Inherit the Wind

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF JEROME LAWRENCE AND ROBERT E. LEE

Born in Cleveland and educated at Ohio State and UCLA, Jerome Lawrence Schwartz (who dropped his last name upon embarking on a professional career), began work as a newspaper and radio writer, then teamed up with Robert E. Lee (no relation to the Civil War general, and himself an Ohio native, educated at Ohio Wesleyan) to write radio plays. Their first collaboration for the stage, *Inherit the Wind*, earned them a great deal of notoriety, and made for them a reputation as playwrights of a political bent—intent on writing about current political issues in the US, including the relationship between science and belief, between political power and the right to speak one's mind. Lawrence and Lee went on to found the American Playwrights' Theatre, and to write another blockbuster, *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*, along with thirty-odd other collaborative plays, many of them still performed today, and reinterpreted to highlight other, current debates in American society.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Although the Scopes Monkey Trial took place in 1925—and involved a debate over the teaching of science broadly similar to that outlined in the play, with William Jennings Bryant, Clarence Darrow, and H. L. Mencken filling the "parts" ascribed to Brady, Drummond, and Hornbeck—*Inherit the Wind* is a post-war play, and its concerns are those of Americans after the Second World War, which was the central; political and social event of the 20th century. After the war, America was one of the two undisputed world political powers, with the Soviet Union being the other, and as a result, American society prized a set of cultural attitudes in perceived opposition to those of the USSR. These American ideals included: religious faith (often Christian); a positive, can-do spirit in business and in life; and, occasionally in opposition to the just stated ideals, a belief in individualism, and the right to speak one's mind. These values are all brought out in *Inherit the Wind*, which seeks, ultimately, a compromise between religious belief, scientific knowledge, and the rights of communities and individuals to express themselves.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Perhaps the most famous and influential of the midcentury American playwrights working in a tradition of "realist" theater indebted, ultimately, to the 19th-century works of Anton Chekhov, was Arthur Miller, whose two most famous plays, *The Crucible* and *Death of a Salesman*, might be read, in part, as commentaries on the nature of current American political and social events. *The Crucible*, which tells a fictionalized tale of sexual intrigue during the Salem Witch Trials, was read by many as an allegory of the McCarthy anti-communist hearings of the 1950s. *Death of a Salesman*, though without overt allegorical meaning, nevertheless dramatized Willy Loman, a traveling salesman, as his career and family life seem to fall apart. Like Lawrence and Lee's *Inherit the Wind*, Miller's plays incorporate a great deal of contemporary speech patterns, and they dig deep into the mythos of American culture prominent during the 1950s—the idea that post-World War II American society was a purely positive, progressive place, one in which democracy, capitalism, and the nuclear family were the established and central social institutions. The plays of Tennessee Williams, including *A Streetcar Named Desire* and *The Glass Menagerie*, also use realist techniques (marking the actual speech-patterns of contemporary families, and dealing not with nobility but with "the common man") to examine sexual desire, personal fulfillment, and the delusions many people take on in order to live their lives. Williams, a darker playwright than Lawrence and Lee, nevertheless also examines the nature of American home life in the middle of the 20th century.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *Inherit the Wind*
- **When Written:** 1951
- **Where Written:** New York City
- **When Published:** Play first performed in 1955
- **Literary Period:** American midcentury realist theater
- **Genre:** realist drama; political drama
- **Setting:** Hillsboro, state unnamed, ca. 1950 (based in part on Dayton, TN, and the Scopes Monkey Trial of 1925)
- **Climax:** Drummond gets Brady to admit that he, Brady, believes he has direct knowledge of the will of God (Act Two, Scene Two)
- **Antagonist:** Reverend Brown
- **Point of View:** third-person

EXTRA CREDIT

More McCarthy. *Inherit the Wind* was also intended, in part, and like *The Crucible*, as a commentary on the McCarthy hearings in Congress—which sought, in the 1950s, to "root out" suspected Communists in American political, social, and cultural institutions. The idea of mass hysteria, suspicion, and a "witch

hunt" for agnostics, Communists, or other "subversives" was a common theme in 1950s literature.

Famous names. The 1960 film version of the play, also called *Inherit the Wind*, starred Spencer Tracy (as Henry Drummond) and Gene Kelley (as Hornbeck). Kevin Spacey, George C. Scott, Jack Lemmon, and other famous actors also have participated in performances of the play, or its screen adaptations, over the past 60 years.

