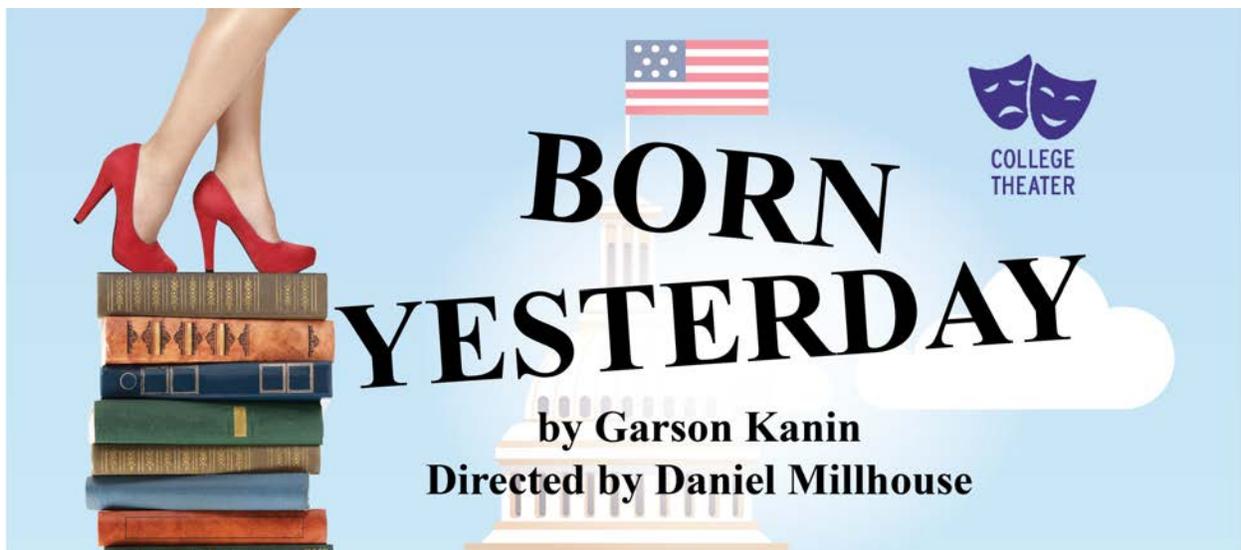


College of DuPage Theatre Department

Presents

Born Yesterday

By Garson Kanin



Directed by Daniel Millhouse

The College Theatre Department sincerely thanks the library for research support for classes studying the script and production, as well as for the cast, director, and production team working on the project.

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Play/Production Information

Brief Synopsis

Harry Brock is a self-made, junkman businessman who comes to Washington to make crooked deals with government big-wigs. He brings with him his ex-chorus girlfriend Billie, whose social graces needs work. Journalist Paul Verrall is hired to educate Billie and she learns to question everything. Her awakening gives her new skills to turn the tables on Harry in this touching and hilarious play.

Time and Place

1946, Washington, D.C.

