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# Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* in America

Diane Long Hoeveler

This essay in honor of Henrik Ibsen addresses the reception and use of his play *An Enemy of the People* made by American playwrights from Arthur Miller to Simon Levy. As Arthur Miller writes in the Introduction to his adaptation of the play in 1957, 'Ibsen sought to make the play as weighty and living a fact as the discovery of the steam engine or algebra. This can be scoffed away only at a price, and the price is a living drama.'

What exactly might be Miller's working meaning of the term 'a living drama.' Miller's claim above forces viewers of Ibsen's dramas to consider not simply the sheer materiality and realism of his plays ('the steam engine or algebra'), but also the force of his characters, their dynamic living presence, history, and energy on the stage (what Miller calls their 'characterological definition,' 1994; 230). That life force emanates so strongly that after the play ends we cannot imagine that these people we have come to know so intimately on the stage will simply evaporate into the curtains. In

one of his more interesting footnotes to *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, George Bernard Shaw tells us that both he and Eleanor Marx, the youngest daughter of Karl Marx, were so intrigued by the unresolved fate of Nora that they independently wrote sequels to Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, trying to imagine her fate after she walked out on Helmer (90). As any spectator of an Ibsen play knows, there is in fact a sort of unresolved openness to most of his twenty-five dramas, just as there is a heavy sense of the past influencing the present events in the plays. In *Hedda Gabler* we see in the final scene the survivors huddled around the scraps of a fragmented and burned manuscript, desperately trying to piece it together, while in *A Doll's House* we see Nora walk out to a new and undefined life, slamming the door on her old one.

While Miller spends a good time of his time analyzing the power of the past in Ibsen's works ('Introduction'), it is also true that there is a continuum that develops while his characters are on stage. As we view the characters' actions on stage, we experience the reality of their present situations as determined by the decisions that they made in the past, but then there is the infinite unknown that cannot help but seize one's imagination once the curtain falls. This openness, of course, has led later dramatists to attempt to answer the question of 'what happened next' that audiences are left with after they themselves walk out of *Hedda Gabler* or *A Doll's House*. That sense of futurity, of questions about the eventual fates of Ibsen's characters, persists all too clearly in his *An Enemy of the People*, first performed in Norway in 1883, and consistently adapted and retranslated into English over the years.

This essay will examine Ibsen's play itself as well as the major adaptation of the work into English, Arthur Miller's version (1950). In the concluding section of the essay I will briefly consider Steven Dietz's contemporary adaptation, *Paragon Springs* (2000), Simon Levy's adaptation (2006), as well as the major filmic versions currently available on video-DVD. My intent is to suggest that the drama has persisted in popularity in numerous cultures because it enunciates the continuing need of people to speak out against political, social, and environmental acts of aggression. Levy's adaptation of the drama at the Fountain Theater in Los Angeles coincides, not coincidentally I think, with his earlier adaptation of Eliot Weinberger's article 'What I Heard About Iraq' (2005) into a drama. As Levy depicts the Bush administration's rush to launch the current war in Iraq, he in a sense writes another version of *An Enemy of the People*, this time focused on the follies and lies of the current administration in Washington. As Levy has noted, he is consumed 'by what it means to be an American, what the

American dream is about, what's happening to the idea of America' ('Simon Levy — Profile'). Miller was similarly invested in charting the permutations of the American dream, and I would claim that Ibsen had a similar investment in the notion of secular humanism, democracy, modernism, and 'progress.' *An Enemy of the People* emerges from such a milieu and, as such, it is a drama that has particularly appealed to America, which is itself a nation that is invested in alternative interpretations and postures of infinite adaptability.

