

BARBECUE

STUDY GUIDE



GEFFEN
PLAYHOUSE

BARBECUE

WEST COAST PREMIERE IN THE
GIL CATES THEATER AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE
SEPTEMBER 6 – OCTOBER 16, 2016

SPECIAL THANKS TO

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This publication is to be used for educational purposes only.

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SECTION 1

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION



ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S COMMENT

RANDALL ARNEY



WELCOME TO THE FIRST PLAY OF THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE'S 2016/2017 season. We are thrilled to bring you *Barbecue* written by Robert O'Hara and directed by Colman Domingo. When we first read this new comedy, I was struck not only by the power and hilarity in the writing but also by the overwhelming profundity of the piece. Within Robert's play we recognize familiar family dynamics while also grappling with larger questions about class and race in America. Robert's gift of portraying a complicated and often disparate world through a comic lens creates a journey akin to an emotional, intellectual roller-coaster. Both raucous and revealing, *Barbecue* is a perfect example of how art can uncover what is broken without leaving us feeling inconsolable.

With great excitement, we welcome both Robert and Colman to the Geffen for the first time. These two artists have masterfully assembled an extraordinary cast and a team of designers including Sibyl Wickersheimer (scenic design), Kara Harmon (costume design), Lap Chi Chu (lighting design) and Lindsay Jones (original music and sound design), who have beautifully set the table to tell Robert's story.

A professor once told me that good plays portray the day in which everything changes. In this new season, our goal was to curate a mix of plays that run the gamut from comedy to tragedy, classical to contemporary, and ideally portray a wide variety of perspectives and facets of the human experience. Some we chose for their incredibly personal points of view, some for their more probing political ideas, but each is a piece of a greater story about the single moments which change our lives forever. Our hope is, beginning with *Barbecue*, each of these plays offers moments that resonate with you.

SYNOPSIS

In this rollicking and thought-provoking satire, three sisters and a brother await their youngest sister's arrival in a park. While they appear to be arranging a festive family barbecue, the gathering is actually an intervention where they plan to confront their sister Barbara about her addictions to alcohol and drugs. Eldest sister Lillie Anne has organized the family meeting and is instructing her siblings how to behave in order to ensure the intervention's success. The other family members are wary: James T is sure Barbara will be high when she arrives and act out – which is why her family nickname is Zippity Boom; Adlean is wrapped up in her own illness, and Marie fears Barbara may react violently to being confronted. Once Barbara joins her family, the story unfolds in unexpected ways and invites us to reflect on how assumptions about race and class can affect what we perceive, and where the drive for success can lead.

PLACE Middle America.

SETTING A pavilion, surrounded by a park.

TIME Now (after and before).

RUNNING TIME Approximately 2 hours. *There will be one 15 minute intermission.*

PERFORMANCE NOTE There is coarse language, drinking, smoking, and one moment of drug use.

ARTISTIC BIOGRAPHIES

ROBERT O'HARA (Playwright)

Robert O'Hara has received the NAACP Best Director Award, the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play, two OBIE Awards and the Oppenheimer Award. He directed the world premieres of Nikkole Salter and Dania Guiria's *In the Continuum*, Tarell McCraney's *The Brother/Sister Plays (Part 2)*, Colman Domingo's *Wild with Happy*, as well as his own plays, *Bootycandy* and *Insurrection: Holding History*. His new plays *Zombie: The American* and *Barbecue*, world premiered this season at Woolly Mammoth Theater and the Public Theater, respectively.

COLMAN DOMINGO (Director)

Tony, Drama Desk, Drama League and Olivier Award nominee Colman Domingo has recently directed *Seven Guitars* (Actors Theater of Louisville) and *A Band of Angels* (Off Broadway Alliance Award, New York City Children's Theater). Mr. Domingo has directed productions Off Broadway and regionally such as *Exit Cuckoo* (Working Theater), *No Parole* (All for One Solo Festival), *i feel love* (Intersection for the Arts), *Single Black Female* (New Professional Theatre). Mr. Domingo is a Lucille Lortel, GLAAD and Obie Award winning playwright whose plays include *Dot* (Samuel French), *Wild with Happy* (Dramatists Play Service), *A Boy and His Soul* (Oberon Books) and *The Brother(s)*. He stars on television as Strand in AMC's *Fear the Walking Dead* and co-stars in the upcoming Fox Searchlight film *The Birth of a Nation*. His theater career spans the West End, Broadway, Off Broadway, Australia, France and all over regional theaters in America.