Act I - September

Act II - About two months later

Act III - Late that night

Characters

Billie Dawn

Harry Brock

Paul Verrall

Edith Devery

Senator Norval Hedges

Mrs. Hedges

Eddie Brock

The Assistant Manager

Helen

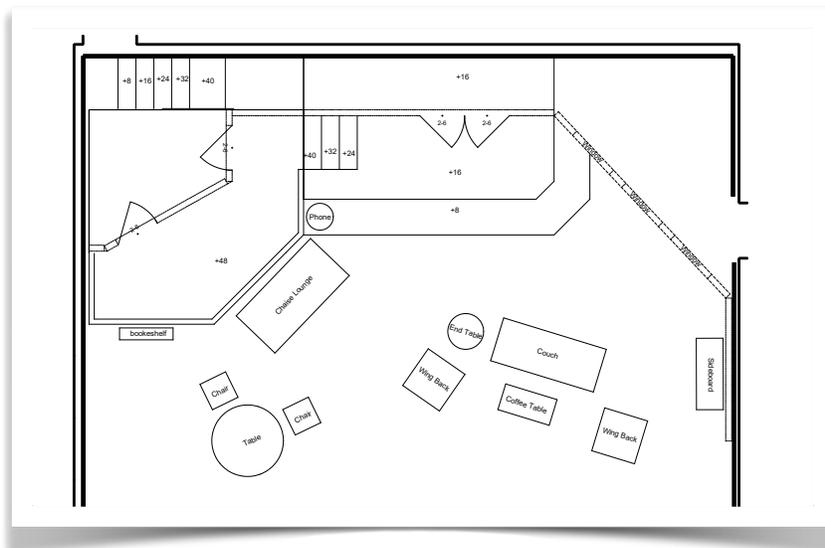
A Bellhop

A Barber

A Manicurist

A Waiter

Note: Mature themes and language



Finalized Ground Plan for College of DuPage's College Theater's Fall 2022 Production of *Born Yesterday* by Set Designer Sabrina Zeidler

***Born Yesterday* Director's Note**

Fall 2022

I worked on this play a couple of years ago as an understudy with the Remy Bumpo Theatre Company. It was actually my first show I worked on in Chicago, and I really fell in love with its wit and political commentary. I'm so grateful to have the opportunity to tell this story with the students at the College of DuPage this Semester. One of the highlights of working on this production has been working with the students to find ways to make this story relevant to today's audience. Having said that, it is wild to see how much a text from the 1940's still has resonance with us today.

As a Director, I am unable to change the text, but I am able to play around with casting in order to "modernize" this story without removing it from its time period. Conscious Casting allows us the opportunity to find contemporary ways to tell these period pieces to a modern audience. For example, casting Ed Devery as "Edith" and casting a BIPOC Actor in the role of Senator Hedges changes the importance of these character's relationships to both Harry Brock and the story. Although these casting choices do not change the text, they can help heighten the story for a modern audience.

Some of the key things I want people to take away from this show are that we are stronger together as a community, and that one individual can make a difference. I want people to leave feeling like they DO have the power to inform their decisions with actual research from all sides of the argument. There is strength in our differences, and effective/informed communication can not only challenge us but allow us all to grow. We all need to challenge ourselves to question what we see and hear, since the rise of social media and "fake news" can leave some of us feeling like we were, in fact, born yesterday. ~DM

The Playwright: Garson Kanin

Source: Barson, Michael. "Garson Kanin." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Garson-Kanin>.

Garson Kanin, (born November 24, 1912, Rochester, New York, U.S.—died March 13, 1999, New York, New York), American writer and director who was perhaps best known for several classic comedies written with his wife, the actress-writer Ruth Gordon, and for the play *Born Yesterday* (1946).

Early Work

Kanin left high school to help support his family during the first years of the Great Depression. He worked as a musician and later as a comedian before attending the American Academy of Dramatic Arts (1932–33). In 1933 he was cast in a small part in the Broadway play *Little Ol' Boy*. After a few other roles, in 1935 Kanin became an assistant to producer-director George Abbott and soon was directing touring companies of Abbott's shows. At about that same time, he met playwright Thornton Wilder, who became his mentor and later encouraged him to write. In 1936 Kanin directed his first Broadway production, *Hitch Your Wagon*.

Film Directing

In 1937 Kanin moved to Hollywood and joined producer Samuel Goldwyn's staff. However, he soon left after receiving no directing assignments. In 1938 he signed with RKO, and later that year he helmed *A Man to Remember*, a B-film written by Dalton Trumbo, and *Next Time I Marry*, a screwball comedy starring Lucille Ball. *The Great Man Votes* (1939) was Kanin's first critical success, thanks largely to a moving performance by John Barrymore. An acerbic satire on politicians and pollsters, it depicts an alcoholic former professor who is about to lose custody of his two children. His life changes, however, after he learns that he holds the swing vote in the mayoral election. *Bachelor Mother* (1939) was a popular success, with an A-list cast that included Ginger Rogers as a department store clerk who is mistakenly identified as the mother of an abandoned baby and David Niven as her boss.