As I initially suggested, we cannot help but be struck by the unresolved fate of Dr. Thomas Stockmann and his cause at the conclusion of *An Enemy of the People*. As he picks up the stones and gravel that have broken his study windows, he is not cowed or frightened into flight, although his brother encourages him to leave the town as quickly as possible, at least until emotions cool down. Instead, the idealistic doctor surrounds himself with his wife, two sons and daughter and defiantly declares that he will stay in the small Norwegian town that has recently branded him 'an enemy of the people.' Like an implausible (and ironic) latter-day Jesus Christ, he determines to form a coterie of idealistic followers around him, all of them devoted to modernizing and secularizing ('revolutionizing') their nation according to scientific and Liberal principles. An advocate of the moral force of the individual in the face of social, economic, and familial corruption, Stockmann believes in 'truth and freedom' (Hemmer 68), as well as universalism and progressivism (Sell 24), and becomes something of a literal embodiment of the ideals of the French Revolution (albeit reaching Norway about a century later). But Ibsen himself was not certain he was writing a comedy of manners or a serious drama, as he wrote to a correspondent two days after completing the play: 'I am still a bit uncertain how far I should call the thing comedy [*lystspil*] or a straight drama [*skuespil*]; it has something of both elements, or else lies in between' (qtd Hemmer 81). More than a humorous whiff of a messiah complex emerges in the personality of the idealistic Dr. Stockmann at the conclusion of the play, and the contemporary viewer at least knows that the sort of revolution that Stockmann envisioned would not occur again until 1914, and then under the less benign direction of Lenin.

But what sort of revolution does Stockmann exactly envision. A man who can declare that 'the majority is always wrong' (Miller, 1977; 94; 'The majority never has right on its side. I said never!' in Hampton, 91) was swimming against the currents of a Europe that had a century earlier overthrown elitist, aristocratic rule in favor of the voice of the people, the brotherhood, the comradeship of the *volk*. But earlier in the play Stockmann had

been gloating over his assured victory with the city council when he thought that both the newspaper under the direction of Hovstad and the Property-owners' Association led by Aslaksen were supporting him: 'You see, I have the solid majority behind me!' (Hampton 72). Is Stockmann a hypocrite or is he a befuddled idealist who makes his best argument anyway he can. I would contend that Stockmann is a character who is ideologically bifurcated and somewhat misplaced historically: almost a Darwinian reactionary in his belief in pedigree and breeding, he is also revolutionary in his adherence to science and progress at the expense of vested interests like the community's tax structure and his own family's chance to profit from their grandfather Kiil's will. Ibsen referred to Stockmann as 'muddleheaded,' but perhaps a better understanding of him is as a man who embodies in his own bifurcated manner a society in rapid transition, moving too quickly from the *ancien régime* to modernization and secularization. Something of a romantic in his belief that one individual could challenge his society and transform it for the better, Stockmann is also almost the embodiment of a Nietzschean superman who thinks his more enlightened will can be imposed upon the weaker masses. As Miller himself noted about Ibsen's characters in general, 'they reveal the evolutionary quality of life. One is constantly aware, in watching his plays, of process, change, development' ('Introduction,' 1957).

In some ways, *Enemy* feels like a rewrite of Ibsen's earlier *Brand* (1865), another drama about 'an uncompromising idealist who sacrifices everything, including his family, to his vision' (Brockett 391). Often seen as a play that stages the conflict between the forces of conscience and opportunism, *Enemy* can also be seen as a Cain and Abel struggle, the manifestation of a long-standing sibling rivalry that the doctor's wife sees as not only personal, but also as the eternal battle between knowledge and power,

**Mrs Stockmann** But, Tomas darling, it's your brother who has all the power  
[...]

**Stockmann** Yes, but I'm the one who's right!

**Mrs Stockmann** Oh, well, right, right; what's the use of being right, if you have no power? (Hampton, 48)

One has to conclude by this point in the drama that Katrine Stockmann and her common sense approach to life have very little in common with her husband and his values.