THEMES & TOPICS

BREAKING THE GRIP OF ADDICTION

MARIJUANA – Recreational or Gateway Drug?

Those who believe marijuana is safer than alcohol and that adults can use it recreationally, the same way they engage in drinking, support the legalization of marijuana. Medical professionals, however, have concerns about young people indulging in marijuana, since doing so may create an “...increased vulnerability for addiction to other substances of abuse later in life...” Marijuana, along with alcohol and nicotine, can also “...‘prime’ the brain for enhanced responses to other drugs,” which can lead to addiction. (National Institute on Drug Abuse)

PHOTO CREDIT

Public Domain / Pixabay

SOURCES

drugabuse.gov
asam.org/public-resources
tinyurl.com/MayorIntervention



Witnessing the drug or alcohol addictions of loved ones can be quite confounding. We wonder why they won't stop abusing substances, especially if they see how harmful their actions are to themselves and those for whom they care. What's hard to detect, and imagine, is that addicts are in the grip of a powerful brain-based disease, which compels them to keep using – sometimes to the point of destitution, insanity and death.

Causes and Effects: While being addicted is still considered by many to be a “failure of will,” most medical professionals believe there is a biological basis for addiction located in the pleasure-reward centers of the brain. The affliction can be triggered by drinking alcohol or ingesting drugs and setting off a genetic predisposition for the disease, and by getting into the habit of chasing after euphoria, “self-medicating” underlying disorders such as anxiety and depression or trying to escape the pain of untreated trauma. Excessive use of drugs or alcohol leads to changes in the brain, and addicts end up consuming more and more substances just to feel “normal.” So driven are addicts to drink or drug and avoid the desperation of withdrawal, they will lie about using, abandon important relationships, and may even steal from family members or commit crimes to support their habits.

RECOVERY

Whether or not a family intervenes, for recovery to take hold those addicted must “bottom out,” or realize that the pain of going without substances is more tolerable than continuing the addictive behavior. They also usually require ongoing help to become and then stay sober. In addition to residential rehabs and outpatient programs, groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous help those in recovery learn how to not give into the cravings that can lead to relapses, by providing social, emotional and spiritual support. Since research has shown the role of brain chemistry in addiction, many medical professionals believe drugs that stop the cravings can be an integral part of treatment.

Impact on Family Members: Since alcohol or other substances disable the “executive function” of the brain, which inhibits and regulates behavior, addicts can act out in sometimes abusive, often irrational ways, instilling fear and resentment in those close to them. When the addict is suffering through withdrawal, he or she can flare with anger, be overly sensitive or attempt to control others’ behavior in ways he or she imagines will provide relief from despair. Family members become vigilant in order to sense how impaired or tense the addict is and to be as invisible or accommodating as possible. These adjustments, plus habitually putting the addict’s needs first in a vain attempt to fix her or him, can so damage family members’ psyches, they usually need to heal as well.

Interventions: Staged confrontations, known as interventions, are usually a last resort for family members and friends. They band together to break the disease’s grip on the addict by sharing honestly and emotionally about the impact of his or her destructive behavior. Such encounters can be complex. Though usually motivated by love and concern, family members are often worn out and damaged by their relationship with the addict. Because the addict can be volatile, abusive and stubborn, family members often choose to surprise him or her with their concerns. If addicts cling to denial or react defensively, long-held resentments can flare and push them further away. If addicts are ready to stop, expressions of care and descriptions of consequences should they choose not to get help can jolt them into the willingness to begin a recovery process, often in a rehabilitation center, under professional care.

Playwright Robert O’Hara articulates some of the aims and steps in an intervention, mainly through the character of Lillie Anne, but also heightens the family encounter to hilarious effect. James T has brought a Taser to protect himself. As Lillie Anne urges frightened family members to show their love to Barbara by sharing warm, though fake, childhood memories, when it is her turn to speak, she threatens to report her sister’s petty crimes to the police, if she doesn’t go to rehab. For a while, it appears that the very family members insisting that Barbara get sober are themselves addicted to crack, pills, drinking and gambling. That Lillie Anne has found a rehab for her sister in Alaska reflects an extreme interpretation of choosing a place that will take Barbara out of her home environment – even her other siblings feel Alaska might be too far away.