In 1940 Kanin directed the comedy *My Favorite Wife*. The madcap farce marked the second screen pairing of Cary Grant and Irene Dunne, who gave memorable performances as a couple reunited when the wife is rescued after having been marooned for seven years on an island. Although *My Favorite Wife* was one of 1940's highest-grossing films, Kanin's next movie, the romantic drama *They Knew What They Wanted*, was one of the year's biggest disappointments despite the presence of Carole Lombard and Charles Laughton. *Tom, Dick, and Harry* (1941) was a light comedy starring Rogers as a small-town telephone operator who must choose between three suitors (Burgess Meredith, George Murphy, and Alan Marshal).

Drafted during World War II, Kanin made documentary films for the military, one of which, *The True Glory* (1945), co-directed by Carol Reed, won an Academy Award for best documentary. After the war, Kanin's focus shifted to writing and the stage, though in 1969 he directed a pair of screenplays he had written: *Where It's At*, a comedy set in Las Vegas with David Janssen, and *Some Kind of a Nut*, a farce with Dick Van Dyke and Angie Dickinson.

Screenplays, Theatrical Work, and Novels

Kanin married Ruth Gordon in 1942, and the couple subsequently became a highly successful writing team. Their first collaboration was *A Double Life* (1947), a film noir directed by George Cukor. Kanin and Gordon earned Academy Award nominations for their screenplay. The couple also received Oscar nods for *Adam's Rib* (1949) and *Pat and Mike* (1952). These classic comedies, which were directed by Cukor, starred Katharine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy. Working alone, Kanin wrote such screenplays as *It Should Happen to You* (1954) and *The Rat Race* (1960; based on his play and novel of the same name). He also penned several scripts for the small screen, including *Hardhat and Legs* (1980), a TV movie that was his final collaboration with Gordon, who died in 1985.

Kanin's postwar career was also highlighted by his work in the theatre. He directed the Broadway production of *Born Yesterday* (1946–49), which he also wrote. Arguably his best-known play, the comedy centres on a millionaire who travels to Washington, D.C., in order to lobby senators. However, when he realizes that his unrefined mistress might be an embarrassment, he hires her a tutor. The play was a breakthrough for Judy Holliday, who also starred in the film adaptation (directed by Cukor), which was a critical and commercial success when it was released in 1950. Kanin subsequently wrote and directed several other plays, including *The Smile of the World* (performed 1949), *The Live Wire* (performed 1950), and *Come on Strong* (performed 1962). In 1955 he directed the Broadway premiere of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. His other directorial Broadway credits included *A Gift of Time* (performed 1962), with Henry Fonda, and *Funny Girl* (performed 1964–67), starring Barbra Streisand.

Kanin also wrote novels, including *Blow Up a Storm* (1959), *A Thousand Summers* (1973), and *Moviola* (1979); *Cast of Characters* (1969), a collection of short stories; and nonfiction such as *Tracy and Hepburn: An Intimate Memoir* (1971), *Hollywood* (1974), and *Together Again! The Stories of the Great Hollywood Teams* (1981). His brother, Michael Kanin, was also a noted screenwriter.

Scholarly Articles on the Play

Well In Advance Of Its Time

BY LAWRENCE HENLEY

Source: Henley, Lawrence. "Well in Advance of Its Time." *Utah Shakespeare Festival*, <https://www.bard.org/study-guides/well-in-advance-of-its-time/>.

Born Yesterday, a play written well in advance of its time, is a comic drama whose subject matter foreshadowed a number of socio-political developments that slowly began to gain momentum soon afterward. The play's subject matter portended such significant trends as the rise of women's movement, consumerism, the resurgence of higher education, and the phenomenon our generation has come to know as "whistle blowing."

Playwright Garson Kanin could scarcely have imagined the progressive changes that would develop as a residual of societal reform movements in the fifty years since *Born Yesterday* was penned in 1947. Astonishingly, the behavioral tendencies of his characters have a shared resemblance to numerous social and political developments that have taken place during the ensuing six decades.