Ibsen himself wrote a note to his publisher about the drama, claiming that, after *Ghosts*, he wrote *An Enemy* as 'an inoffensive piece, which can be

read by ministers of state and business men and their ladies' (16 March 1882; qtd. McFarlane, vol. 6, p. 423). Somehow, one cannot help but hear thick irony in that disclaimer. Like other Ibsen dramas, this one begins with a cozy family scene that would have reassured his audience that they were at least initially inhabiting familiar terrain. But all that is suddenly interrupted by the delivery of some sort of 'fatal secret' (in this case, the letter that provides evidence of pollution in the water system) that dissolves the security of the family, and, by extension, the community. Raymond Williams has called this device 'Ibsen's retrospective method' and it is for him 'much more than a device of exposition; it is a thematic forcing of past into present' (9). It is also, however, 'a bourgeois form [...] that curious combination of a demonstrated public morality and an intervening fate, evident in the early eighteenth-century domestic drama, and reaching its maturity in Ibsen' (9). Miller, on the other hand, has labeled this device a 'reincarnation of the Greek dramatic spirit, especially in its obsessive fascination with past transgressions as the seeds of current catastrophe' (1994; 229). And later critics of Miller's works have used Miller's analysis above to label aspects of *All My Sons* (in particular) as 'Greco-Ibsen.'

For Shaw, the conflict in *An Enemy* was between public hypocrisy and one honest individual: 'Feeling the disadvantage of appearing in their true character as a conspiracy of interested rogues against an honest man, they pose as Society, as The People, as Democracy, as the solid Liberal Majority, and other imposing abstractions' (94). When the French revolution overthrew the King and banished the pope, they installed instead what Shaw calls (not facetiously I think) 'Voltaire's pope, *Monsieur Tout-le-monde*, and made it blasphemy against Democracy to deny that the majority is always right, although that, as Ibsen says, is a lie' (95). Because of its vested interests in maintaining the status quo, the majority is always wrong, always has to be wrong, because the new and the reformed will wipe away the privileges of this same majority. For Shaw, 'the pioneer is a tiny minority of the force he heads; and so, though it is easy to be in a minority and yet be wrong, it is absolutely impossible to be in the majority and yet be right as to the newest social prospects' (95). Shaw, of course, had his own agendas and we can certainly see them in his condemnation of organized religion and his bald claim that 'there is no such thing as the ideal State' (96). Like Ibsen, Shaw believes that 'all abstractions invested with collective consciousness or collective authority, set above the individual, and exacting duty from him on pretence of acting or thinking with greater validity than he, are man-eating idols red with human sacrifices' (96-7).

But the play makes clear that abstractions like 'the people' or 'sacred human rights' are what Ibsen would eventually call 'the life-lie' (*livslognen*) in *The Wild Duck*. As Ewbank has noted, a few key words -- 'truth' ('sannheten'), 'Might' ('Makten'), and 'Right' ('Retten') -- in the play are used repeatedly so that by the end of the play, these words have a much more complex, nuanced ('human') meaning. But by the time Stockmann talks about 'old truths' as 'lies,' we know that the play is not simply concerned with the state of the water, but the fact that, as Stockmann points out, 'our spiritual springs are poisoned and that the whole of our society rests on the plague-infected soil of lies' (Hampton 87). It would appear that the organizing principle of the drama is the Hegelian one of thesis, antithesis, synthesis, but this debate itself is predicated on the shifting and unreliable meaning of words and abstract concepts. People 'clash and fight in terms of abstract concepts; and in a sense the play is about what these concepts mean, i.e., about what words can hide' (Ewbank 79).

