given.*

Connie: You're on a placebo. This is all just you.

His body tries to absorb the information. Eventually...

Connie: Tris?
No response.
Connie: Tris?
Dr. James: You're testing me?!
Toby: It's not un/usual –
Dr. James: You're testing me!

Learning Experiences (cont.)

LEARNING EXPERIENCE THREE

PRACTICE LINK:

Creating and Presenting

FOCUS:

Stream-of-Consciousness

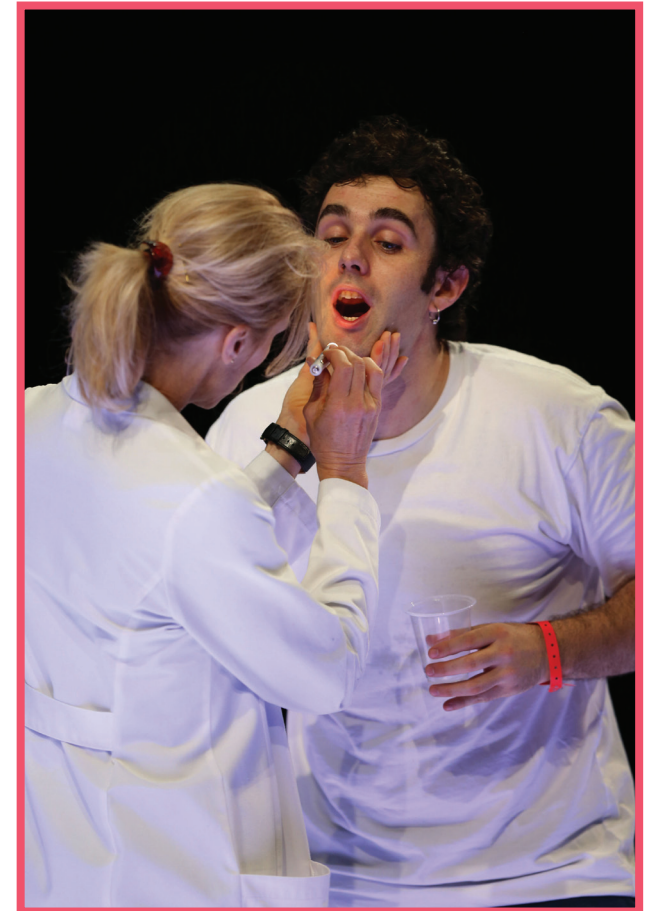
RESOURCES:

Paper and a pen for each student, music (optional), whiteboard.

TAKE YOUR CUE: Stream-of-Consciousness

The focus of this activity is for students, thinking about the STYLE of Naturalism, to explore the 'inner-landscape' of the CHARACTERS in the play by writing a stream-of-consciousness account. A stream-of-consciousness account is a form of writing where a character's thoughts and conscious reactions to events are written in a continuous flow of uninterrupted dialogue.

1. Students are to choose the CHARACTER of Connie or Toby and write a piece of stream-of-consciousness dialogue from the character's position at the end of the play as they sit by the bedside of their respective partners.
2. Students are to read the character analysis found in this resource. Students writing as Connie are to think about her position on love, how love unfolds and the effect of the drug. Students writing as Toby are to think about his position about the cause of depression and the brain and how this impacts on his idea of love.
3. Students are given 15 minutes to write.
4. Share the streams-of-consciousness monologues with the class.



Angie Milliken and Mark Leonard Winter in STC's *The Effect*, 2014.
Image Stephen Henry. ©

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OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR *THE EFFECT* BY LUCY PREBBLE

- Pre-Show In-the-Know handout for fast facts and what to look for in the performance.
- Classroom poster and handout about science in plays.
- Worksheet - investigating the Performance Techniques used in *The Effect* to create Dramatic Meaning
- Designer Sketchbook - A digital sketchbook features photos and sketches of the set and costume design by Renee Mulder.