Kanin, also husband to legendary actress Ruth Gordon, wrote and directed numerous works for the Broadway stage, as well as several more for the silver screen. At the head of the class stands *Born Yesterday*, most likely due to its enlightening power over postwar America, just beyond the midpoint of the twentieth century. The play was more than entertainment: it served a dual purpose, offering an accessible model for the way attitudes about ethical behavior, the pursuit of knowledge, and male-female relationships might be reformed.

Born Yesterday made its New York debut at George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart's Lyceum Theatre, premiering on February 4, 1946, subsequently moving to Henry Miller's Theatre on 42nd Street. The show ran for a whopping 1,642 performances, a staggeringly large number of outings for a non-musical. Shortly after it closed, Kanin signed a deal with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer to have the play adapted for nationwide distribution in Hollywood. The screen version was to be directed by the late, great George Cukor (also the director of *The Philadelphia Story*, *A Star is Born*, and *My Fair Lady*). Both of the original productions of *Born Yesterday* received an enormous boost from the performances of one of the greatest stars of the 1950s, the inimitable and somewhat forgotten Judy Holliday, who was featured as the female lead in both mediums.

Holliday was born Judith Tuvim (her surname can be loosely interpreted in Yiddish as "holiday") on June 21, 1921. Her Queens, New York family was of Russian-Jewish descent. Attracted to the performing life well before her teenage years, Holliday eventually signed on with Adolph Green's group of nightclubbing post-vaudevillians, The Revuers, after turning eighteen. By the early 1940s, this reasonably successful act found itself in Los Angeles, and, like so many other performers of the era, both Judy and her colleagues signed on as Hollywood contract players at Twentieth-Century Fox. After being dropped by the studio, she returned to New York where she was almost instantly recruited to replace Jean Arthur less than a week before *Born Yesterday*'s out-of-town tryout in Philadelphia. Holliday seized the opportunity and turned it into gold, becoming an "overnight" sensation in what became her career-making signature role.

Her character, Billie Dawn, was the seven-year “fiancée” and trophy girl of shifty New York junk-tycoon Harry Brock (played brilliantly on Broadway by Paul Douglas and matched on film by tough guy Broderick Crawford). In the role, Holliday successfully masked her innate intelligence, transforming herself into the classic ditzy blond and ex-chorus girl. For her efforts, she was honored with the ultimate trifecta of awards for an actress in a leading role: a clean sweep of the Tony, the Oscar, and the Golden Globe!

This past century-and-a-half of American history is full of non-fictional characters that should remind audiences of Harry Brock. You know them. They were the low-born, hard-fought success stories of Joseph P. Kennedy, Jimmy Hoffa, Al Capone, and Don King. New York’s infamous Tammany Hall was chock full of Harry Brocks, led most notably by the notorious “Boss” Tweed. Brock’s character can be interpreted somewhat euphemistically as the seething underbelly of modern American business culture: always looking for legally defensible ways to carry out illegal or barely legal (and lucrative) acts. Today, the U.S. continues to be scarred by such scandal. The likes of Enron and World Com have become all-too familiar to us. An easy identification with corruption in the present-day can be made through Harry Brock.

Brock, who is without question a bully in both business and personal relationships, believes himself to have a noose-tight grip on the universe. He is the archetypal “legitimate” business man, forever trotting out weapons from his legal arsenal, men that possess the strong command of non-street education well beyond his grasp. The personification of this is the play’s slick D.C. attorney Jim Devery, an alcoholic who long ago compromised his youthful idealism in exchange for his employer’s tainted money. While he is, admittedly, ashamed of what he has made of his life, Devery represents the antithesis of the whistle-blower. He cultivates and enhances Brock’s hold on power, sustaining it not only through the boss’s heavy-handed tactics, but through the deployment of dexterous legal manipulation. He is responsible for the orchestration of what we know as political “payola.”