PLOT SUMMARY

Inherit the Wind is a play dramatizing the Hillsboro **Monkey** Trial, in a small American town called Hillsboro, state unnamed, in the 1950s. This trial is based on some historical facts of the Scopes Monkey Trial, which occurred in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925, and which brought William Jennings Bryant, Clarence Darrow, and H. L. Mencken—a famous politician, lawyer, and reporter, respectively—to a small town to determine whether a man ought to go to jail for teaching evolution in a science class, in violation of state law.

In the play, Bertram Cates, a high-school biology teacher, has been jailed for doing exactly this—teaching evolution as science. He is visited in the jail by Rachel, his friend and possible lover—Rachel asks him whether he should continue fighting the law, and warns that Matthew Harrison Brady, a famous former Presidential candidate, is coming to Hillsboro to argue the case against Cates. Back in the town, men, women, and children prepare for Brady's triumphant arrival, singing religious songs. When Brady arrives, he states that he is fighting not just to put Cates in prison, but to defend Christian religious teaching across the US, and to keep some "northern" states from teaching the irreligious idea that humankind's ancestors were monkeys. Brady, tipped off as to Rachel's relationship to Cates, pulls her aside to ask Rachel questions about Cates' religious beliefs. It is announced, meanwhile, that Henry Drummond, a famous progressive lawyer, will be traveling to Hillsboro from Chicago to defend Cates. Hornbeck, a progressive reporter from Baltimore, observes the scene, jokes about the ignorant religious beliefs of the town, and writes articles in support of Cates' cause.

The trial begins, and Drummond and Brady, along with his co-prosecutor Tom Davenport, the town district attorney, select jurors. One evening, as the trial is taking place during the day, Reverend Brown organizes a prayer meeting in which he delivers fiery invective against Cates, Drummond, and others who do not believe in God, or who wish to challenge God's principles. Brady, shocked by Brown's fervor, argues that religious law is true, but that sinners should be forgiven, not damned. The next day, Rachel is forced to testify against Cates, reporting that Cates has questioned the absolute truth of Christian teaching, especially as regards science; Rachel is led, weeping, off the stand, and Drummond attempts to call scientific experts to testify about Darwinian principles. But the Judge and Brady argue that evolution cannot even be explained in court, as this, too, violates the state no-evolution law. Drummond therefore calls Brady to the stand as an expert on the Bible, and proceeds to show that Brady's belief in the absolute literal truth of the Bible is misguided, leading to scientific problems and failures of logic and sense. Brady, exasperated, declares finally that he understands God's intentions better than other people, and this causes the people in the court to see Brady as a vain buffoon—he, too, is led from the stand, confused and embarrassed.

The next day, the verdict is rendered by the Judge: Cates is guilty, but after the Mayor has prevailed on the Judge to deliver a light sentence, because many other American towns are following the case via newspaper and radio, the Judge sentences Cates only to a 100 dollar fine and 500 dollars bail, the latter of which is paid by Hornbeck. Cates is then free to leave town—he wonders if he has won the trial, since it appears he has lost, but Drummond tells him that Cates has made the Hillsboro law seem ridiculous, and has inspired others to think for themselves and to speak their minds. Brady attempts to give a long closing address after the trial is over to the crowd in the court, but the radio broadcaster stops him before he even gets started, saying the trial and verdict are over—Brady becomes so upset that he suffers a stroke-like fit, and is led off-stage. When it is announced soon after that Brady has died, Drummond speaks kindly of Brady, saying that he was a man of greatness, but a man who believed he knew, better than others, what God wanted, and how humans should live. Drummond also quotes a line from Proverbs, in the Bible, quoted before by Brady, that "a man who troubleth his own house . . . shall inherit the **wind**," meaning that a man must trust in the personal conscience of his fellow man, in order to live and thrive in society. Hornbeck objects to Drummond's defense of Brady, saying Drummond is too soft and kind—but Drummond replies that Hornbeck, not unlike Reverend Brown, is closed-minded in his viewpoints, and that Hornbeck wants only to ridicule those who do not agree with him.

Rachel comes up to Cates and Drummond and says that she, too, has resolved to think for herself—her first act of this new resolve is to leave her father's house and to go with Cates wherever the railroad will take them, to start a new life together. On his way out of the courthouse, Drummond finds Rachel's copy of Darwin and a Bible on the Judge's bench—he mimes "weighing" the two books against each other, then smiles, places both in his bag, and walks out to join Cates and Rachel on the train.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Bertram Cates – A former high-school biology teacher in Hillsboro, Bert Cates is indicted and imprisoned for teaching evolution, which violates the state's no-evolution teaching law. Cates, represented by famous progressive lawyer Henry Drummond, is showed to be a sensitive, thoughtful teacher, one who might even believe in God but believes, more importantly, that science ought to be taught in science classes. Although Cates is convicted of breaking the state's law, the law itself is showed, during the trial, to be a vestige of an older, less religiously-tolerant society, and Cates is only fined 100 dollars for his "crime."