In his final recourse to 'spiritual' concerns, Stockmann is something of a misguided Hegelian, or at least as much of one as Ibsen understood. As Downs has noted, for Ibsen the model of Hegelian philosophy seemed to raise the simple question: 'What if the Christian religion [is] not the final 'synthesis' which for so long it has seemed to be [...] but an 'antithesis,' waiting, as it were, for a later 'synthesis' as it had confronted an earlier 'thesis'?' (113). Ibsen hints at this issue when Stockmann's sons talk with Billing and Hovstad about what they want to do when they grow up. Morten announces that he wants to be a Viking, while Ejlif quickly warns him that 'then you can't be a Christian.' Billing interjects, 'I'm not a Christian and I'm proud of it. You wait, soon there won't be any Christians' (Hampton 16). Clearly the spiritual springs that Stockmann hopes will wash his community clean are not affiliated with any denominational religion, Christian, pagan (Viking), or otherwise. Stockmann instead envisions some sort of secular humanism, some belief in 'human rights' that will purge the town of their corrupt self-serving hypocrisies. But as every failed revolutionary from Robespierre to Lenin has learned, power itself corrupts and the impetus to reform others can only become yet another failed experiment in *realpolitik*.

*An Enemy* was first introduced to American audiences in 1895 through the highly inauthentic production of Herbert Beerbohm Tree, who claimed that he was presenting the drama as a 'respectable tragedy about an idealist who stands up for his principles' (Schanke 16). In fact, the characters as envisioned by Tree were caricatures, wheezing, entering and exiting with 'low comedy' flair, and generally playing the action for 'broadly farcical' effect

(Schanke 16). In order to make the play even more palatable for English-speaking audiences, Tree went further by deleting all of the controversial ('elitist') references in the play to 'Darwinian social determinism' in Stockmann's speeches (Emeljanow 108). As Dithmar, a contemporary critic of Ibsen noted at the time, the play was not authentic to the spirit of Ibsen and, like the Londoners who had seen Tree's production two years earlier (premiere: June 14, 1893), Ibsen was being made palatable to English speaking audiences by censoring and sanitizing the conflicts and ideas in the dramas.

Arthur Miller has admitted that he was inspired to become a dramatist because of his love for Ibsen's plays (Moss 24). After a ten-year apprenticeship during which he wrote a number of unsuccessful plays, Miller earned his first New York Drama Critics Circle Award for *All My Sons*, produced in 1947 and clearly influenced by *An Enemy*. In fact, Miller called *All My Sons* 'my most Ibsen-influenced play' (1994; 232). Three years later Miller adapted Ibsen's great political drama in 1950 from a word for word translation done from the Norwegian by Lars Nordenson (Miller 1977; 11), and he too, like Tree before him, deleted a number of Stockmann's elitist, racist, or fascist speeches (referring to poor people as 'animals,' 'mongrels' rather than 'poodles'; talking about 'breeding' of dogs as analogous to producing a superior class of people, 'an aristocracy of character') because he knew such sentiments would offend the liberal American audiences he was trying to reach. After Hitler and the Holocaust, rhetoric about a superior species of humanity was more than a bit uncomfortable, and as a Jew, Miller would have been in an awkward position to produce Stockmann's offending speeches and then celebrate the man's vision for a reformed Europe. Moi has noted that after Ibsen's 'high naturalist phase of the early 1880s' epitomized in *An Enemy*, Ibsen 'turned his back on the metaphysics of truth. Dr. Stockmann's righteous pursuit of the truth in *An Enemy* leads him into precisely the kind of elitism and arrogance that were to become widespread among modernists' (Moi 95). Similarly, Adler has observed that 'Miller removes what he saw as potentially a proto-fascist strain in Stockmann's espousal of an evolving aristocracy of leaders with broad powers to mould community standards [...] Apart from the shadings in the protagonist's character and Miller's introduction of more colloquial language, the alterations between original and adaptation might be accounted minimal' (87). Years later, Miller himself defended his decision to censor *An Enemy*, stating: 'Though Dr. Stockmann fights admirably for absolute license to tell society the truth, he goes on to imply the existence of an unspecified elite that can prescribe what people are to believe [...] It is indefensible in a democ-

matic society, albeit the normal practice, to ascribe superior prescience to a self-elected group' (1987; 323-34).