Brock sees the world as his to control, treating all he encounters as existing to be subservient to his desires. No exception to this is his lackey, Eddie (who happens to be his own brother). Even Brock’s girlfriend is nothing more than a testimonial to his power. Billie Dawn is simply another attractive blond bimchette whose rescue from the tawdry existence of a chorus girl must be repaid through indentured companionship. To be sure, Billie has most everything she could possibly want from a material point of view. Harry has made certain of that: furs, jewels, lavish hotel suites, all in quantity. She has everything except the real love and sense of self-worth that she desperately needs, something to which Harry, child of the streets that he is, is completely ignorant of.

In truth, despite plentiful material goods, Billie Dawn lives in isolation. Admittedly, she hasn’t seen her family in nearly a decade. She feels a deep sense of guilt resulting from the alienation of her father, a simple and honest man she deeply admires. Worse yet, Brock and Devery continually manipulate her trust, using Billie’s legal signature as a tool with which to create shelters for the slimy cartel they are in the process of engineering. Billie, innocently enough, affixes her name to a plethora of contracts and documents, the true purpose of which she is ignorant. Although Brock, in weaker moments, professes to be “nuts about her,” his treatment of her belies that statement. To make matters worse for Billie, Harry focuses on her social inadequacies. In her uneducated state, she proves herself socially and intellectually incapable of mingling with the wives of Washington politicians.

Billie has grown weary of waiting for Harry's absent proposal of marriage, as well as the rough treatment she often receives from him. Truth be known, she would probably prefer to see her fiancé rot in hell. The couple's frenetic game of Gin Rummy in the original film version of *Born Yesterday* exemplifies her streak of defiance. As he rails at her for her lack of social graces during the card game in their hotel suite, she infuriates Harry with her astonishing card playing skills, absolutely dominating him. Through her superiority in card games, she channels her resentment into thoroughly pasting her hot-headed sugar daddy time after time.

Nostalgic for a time in the not-so-distant past when she, in her own mind, could have been a "star," Billie can see the contrast between those days and the present, becoming restless for something more in life. Unknowingly, Harry provides her with the unlikeliest of keys to this fulfillment, accidentally transforming Billie's ignorance and isolation into the richness of culture and intellect. Counselor Devery has invited an idealistic young maverick up to Brock's massive suite. He is Capitol journalist Paul Verrall. Verrall is offered the chance for an inside scoop, an attempt on the part of Devery to employ the "keep your enemies closer" theory of public relations in an effort to improve his employer's tarnished image.

A sudden brainstorm of Harry's takes the lawyers idea a step further. Impulsively, Brock puts Verrall on the payroll. His assignment will be to educate and sophisticate Billie Dawn, in order that she might advance her compatibility with the Washington cocktail set. Through his initial acceptance of Harry's offer, Verrall seeks only to dig up as much dirt as he can on Brock's operation. He takes the money without suspecting the miracle by which his true reward will be paid.

The plan backfires completely on a dumbstruck Harry Brock, who sees his plans to corner the scrap iron market by way of bribery and chicanery torn to shreds. Of equal import, he loses both the girl and his corporate skill to a return to idealism inspired by the man he put on his own payroll! A Pygmalion-esque relationship develops between Billie Dawn and the handsome tutor, and she discovers the value and power of consideration, morality, and thought through Verrall's teachings. To his surprise, Paul is powerless to do anything but fall in love with his pupil, and he demonstrates to Billie exactly how she has been played for a fool by her manipulating boyfriend and his lawyer.

Born Yesterday is a play loaded with priceless lines, many of which serve to indicate Kanin's political and social leanings. In the opening segment of the play, attorney Devery remarks defensively: "Just because I'm a lawyer does not mean I own the law!" From Verrall, we receive the following gem of a thought: "A world full of ignorant people is too dangerous to live in."

Revived both on the New York stage and as a Hollywood film, the show has in modern times featured such luminaries as Edward Asner and Madeleine Kahn in lead roles. In their most recent film reincarnations, Billie Dawn and Harry Brock were played by Melanie Griffith and John Goodman, with Griffith's then-husband Don Johnson appearing as Paul Verrall.