DISCUSSION POINT

How can we meet internal and external challenges and enjoy life fully, without turning to alcohol or drugs?

RACE & CLASS

ETHNICITY

Ethnicity is generally understood to refer to cultural affiliations into which people are born or that they adopt through life experiences and choices. In written resources for the 2003 PBS presentation *Race – The Power of an Illusion*, a contributor, discussing the differences between “race” and “ethnicity,” cites someone of Korean birth who grew up in Italy after being adopted by an Italian family. She identified as an Italian, in terms of her ethnicity, but in the U.S. she was treated “racially” as Asian because of her appearance, even though she felt no ancestral connection to Korea. The author goes on to point out that “race” often determines how one is treated by society, while “ethnicity” is how one chooses to identify with one or more cultures.

PHOTO CREDIT

U.S. Census Bureau

SOURCES

tinyurl.com/PBSRace
tinyurl.com/SciAmerRace
tinyurl.com/PewRaceDefs
tinyurl.com/BoundlessClsStruct

What is Person 1's race? Mark (X) one or more boxes.

<input type="checkbox"/> White		
<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African Am.		
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native — <i>Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.</i>		
<hr/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan
<input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian — <i>Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander — <i>Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.</i>

While the content of *Barbecue* centers mainly on a family’s experience with addiction, the play’s unique structure, use of characters and timeline challenge the audience to think about race and class. O’Hara does not address social inequities directly, but uses satire to skewer assumptions about race and class in comic and provocative ways. Exploring the concepts of race and class in American society can provide a context for understanding some of O’Hara’s artistic choices.

Race: According to *Scientific American*, many mainstream scientists believe, “race is a social construct without biological meaning.” Though the concept is based on differences in physical appearance, such as the color of skin and facial features, racial divisions are not considered valid in terms of our species, because there are minimal genetic variations among different groups of human beings. Throughout history, this concept has been used by those with white skin, and the power that goes along with it, to judge non-whites as inferior, on their way to exploiting or excluding them. Even though the U.S. was founded on the principle of equality for all, racist policies, based on hierarchical racial distinctions, were institutionalized, leading to segregation and discrimination against “minorities” – those not born into the dominant white culture. Progress has been made over the years in providing equal rights and opportunities to all U.S. citizens, but major social and economic inequities still exist. It can be hard for whites, especially those in powerful positions, who are automatically accorded privileges because of the color of their skin, to grasp the indignities and injustice of race-based experiences, such as being stereotyped, racially profiled or treated unequally under the law. Some scientists advocate getting rid of the idea of race altogether and distinguishing human beings through their geographical and/or cultural “ancestry.”

New Interpretations: According to Pew Research, there are a variety of interpretations of what constitutes racial identity among the U.S. population. The federal government apparently uses social definitions of race developed by the U.S. Census Bureau to ensure the equitable distribution of funds and the protection of civil and voting rights.

SATIRE

The use of humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to expose and criticize people's stupidity or vices, particularly in the context of contemporary politics and other topical issues. (Google.com)

Citizens are asked to self-identify from among categories that include: White, Black or African American, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. Those who identify as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish “may be of any race,” which some find confusing. As the Pew report notes, “The confusion reflects a larger debate about how to define race, which used to be seen as a fixed physical characteristic and now more commonly is viewed as a fluid product of many influences.” A 2013 U.S. Census Bureau report has also recognized that, “... identity is a complex mix of one’s family and social environment, historical or socio-political constructs, personal experience, context, and many other immeasurable factors.” Accordingly, the 2020 census form will offer wider and clearer options.

Class: While the existence and definitions of categories of a class system in the U.S. are open to argument, social scientists tend to identify the following strata: *Upper class* is associated with those who control most of the wealth through inheritance or corporate or industry ownership. Members of this relatively small group are sometimes referred to as the “top 1%.” The *middle class* is thought to include professionals – doctors and nurses, lawyers, professors, and small business owners. *Working class* denotes those who have trades and day jobs. Those in the *lower or underclass* are usually poor, often unemployed, barely able to meet basic needs, or homeless and food-insecure. It has gotten harder in recent years for those not in the top 1% to realize the “American Dream” of making enough money to support a family comfortably or even strike it rich, but achievement in education, determination and hard work, and taking advantage of opportunities are still considered viable ways for citizens to advance, no matter what their economic class.