Miller's adaptation has been described as more than a little quirky, complete with 'high spirits and idiomatic obsolescence' (Lindholdt 54), not to mention some fairly substantial changes in the play's organization and characterizations (particularly of Dr. Stockmann, making him an unambiguous hero-martyr rather than the subtly shaded character that Ibsen had created). Miller also cut the play by as much as a quarter, reducing five acts to three, and adding his own interlinear notes on the characters as a sort of running commentary on the play (a device begun by Shaw but famously used earlier by Coleridge in his marginal gloss to *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*). Miller's most substantial revision is the speech of Peter Stockmann, who defends the need to resort to totalitarianism in the name of law and order: 'No, God knows, in ordinary times I'd agree a hundred percent with anybody's right to say anything. But these are not ordinary times' (Miller, 1977, 89). Miller, of course, was writing on the verge of the Communist witch-hunts led by Senator Joseph McCarthy, but certainly anyone who knows history understands that every generation thinks that theirs are 'not ordinary times.' The same argument has recently been made about illegal wiretaps by the Bush government in its fight against terrorism. For all of its faults, however, Miller's adaptation has 'proved to be very popular and has shown a tendency in America to replace Ibsen's original' (Haugen 343).

In his introduction to *Enemy*, Miller wrote that 'I have attempted to make *An Enemy of the People* as alive to Americans as it undoubtedly was to Norwegians [...] and I believed this play could be alive for us because its central theme is, in my opinion, the central theme of our social life today. Simply it is the question of whether the democratic guarantees protecting political minorities ought to be set aside in time of crisis' (Miller 8). Clearly, Miller implies, the rights of minorities need to be protected, and as someone who in 1956 was hauled before the House Committee on Un-American Activities and refused to 'name names,' Miller was all too sensitive to the stupidity of the righteous and hypocritical 'majority.' Although the public may have been comfortable with Miller's adaptation (or bowdlerization), the New York critics were not. Alan Thomas castigated Miller for rubbing off 'the comic and distinctive edges [of Dr. Stockmann]' and of making him 'a Hollywoodish-heroical Champion of Democracy, too serious and wise to descend to horseplay or to delight in making a rumpus.' In a statement that echoes the complaints made by Dithmar about Tree's production in 1895, Thomas sneers: 'to make free with Ibsen by turning his play into a contem-

porary melodrama of 'social significance' may win hot applause, as it did on the night when I attended, but the applause is for the agitational propaganda, not for Ibsen' (27). Ironically, as Mike Sell points out, Miller thought he was working against the philistinism of Broadway audiences when he wrote *All My Sons* (1947), *Death of a Salesman* (1949) and adapted *An Enemy* (1950): 'though his plays reflect a naturalist urge to place characters within a tightly woven net of personal, social, political, and historical forces, they also reflect an essentially tragic commitment to the articulation of transcendent principles based in specific stories of individual and community resistance to fate' (27).

But if Miller's adaptation was produced during the height of the Communist 'scare' and fear-mongering of Senator McCarthy (Republican, Wisconsin), the play proved infinitely malleable, as Miller realized by 1989. At that later date, Miller returned to examine the play, and this time he saw its themes as more concerned with ecological despoliation and industrial pollution. As he observed in an article written for *Index on Censorship*,

The story of *Enemy* is far more applicable to our nature-despoiling societies than to even turn-of-the-century capitalism, untrammled and raw as Ibsen knew it to be. The churning up of pristine forests, valleys and fields for minerals and the rights of way of the expanding rail systems is child's play compared to some of our vast depredations, our atomic contamination and oil spills, to say nothing of the tainting of our food supply by carcinogenic chemicals [...] It must be remembered that for Ibsen the poisoning of the public water supply by mendacious and greedy interests was only the occasion of *An Enemy of the People* and is not, strictly speaking, its theme. That, of course, concerns the crushing of the dissenting spirit by the majority, and the right and obligation of such a spirit to exist at all. That he thought to link this moral struggle with the preservation of nature is perhaps not accidental. (74)