In conclusion, *Born Yesterday* is far from an old warhorse in revival. It is a true chestnut, maintaining both strength and substance as a play. In tribute to Kanin's monumental talent and forethought, it proves that, even in today's world, we can learn valuable lessons concerning ethical behavior, the value of teaching and learning, and human relationships.

The Continuing Relevance of Garson Kanin's *Born Yesterday*

BY JOSE CARRASQUILLO

Source: Carrasquillo, Jose. "The Continuing Relevance of Garson Kanin's 'Born Yesterday.'" *Ford's Theatre*, <https://www.fords.org/blog/post/the-continuing-relevance-of-garson-kanin-s-born-yesterday/>.

Born Yesterday's history-making, sold-out Broadway run began in 1946. The show played for nearly four years and for a total of 1,642 performances. The appeal of the original Broadway show was placed squarely on Judy Holliday's comic turn in the role of Billie, which made her a bonafide star. Holliday later reprised her role in the George Cukor film adaptation and won an Oscar for Best Actress.

In a 1989 Broadway revival with Madeline Kahn playing the role of Billie Dawn, theatre critic Frank Rich wondered what had made Garson Kanin's play one for the record books. Not counting musicals, *Born Yesterday* still holds a spot in the list of the top 10 most popular and successful Broadway shows of all time. When looking at the historical context of *Born Yesterday*, there are other interesting factors to consider regarding the play's popularity.

Born Yesterday was set in the year that it was written. At the time, American drama was shifting away from political plays like Clifford Odets's *Waiting for Lefty* and embracing the probing psychological dramas of Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller. Even so, Garson Kanin's political preoccupations about Americans were a constant in his discussions with relatives and friends. His work questioned: how do Americans ultimately view their country? Do they understand and appreciate the role of government? And more pointedly, do Americans understand their personal responsibilities in a democracy?

Internationally, Kanin became concerned about the number of prominent figures buying into the ideology of dictatorships. He was shaken when he learned of the infamous Berlin book burning in 1933. Kanin recalled Helen Keller's response when she was told that her book would be incinerated. She responded by saying, "Tyranny cannot defeat the power of ideas." This became Kanin's overriding theme to *Born Yesterday*.

Using elements of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, Kanin aimed to write an exposé of government corruption, but the show received unflattering reviews during tryouts in New Haven and Boston. At a time when American Exceptionalism was taking hold, the original play had too many references to the Cold War, too many political metaphors and too many allusions to fascism. The end result left audiences cold.



Washington actress Kimberly Gilbert plays Billie Dawn in the fall 2018 production of "Born Yesterday" at Ford's Theatre. Photographed on location at The Jefferson hotel by Scott Suchman.

Originally, Kanin had written the play for actress Jean Arthur. Further delaying the play's gestation was her lack of chemistry with her co-stars, who had received better reviews than her. In addition, Arthur found that playing the role of Billie was a daunting experience. After the production closed in Boston, she was diagnosed with physical exhaustion; the show took a hiatus. While technical rehearsals were going on in Philadelphia with an understudy, Arthur threatened to not return to the production unless new demands were met. Refusing those, Kanin and the producers replaced Arthur with Judy Holliday four days before the show's Philadelphia opening.

With Holliday, Kanin re-worked his themes around the idea that any person has the power to exert change. To support this point dramatically, he gave center stage to Holliday's Billie Dawn, an uneducated and unpolished chorus girl who proves she can outsmart her male counterparts.

Kanin's use of farcical elements to make light of the underlying seriousness of his theme was his final stroke of genius. His "dictator" is a scrap-metal war profiteer from Plainfield, N.J., named Harry Brock with an entourage of usual comic suspects: Brock's lawyer, an alcoholic former secretary to a Supreme Court justice; his cousin Eddie; and his unsophisticated girlfriend. Brock worries that Billie's rough edges might be out of place in D.C.'s halls of power and employs journalist Paul Verrall to give her a quick education. Paul takes the job as a way of finding out more about Harry's deals. Billie soon comes into her own, thus complicating Brock's scheming plans. Kanin does not weigh down his denouement with pronouncements. Billie simply unmask Brock's wheeling and dealing as dishonest and refuses to go along, becoming the heroine of the story.