Although degrees of economic security seem to play the strongest role in how class categories are identified, certain attributes, such as how people speak, interact with others or enact certain social norms, are also associated with class distinctions. O’Hara focuses on this by exaggerating the lack of social graces of various family members, except for one character who has upper-class airs inspired it seems, by her enormous professional and financial success.

Like most enduring artists, the playwright is interested in asking questions – or prodding audience members to question themselves – about notions we may have about race and class, rather than providing answers. Such dialogues – with the play, ourselves and others – can prompt us to consider the best ways to keep dismantling the power of the predominantly white establishment to define, discriminate against, exclude or mistreat those considered non-whites. With recent moves on the part of the federal government to open up what constitutes our cultural identities, perhaps different groups of citizens will learn to appreciate each other’s “many influences,” whatever their origins, and how they contribute to our complexity, depth and gifts as human beings.

**DISCUSSION
POINT**

How do you define your “cultural identity?”

COMEDY'S POWER TO UNDERMINE STEREOTYPES

STEREOTYPE (noun)

An often unfair and untrue belief that many people have about all people or things with a particular characteristic.
(merriam-webster.com)

PENAL INJUSTICE

Severe laws implemented in the “War on Drugs” in the 1980s-90s led to mass incarcerations, mainly of people of color. According to *The New Yorker* magazine (August, 2016), “Federal guidelines mandated stiffer penalties for possession of crack cocaine, which is more common among black drug users, than for possession of the powdered version, which is more frequently used by whites, and as a result African-Americans were incarcerated in disproportionate numbers.” With a recent rise of drug abuse among whites has come an increased focus on treatment rather than imprisonment. This shift in attitude, as well as persistent calls for justice, have inspired actions to correct the unequal treatment of non-white drug users, which include the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 and a decision to phase out for-profit prisons that were constructed to handle the increase of prisoners due to drug sentencing.

SOURCES

tinyurl.com/AFTAHumor
tinyurl.com/SAMSAInfo
tinyurl.com/SunriseAADemos
tinyurl.com/AtIDrugUse
tinyurl.com/DrugWarInfo

Addiction to alcohol and drugs is an equal-opportunity destroyer of lives, afflicting human beings of all ages, genders, cultural heritages, social and economic classes and professions – in large numbers. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, as of 2013 an “...estimated 22.7 million individuals aged 12 or older...needed treatment for an illicit drug or alcohol use problem...” in the U.S.

While addicts come from a cross-section of society, harmful stereotypes have been lodged in the public’s mind. According to the rehabilitation center Sunrise House, “The African American community has been plagued by problems with illegal drugs, some real and some the result of racial profiling and cultural stereotypes...According to these stereotypes, the rates of drug abuse and drug-related crime are much higher among blacks...” National statistics, however, reported in 2013 by the National Institute on Drug Abuse “...show that the rates of illicit drug abuse were roughly the same among African Americans, whites, and Hispanics.” In fact, recent research has shown that whites who live outside of cities have experienced a spike in addiction to prescribed painkillers and heroin.

Barbecue centers on the experience of a family whose members want their addicted sister to get help, and are then given an unexpected opportunity to bring this story to life as a film. As the characters embark on this journey, playwright O’Hara takes society and show business to task, by making fun of the cultural stereotypes that some may harbor about working-class whites and African Americans.

In this, O’Hara joins other artists in using exaggeration and ridicule to poke holes in preconceived notions, by making the audience laugh and, perhaps, squirm in recognition of their own biases, at the same time. Television writer and producer Norman Lear jolted American audiences into increased awareness of bigotry with *All in the Family* (1971-1979), by holding up the buffoonish character of Archie Bunker as a mirror. Filmmaker Spike Lee highlighted where white and black intolerance can lead, to devastating effect in *Do the Right Thing* (1989). In *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (produced by the Geffen in 2012), playwright Lynn Nottage attacked the stereotypes black actresses were forced to enact in 1930s Hollywood, in comic and moving ways. O’Hara, too, does not just go for the belly laughs inspired by the outrageous interactions of the adult siblings in *Barbecue*. By switching up stereotypes, and injecting a dose of cynicism about how the quest for fame and fortune can cut across racial lines, he uses a gleeful, if not liberating defiance to take aim at notions that sustain, and are maintained by, prejudice.

DISCUSSION POINT

How has your mind been opened or changed by comedy?