The structure of the piece leading to the 'great metatheatrical Act 4 featuring Dr. Stockmann's speech' (Moi 12) to his brother Peter and the townspeople, lends itself to the dramatized debate of ideas that Shaw was to develop later in England. Something like a stylized volley and exchange occurs between the two brothers, each of whom represents a radically different set of values. As Miller realized, for the debate to work Ibsen 'needed an absolute good for evil to work against, an unarguably worthy brightness for dark mendacity to threaten, and perhaps nature alone could offer him that. And, of course,

this is even more effective in our time when people have to go to the supermarket to buy clean water' (1989; 74).

As Sell has noted, Miller generally created characters that were 'in the vein of Ibsen,' that is, 'more than the sum of their environments while remaining always anchored in them' (25). This is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the actions and motivations of the Keller clan. In creating *All My Sons*' Joe Keller and his two sons, Larry and Chris, Miller in effect reversed and rewrote the moral dilemma of *An Enemy* using the same 'writing as legislating' technique that he had learned from Ibsen (Miller, qtd Gross 14). When Chris Keller asks his mother how she can accept Larry's death as well as those of other airmen killed by Joe's manufacture and sale of defective airplane parts, he states the theme of Miller's play: 'You can be better! Once and for all you can know there's a universe of people outside and you're responsible to it.' The same statement might sum up the message that Ibsen was conveying in the character of Thomas Stockmann. But it was not simply the theme that Miller adapted from Ibsen, he also added the symbolic, mystical, and 'Greco-Ibsen' elements to this and his other early dramas because, like Ibsen, he believed that naturalism or materialism could not be the whole of life: the 'real' in Ibsen's plays was based in 'some unreadable hidden order behind the amoral chaos of events as we rationally perceive them' (*Timebends* 135). A year earlier he stated even more explicitly that Ibsen was 'as much a mystic as a realist [because] while there are mysteries in life which no amount of analyzing will reduce to reason, it is perfectly realistic to admit and even to proclaim that hiatus as a truth' (1988; 13). But what Miller does glean from Ibsen is what he calls an understanding of the 'magnetic force of the family relation' (1979; 16), the motivating factor that the father-in-law Morton Kiil provides when he attempts to blackmail Stockmann by threatening his wife and children with disinheritance or the motivating factor for Joe Keller to betray his business partner and American service men for the sake of wealth for his sons.

The personal rather than the public lies at the root of both Ibsen and Miller's dramas. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that it is the conflict between the personal (the power of the family and clan) over the public (the social and economic world of power, newspapers, and taxes) that forms the crux of the problem. There is something deeply primeval about the pull of the family, and Miller recognized this in one of his notebook jottings (in an unpublished manuscript at the University of Texas examined by Bigsby). In toying with the idea of writing an 'Italian play,' he observed: 'the secret of the Greek drama is the vendetta, the family ties incomprehensible to Eng-

lishmen and Americans. But not to Jews. Much that has been interpreted in lofty terms, fate, religion, etc. is only blood and the tribal survival within the family' (qtd Bigsby 109). Although Miller finally rejected Ibsen's dramas as a model and turned his attention to writing more anti-realistic plays (i.e., *A View from the Bridge* and *After the Fall*), he continued to assert his belief in the notion of drama as 'jurisprudence' (Miller, 1979; 10). Resorting to a musical metaphor, Miller observed that 'there could be no aesthetic form without a moral world, only notes without a staff' (*Timebends* 160). For Mike Sell, the importance of Ibsen's influence for Miller is the 'morality of form,' the coherence in a 'dramatic structure that makes possible an understanding of right action, of the place of right action in a specific conflict, and of the larger significance of righteous action and sectarian conflict to the human community' (26).