Washington actor Edward Gero plays Harry Brock in the fall 2018 production of "Born Yesterday." Photo was taken on location at The Jefferson hotel by Scott Suchman.

If *Born Yesterday* differs vastly from other incarnations of the Pygmalion story, it is because Billie Dawn remains true to herself. She gains knowledge and understanding, but she does not go through a physical transformation, change the way she speaks or opt for different sartorial choices in order to gain access to higher social strata. And therein lies Kanin's astute understanding of popular culture: the emotional and dramatic arc of a heroine, one without an education or social pedigree who emerges with power, would be embraced and celebrated.

Other Reviews

Insightful *Born Yesterday* Clearly Has Stayed Up All Night

BY KERRY REID

Source: Reid, Kerry. "Insightful 'Born Yesterday' Clearly Has Stayed up All Night." Chicago Tribune, 9 May 2019, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/theater/ct-born-yesterday-review-ent-0329-20170328-story.html>.



Eliza Stoughton stars in "Born Yesterday," a Remy Bumppo revival of Garson Kanin's 1946 comedy. (Johnny Knight photo).

A businessman with a crude way of talking and an outside — but easily bruised — ego arrives in Washington, convinced he can bully and buy his way into getting what he wants. Which is more money, naturally.

So sure, it's called "Born Yesterday." But Garson Kanin's 1946 comedy might as well be an episode of "The Daily Show" for all its applications to our own topsy-turvy times. Then again, a cynic might point out that Americans have always enjoyed all the democracy they can afford.

Remy Bumppo's current revival, directed with verve and precision by David Darlow, provides comic respite and sharp insight for the age of

Trump. (As parallels go, though, it's worth noting that Harry Brock, the blustering junkyard king who plans to make disaster-capitalism hay out of the wreckage of post-World War II Europe — if he can just get some pesky tariffs and regulations set aside — is an actual self-made man, not an entitled imbiber of silver spoons since birth.)

Every performance here is practically note-perfect, but attention must be paid to Eliza Stoughton as Brock's mistress, Billie Dawn. Stoughton nails Billie's guileless vapidness at the outset of the show and her awakening sense that there's more to the world than being pushed around by a selfish lout. Her shrill nasality certainly echoes Judy Holliday (who played Billie on Broadway and in the 1950 film version), but Stoughton makes the part her own with a blend of vulnerability and self-awareness that's touching, funny and utterly believable.

In particular, she nails the subtle but significant shift in Billie after her self-improvement lessons with journalist Paul Verrall (Greg Matthew Anderson), hired by Brock to help Billie fit in with the Washington squares as he makes pay-for-play deals with Senator Hedges (Brian Parry). The play moves forward two months after intermission, and Stoughton shows us a Billie who is slowly but steadily expanding the narrow lens of her world. She's not completely transformed, à la Eliza Doolittle in "Pygmalion" (the last show Remy Bumppo staged), but she's learning to learn, to know what she doesn't know, and to question conventional wisdom — the first duties of an informed citizen.

The dialogue pops with lines that brought appreciative chuckles and gasps of recognition on opening night, particularly when Anderson's Verrall tells Billie "A world full of ignorant people is too dangerous to live in." One remembers that Kanin wrote this play a few months after World War II, when America was the colossus standing astride the battered hulks of other Western democracies and determined to remake the world in its own image. Buoyancy and a faith that people who know better naturally do better provides the optimistic foundation in this world.

But it's still a comedy, and Kanin understood human nature too well to write a mere morality play. Darlow and his cast mine all the comic gold in this quintessential well-made play. Often, it's the reactions that are funnier than the delivered lines. Take, for example, Sean M. Sullivan's Harry, frowning his brow as he tries to work out the logic behind not being able to have his cake and eat it too. Sullivan, always an electric presence, consistently shows Harry always a half-step behind everyone else, even as he thinks he's in charge of the room.