EXPOSURE

**MEMOIR** (noun)

A collection of memories from a specific time, or from over the course of a person's life.

NOTORIETY (noun)

The condition of being famous or well-known, especially for something bad.

(merriam-webster.com)

PHOTO CREDITS

Public Domain / Pixabay

SOURCES

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fake_memoirs

We live in a time of extreme self-exposure, made possible by social media platforms, such as Facebook and Instagram. Important life events, travel, professional accomplishments and social lives are shared through posts and images that connect a vast electronic network of people.

In the 1990s, well before this technological revolution, the written memoir became a popular way to share life experiences with the world at large. Poets and writers, such as Mary Karr (*The Liar's Club*, 1995) and James McBride (*The Color of Water*, 1995), helped turn memoirs into critically acclaimed literary works. With books like Dave Pelzer's *A Child Called "It"* (1995), traumatic childhood experiences and the uplift of overcoming them transfixed the public. James Frey wrote a gritty memoir about his recovery from drug addiction in *A Million Little Pieces* in 2003. Largely because Oprah Winfrey recommended it, the memoir became a bestseller. When it was revealed three years later that Frey had invented much of his story, Winfrey confronted and shamed him on her TV show, after which the publisher provided refunds, and then marketed the work as semi-fiction.

The Frey scandal raised a number of questions: Was it acceptable to use "creative license," or make stuff up, in memoirs? Some argued that since our memories are inherently faulty there was no harm in imagining conversations or elaborating impressions, as long as such elements were authentic in spirit. Some drew the line at combining people into one person for dramatic effect, as some memoirists have admitted doing. Most ended up affirming that memoirs should be based on real, not imagined, experiences.

When asked why he invented so much of his story, Frey claimed he wanted to infuse the work with the kinds of dramatic characters and compelling narrative arcs that are present in great fiction. Why then, we might ask, didn't he write fiction? Perhaps at the time, riding the successful wave of memoirs was a surer way to find acclaim than by writing a novel. For some, being noticed and reaping the financial rewards – regardless of the notoriety involved – are all that matter.

In *Barbecue*, playwright O'Hara explores a performer's powerful need to be taken seriously as an artist on a global level, and a family's desire for riches, no matter what the cost – to the truth.

DISCUSSION
POINT

What expectations should the public have about the authenticity of stories that are about people's real life experiences? What's more important: the dramatic impact, or the truth? Why?

SECTION 3

PERSONNEL PROFILE

AN INTERVIEW WITH JESSICA BUZZARD

What is your title and how long have you been at the Geffen Playhouse?

I am Director of Marketing, and I have been with the Geffen Playhouse since April of 2016.

What are your primary responsibilities at the Geffen?

The Marketing team, which I lead and guide, is responsible for generating roughly half of the Geffen's operating budget through the sale of single tickets and subscriptions (or season tickets). To achieve this, various team members are responsible for creating artwork and copy for each play, maintaining our website, managing email marketing and paid advertising, reaching out to new audiences, running the ticketing system for the theater and providing excellent audience services.

How did you come to the Geffen – what jobs or projects led you here?

I am passionate about the arts, and believe that all art forms have critical roles to play in individual lives and in society as a whole. I also love introducing audiences to artwork – for me, this is what my work is all about. I studied Art History in college and since then, I have worked for the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Oklahoma Arts Institute (Oklahoma's Official School of the Arts), for the independent film organization Sundance Institute, and now for the Geffen. Live theater is a new area of focus for me, and the Geffen is one of L.A.'s most cherished cultural institutions. So in making this move, I felt like there was a lot for me to learn and hopefully a lot for me to offer – coming from a very different perspective.

What are the main goals of marketing at a theater and what strategies do you use to achieve them?

The most pressing goal is selling tickets and subscriptions! Some tactics are immediate – such as email marketing, print and radio advertising and digital and social media promotion. Other tactics are more long-term and geared towards building the Geffen brand as a vibrant cultural destination that offers a wide range of excellent plays and programs. Outreach to new audiences is a central element of our long-term plan, and requires a lot of trial-and-error to find the most effective tools. We are also focused on achieving patron loyalty throughout audience services.



How would you characterize the differences between marketing films and marketing live theater?