Set in the Midwest during the 1920s, Dietz's *Paragon Springs* premiered at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater in 2000 and was performed in Chicago in 2004 (unfortunately, the play has not yet been published). A very faithful adaptation in terms of characterization and central moral dilemma, Dietz has stated that he chose to set the play in the 1920s in America because the era was analogous to the stage of civilization that Norway was in the 1880s: 'a time when the modern America was being born, and thus a time of great and startling conflict' (1). As the director of both productions of *Paragon Springs*, William Brown noted, *Enemy* 'is a disturbing play and a dangerous one. It articulates ideas that are messy and not easy to come to terms with. What I love about this version is that the town is very familiar to us. It's Wisconsin — our own backyard. Instead of it happening in some foreign venue, it's something we know — our friends and neighbors' (1-2).

Rather than emphasize the role of the people's free press as Ibsen did, Dietz's play uses the radio — and by extension, technology — to describe how the voice of one man can 'resonate' or 'impersonate the voices of many.' As Dietz notes, 'the infamous phrase, 'The American People,' surely comes out of this time most profoundly — because technology suddenly began to give the illusion that one man could read, and therefore, speak for everyone' (2). Another curious alteration to the play is the name of the town for its setting, 'Paragon Springs.' Any Midwesterner knows that Frank Lloyd Wright built his Midwestern retreat, Taliesin, in Spring Green, Wisconsin, the place where he spent his summers as a child. For Midwestern audiences, the setting of *Paragon Springs* in rural Wisconsin and during the heyday of Wright's career in Chicago recalls in many ways the character of Dr. Stockmann. Certainly, Wright was not a medical doctor, but he did at-

tempt to construct a similar sort of totalizing vision on conceptual architectural ('scientific') principles that Stockmann attempted to bring to a political reconstruction and reform of his own small Norwegian village.

In addition, Simon Levy has adapted *An Enemy* for a new production at the Fountain Theater, Los Angeles (2006). As the resident playwright, director, and dramaturg for the theater, Levy is perhaps best known for his recent *What I Heard About Iraq*, a political drama that he adapted from an article written by Eliot Weinberger and staged as a worldwide reading on March 20, 2006 ('Worldwide Reading of *What I Heard About Iraq*.') Using actual direct quotations from politicians, military leaders, soldiers, and Iraqi citizens, the play attempts to reveal the half-truths and lies behind our motivations in invading Iraq. Like Miller, Levy insists that his creativity and passion for the theater comes out of his Jewish identity: 'I have been greatly influenced by my Jewish heritage' ('Simon Levy — Profile'). He also echoes Ibsen at times, stating 'Action is the antidote. I believe one person *does* make a difference. Our choice is to cry out or be silent. But a cry can become a shout can become a roar. And I believe our leaders will follow the people if the people's voice is strong enough. If we changed military might to humanitarian might, can you imagine how much good we could do?' ('Simon Levy — Profile.')

The connection that most reveals the Ibsen-Miller-Levy trajectory is the fact that Levy began work on adapting *An Enemy of the People* immediately after his production of *What I Heard About Iraq*. Like Miller, Levy has stated that the principle that informs his work is the determination 'to understand "the other." To challenge myself with something that "can't be done." It's the 15-year-old rebel in me. I have no desire to walk in the meadow. I walk along the cliff edge; I test limits' ('Simon Levy — Profile.'). Born in England but raised since the age of two in America, Levy sound very much like Miller when he states that his attraction as a dramatist is to plays that provoke a 'strong psycho-emotional response' in him. Noting that he is consumed by 'what it means to be an American, what the American dream is about, what's happening to the idea of America,' he virtually echoes Miller. 'My soul is aching and crying out,' he says. 'I needed to provide a cognitive map so everyone can see the journey. To condense it to an experience we can hold in our hands, get it into our bodies. Embrace it and "get it." It's what the Greeks called catharsis' ('Simon Levy — Profile.'). Whether he is aware of how much his words echo those of Miller, Levy's adaptation of *An Enemy* at this particular time (during the Iraq War crisis) places him firmly

in the tradition of being a follower of Miller's themes, interests, and techniques.