That bit of pastry wisdom comes to Harry from his avatar into the ways of Washington, Ed Devery, a former assistant attorney general now working as Harry's bagman, when he's not half in the bag. As played by Shawn Douglass, Devery is pitiable and despicable — a man who knows that what he's doing is slimy and destructive but lacks the spine to stop himself. (Fortunately, such types are rare in politics today, right?)

Anderson's Verrall is a bit of a cipher, playing it close to the vest, and I think that's not a bad way to go with the character. We don't doubt that he's charmed to the hilt by Stoughton's brassy but good-hearted Billie, but we're left with some doubt as to whether these two will go the distance.

But that really doesn't matter, because what he's helped Billie see is that her worth depends as much upon her brain as her body, and that it's never too late to change the course of one's life. She also learns that tough guys often crumble easily, victims of their own hubris and a failure to realize that, while everyone may have their price, that price doesn't always translate into cash. Sometimes, self-respect matters more than filthy lucre.

After Harry expresses disbelief at her growing independence, Stoughton's Billie retorts "Don't knock yourself out. You got a lot of surprises coming." One wonders if the current resident of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue knows that the twists and turns are only beginning.

Analysis Tools

Things to Think About Prior to Performance

- Who runs the government (money, checks/balances, or the people)?
- Is knowledge truly power?
- Can one person make a difference in today's society? For the better or for the worse?
- Does money speak louder than words (or even actions)?
- What is at stake for people who speak out against unethical behavior?
- Do the needs of the many truly outweigh the needs of the few?
- Can productive communication (both listening and "teaching") make a change in our society?
- How important is education to our society and communities? Who controls what is taught?
- How do you approach taking about controversial topics? How do you approach talking about politics?

Things to Watch For in Performance

- Was there any casting that you thought was especially appropriate or inappropriate? Why?
- Was there a good, motivated relationship between the set and the action of the play?
- Were there levels on the stage for variety? If so, did they heighten the story?
- How does the color scheme and costume design change throughout the show? Why do you think that is?
- There are a ton of props/set dressing used in the later half of this play. Do these props help further the plot or character development? How?
- Why do you think Garson Kanin included the card game between Harry Brock and Billie at the end of Act I?
- How does Paul and Billie's relationship grow throughout the show?
- How is the passage of time conveyed through design?
- How does the sound design help heighten the story? Why "Anything Goes"?

Things to Think About After the Performance

- What do you think the core value and then the theme is of this play?
- Why is this play still significant in the American Theater?
- How can protests/marches make a difference in our society? Do they?
- How can celebrities (and now influencers) sue someone to join/agree with their personal campaigns/bias? Who do we choose to side with and why?
- How can we grow stronger together as a community?
- How much can effective/informed communication not only challenge us, but allow us all to grow?
- How do the relationships between the characters change throughout the show?
- How do the acts of violence portrayed on stage heighten the story and relationships of the characters?
- Did changing the gender of "Ed" to "Edith" add or take away from the story? Why? How could this choice be seen to speak to a contemporary/modern audience?

Other Analysis Tools

- What happens in the very last moments of the play? Certainly, the last few minutes, but, more importantly, the last thirty seconds? In that time, WHAT happens or is said, and what does that say about what the play is “about”? In a nutshell, how does the playwright drive his point(s) home?
- And what is the significance of the title? Why did the playwright decide that this was the most quintessential title for his work?

Additional Information

The running time for this production is approximately 2 hours with one 15 minute intermission.

Please join us for a pre-show discussion Thursday, October 6th at 6:45pm in MAC 140 preceding the preview performance. Note that the pre-show discussions will include the director and designers and will be a discussion on the approach to this production.

There will also be a post-show discussion following the Friday, October 14 performance. The post-show will be with the director, cast and crew, and we will be fielding questions from the audience.

Please join us!



Publicity Photo for College of DuPage's College Theater's Fall 2022 Production of *Born Yesterday* featuring Costume Design by Kim Morris
Left: Rowan Brandou as Paul Verrall
Right: Diana Pantoja as Billie Dawn