I think there are some misconceptions about theater. Theater tickets are perceived as being more expensive than movie tickets, and theater content is often thought to be less relevant and less appealing to younger audiences. Of course, this is wrong. Many of our shows offer tickets for \$20 and the plays are hugely relevant to modern life. Just this season we tackle themes such as race, class, climate change and sexual assault.

What do you find most challenging about your work?

I think the biggest challenge is convincing audiences throughout L.A. that live theater is a dynamic, accessible art form that provides a unique entertainment and cultural experience. I am determined to bring more diversity to our audiences. I want all Angelenos to feel that we have a seat for them at the Geffen, and that we are an organization that reflects, values and contributes to the dynamic cultural life of Los Angeles.

What do you find most satisfying?

The relatively small size of the Geffen means that we can implement new ideas very quickly, immediately see whether or not a new idea is working and adjust. My new colleagues are some of the most generous and committed people I've ever known, and everyone is extremely open to new ideas. And of course, the most satisfying thing of all is to see audiences experiencing and engaging with the work on our stages. ■

SECTION 4

AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

Going to the theater is a unique experience, and we all need to be mindful of “audience etiquette,” or how to behave at the theater.

The audience plays an essential role in the performance of a play. Without an audience, the actors are only rehearsing. Audience members’ concentrated silence and responses, such as laughing and applauding, provide energy to the actors as they bring the performance to life.

Since the actors can hear and see the audience, it is important not to engage in behaviors that might disturb or distract them – and fellow audience members. These actions include:

- Talking
- Texting
- Allowing cell phones to ring
- Taking photographs or video
- Getting up to leave before intermission or the end of the show (unless it is a true emergency)
- Eating or drinking
- Unwrapping candy or cough drops
- Touching or leaning on the stage.

Audience Awareness Activity: Before going to the Geffen Playhouse for the first time, compare and contrast the experience of seeing a live play with:

- going to the movies
- attending a live sporting event
- watching television.

DISCUSSION POINT

If you were onstage performing a play, how would you want the audience to behave?

POST-SHOW DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Depending on the time available and your group members' interests, guide them to respond to questions selected from those suggested below. Encourage everyone to participate, while having respect for differing opinions. Individuals can share their thoughts with a partner or in a small group. Ask for several volunteers to share their groups' answers with the larger group.

- Overall, how did you feel while watching *Barbecue*? Engaged? Distanced? Entertained? Bored? Confused? Inspired? What made you feel this way?
- What did you enjoy most about the play? What did you have troubling connecting to? Why? (Provide evidence from the production.)
- Were you able to personally relate to, or recognize, the characters? If so, why? If not, why not?
- What did you learn about the purposes and steps of a family intervention?
- In terms of the plot, why did the playwright have different casts playing the family? What do you think the playwright wanted the audience to think about, in making this artistic choice?
- What were the most surprising moments in the play? How did they make you feel? What did they make you think about?
- In one or two sentences, how would you summarize what *Barbecue* is about?
- What did you appreciate most about the performances by the actors?
- How did the set, props, costumes and lighting contribute your experience of the play?
- Would you recommend *Barbecue* to other theatergoers? Why, or why not?

SECTION 5

RESOURCES

LEARN about addiction and where to get help, for yourself or a loved one, at asam.org/public-resources-and-drugabuse.gov.

LEARN about the harmful underlying assumptions and use of the concept of race by exploring PBS presentation *RACE – The Power of an Illusion* at tinyurl.com/PBSRace.

LEARN “what science has to say” about race, genetics and evolution in an article from *Time Magazine* at tinyurl.com/Race-Genes.

VISIT the California African American Museum in Los Angeles to experience and learn about African-American culture and visual art. Information at caamuseum.org.

LEARN how humor can “animate democracy” by addressing cultural stereotypes, in a paper sponsored by American for the Arts at tinyurl.com/AFTAHumor.

READ *The Color of Water*, a memoir by James McBride, which many believe reflects the cultural complexity of America. Available at the Los Angeles Public Library.

WRITE your own memoir, following the guidelines of master writing teacher William Zinsser in *Writing About Your Life: A Journey into the Past*, which demonstrates basic steps, and *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*, which considers the challenges of writing from memory. Available at the Los Angeles Public Library.

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Shay Family Foundation
Simms/Mann Family Foundation
Simon-Strauss Foundation
Singer Family Foundation
Skoll Foundation
Smith Family Foundation
Sondheimer Foundation
Stone Family Foundation
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And many more!



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