Rachel Brown – A dear friend and love interest of Cates', Rachel Brown, daughter of Reverend Brown, Hillsboro's "religious leader," believes that Cates should not have broken the state's no-evolution law, no matter how silly it seems. She asks Cates repeatedly to admit his guilt and avoid trial. Rachel eventually comes to realize, after being forced to testify against Cates, that people must be given the chance to think for themselves, and to determine what they believe in; Rachel then leaves town, at the play's end, with Cates.

Matthew Harrison Brady – A three-time Presidential candidate (and runner-up) and famous public speaker, Brady comes to Hillsboro to try the case against Cates for the prosecution and is treated like a hero. During the trial, however, Brady is exposed by Drummond to be a vain self-aggrandizer who wants to impose his religious beliefs on others. After his humiliation at the trial, Brady soon dies of something resembling a stroke. (This role is inspired in part by William Jennings Bryant, the presidential candidate and prosecuting attorney in the original Scopes case.)

E. K. Hornbeck – A muckraking, progressive reporter from the Baltimore Herald, Hornbeck a wry, skeptical man distrustful of all religions and of religious bombast generally. Hornbeck supports Cates and finds religious believers to be inherently stupid—Drummond later criticizes Hornbeck for his desire only to criticize, and Hornbeck, happy that Brady has been defeated, returns to Baltimore. (This role is inspired in part by the real-life reporter and writer H. L. Mencken.)

Henry Drummond – A famous progressive, agnostic lawyer, one known for being able to win cases for his defendants, some of whom appear very much to be guilty, Henry Drummond works Cates' case pro bono, and comes from Chicago to pit himself against Brady. Drummond respects Brady and does not ultimately believe that Christianity should be expunged from American society—rather, Drummond believes that religion and science each should be allowed to operate within their separate spheres. When Brady dies, Drummond mourns his passing and claims Brady was a great man—Drummond later leaves town with Cates and Rachel, on the same train, convinced that the Hillsboro trial has "moved forward" the case for the separation of religion and science. (This role is inspired by real-life attorney Clarence Darrow.)

Howard – A young boy and former student of Cates', Howard claims, in the trial, that Cates taught him something of Darwin's theory of evolution, but Howard admits that this theory had very little impact on his life—that he doesn't feel, necessarily, that Darwin prevents him from believing in God or from behaving as a "good boy" would. Howard does, though, scandalize Melinda when he tells her she was descended from **monkeys**.

Reverend Jeremiah Brown – Hillsboro's "religious leader," Reverend Brown, Rachel's father, is a fire-and-brimstone Christian who believes that sinners, like Cates, should be damned to hellfire and torment. Rachel, Brady, and others in the town do not necessarily follow the fervor of Brown's beliefs, however. Brady quotes from Proverbs that those who disturb their own house will find they have no house, no family to turn to—these people will merely "inherit the **wind**." Rachel leaves Brown's house at the end of the play, to take the train away from Hillsboro with Cates.

The Judge – The Judge, like Davenport, seems not to want evolution taught in schools, but he, too—this time under the Mayor's influence—is willing to give Cates a light sentence, in order to avoid attracting national attention to Hillsboro. The Judge does not seem to understand evolution, but he does understand that public opinion regarding the coexistence of religion and science is changing, becoming more progressive, and the Judge is willing to allow that perhaps this coexistence is not all bad.

George Sillers – Another religious man called to the jury, Sillers admits that his wife does most of his "religious" thinking for him—Drummond approves him, as do Brady and Davenport initially. But the latter two worry that Drummond will be able to "warp" Sillers with Drummond's own progressive ideas, since Sillers seems not overly concerned with religious matters—he's mostly involved with running his business.

Tommy Stebbins – A young boy whom Cates taught, and who demonstrated a great aptitude for science, Stebbins died of drowning, but was not given a formal funeral by Reverend Brown because Stebbins was not baptized. Cates found this choice especially cruel, ceased to attend church after it occurred, and argues in court that religion ought to be used to comfort, rather than denigrate, people.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Mrs. Brady – Brady's quiet and supportive wife, Mrs. Brady warns her husband, repeatedly, not to eat too much or over-exert himself. Her fears become justified, later, when Brady dies of a stroke at the trial's end.