Finally, *An Enemy of the People* has been adapted for the screen a number of times, although not nearly as often as *A Doll's House* and *Hedda Gabler*. As Törnqvist has observed, the recent upsurge in adaptations of *An Enemy* is due to 'the threatening environmental problems in our time' (206). Four major English language adaptations exist, while there are also Estonian, Greek, Indian, German, and Norwegian versions (see Hansen, *passim*). The earliest English-language version was produced for television in 1966 and was alternately known as 'Arthur Miller's Adaptation of *An Enemy of the People*.' Starring James Daly as Dr. Thomas Stockmann, the film was shot in black and white with a running time of 112 minutes. This production is currently available on VHS and has been lauded as one of the most accurate and well-acted film versions available in English. The next adaptation was done for film in 1978 and was also based on Miller's adaptation. A big screen color production, the film is divided into Acts, giving it a very theatrical appearance (there are also no exterior shots). Running 103 minutes and with an impressive Hollywood cast, the film features the unlikely Steve McQueen as Dr. Thomas Stockmann (costumed to look like Ibsen himself). Somewhat controversial at the time of its production and released to mixed reviews, the film is now generally recognized as the most serious and important film version of the drama.

The two most recent English adaptations of the play have both been made for television, one in the United Kingdom and one in the United States. The UK version was produced in 1980 and was an 85 minute color adaptation starring Robert Urquhart as Tom Stockmann. The US version was taped for viewing on television directly from a Broadway production in 1990. Directed by Jack O'Brien, this VHS version stars John Glover as Thomas and Nicholas Fee as 'Edward' Stockmann, his brother. In addition to this name change, the action has been moved to Maine, 1893. As I mentioned earlier, more esoteric versions of the drama are also available on VHS. The USSR produced an Estonian-language version in 1989 entitled 'Doctor Stockmann,' while the famed Indian director Satyajit Ray produced a Bengali-language version entitled 'Ganashatru' also in 1989. Ray's adaptation is set in a contemporary Bengalese town, where the Hindu temple's holy water is contaminated (Törnqvist 206). In 1972 a Greek-language version was produced and entitled 'O Ehtros tou laou,' while a German-language version entitled 'Ein Volksfeind' was produced for television in 1998. To my knowledge, the only Norwegian adaptation available on film

was produced in 2005 and directed by Erik Skjoldbjaerg (director of the Norwegian version of 'Insomnia'). A 90-minute film shot in color and set in contemporary Norway, 'En Folkefiende' was very well received at its premiere in London, even though the director announced (perhaps somewhat alarmingly) to the audience that he had based his depiction of Stockmann on Michael Moore, the American agent provocateur of films like *9/11*.

*An Enemy of the People* has consistently spoken to American audiences since the late nineteenth century, and certainly with the current debates over environmental pollution and the Iraq war it will continue to resonate. The drama has an archetypal quality that allows it to be adapted, transformed, and reinterpreted by succeeding generations and, from the filmic evidence, by disparate cultures. Thomas Stockmann may appear to us as a self-righteous prig, a conceited snob who viewed himself as superior to the 'herd' who surrounded him. But the modern world has been built on the belief that progress occurs when exceptional (or eccentric if you will) individuals look critically at their environments and bring rational, scientific, and yet deeply human principles to bear on the organizing principles of their communities. We have returned, I think, to the realization that Ibsen was writing as a secular humanist in an age that was still deeply invested in the 'truth' of religious ideologies and the hierarchical structures they supported. His frustration with fraud, lies, and greed fairly shout in this play, and because of that, we will, I would predict, continue to see more and more American and English adaptations of its message in the years to come.