Melinda – A young girl in Hillsboro, Melinda is teased, in the opening scene, by Howard, a young boy. Howard tells Melinda that Melinda's family descends from worms and **monkeys**, to her horror and dismay.

Meeker – The bailiff of the city jail and court, Meeker is kind to Rachel and Cates and often arranges for the two to speak to one another in the courtroom, after hours.

Tom Davenport – Brady's co-prosecutor and the district attorney in Hillsboro, Tom Davenport believes that religion should be taught in schools, but also is more moderate than Brady—he speaks with less flourish and seems, ultimately, relieved that, although Cates is found guilty, his punishment is light.

The Mayor – A shy but practical politician, the Mayor is initially awed by Brady's presence in Hillsboro, but later asks the Judge to pass a light sentence on Cates, in order to make Hillsboro seem like a relatively moderate, and not a "medieval," place.

Storekeeper – A quiet man without much by way of formal education, the Storekeeper tells Hornbeck that he has no opinion about Darwin versus Creationism, since "opinions" don't matter much as far as business is concerned.

Mrs. Krebs – A fervently religious woman in Hillsboro, Mrs. Krebs believes that God himself grants the hot weather and the sweat glands human use to comfort themselves in hot weather.

Bannister – A religious man called to the jury, Bannister is approved by Brady because he is a religious man, and by Drummond because he cannot read—meaning he has read neither the Bible nor Darwin.

Mrs. Blair – Howard's mother, Mrs. Blair is mostly concerned that Howard puts on a good appearance for the arrival of Brady in Hillsboro.

Elijah – A young boy selling Bibles in Hillsboro, Elijah cannot read—Hornbeck jokes with Elijah during the scene of Brady's arrival in town.

Dunlap – A prospective juror who says he believes in God. Drummond does not accept him as a juror.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

SCIENCE VS. RELIGION

Bertram Cates has taught evolution in the high school of a small town (Hillsboro, state unnamed), in violation of a state law banning exactly this. The state instead requires that teachers teach creationism—the theory that God created the earth and humankind in keeping with the Biblical Book of Genesis. The play is inspired by real-life events in Dayton, Tennessee, in 1925: the Scopes "**Monkey Trial**," wherein a teacher, John Scopes, also taught evolution to his students. Cates lectures on evolution because, as a teacher, he feels he must teach what is actually and provably true. Rachel Brown, daughter of the town's minister Reverend Brown, seems to have a romantic relationship with Cates, and is torn between her father's viewpoint—that religious law is inviolable—and Cates', that religion and science occupy two separate domains. The "Monkey Trial" is, in essence, a drama over the educational validity of teaching science as science, and of teaching religious belief as a form of verifiable knowledge.

The prosecution brings in Matthew Harrison Brady (based on the historical figure William Jennings Bryant, from the Scopes Trial) to aid in prosecuting the case. Brady believes that religious values, including those taught in Genesis, are literally true. Brady also believes that these Christian religious teachings are part of an "American" mode of religious belief. Good Christian Americans believe in Christian creationism. Bad Americans "believe," instead, in evolution.

Henry Drummond, famous progressive lawyer (based on the historical figure of Clarence Darrow), aids in Cates' case. Drummond seeks to bring in authorities to attest to the scientific validity of the theory of evolution, but the Judge does not allow these scientists to testify (believing, paradoxically, that state law also bans explaining evolution in courtrooms). Drummond, who probably believes that biblical creationism is bunk, takes an interesting tack in the play's climax, as he interrogates Brady on the stand. In his interrogation Drummond forces Brady into revealing that a belief in the story of Genesis as being literally true can't pass basic logic, and holds instead that the Bible should be read as an allegorical religious document. This means that the Bible and science are not incompatible at all—rather, the Bible seems to leave space for evolutionary theory, which in itself can be proved true through experimentation and observation. This climactic scene represents the "synthesis" of these two, apparently competing views.

Science therefore does not destroy religion any more than religion can "disprove" science. Rather, religion and science, as Cates seemed to imply from the beginning, occupy two separate realms, and neither overwhelms or invalidates the other.

DAVID VS. GOLIATH

Inherit the **Wind** contains an overlapping network of characters perceiving themselves to be underdogs (or "Davids," in the Biblical story of David and Goliath), who pit themselves against more powerful figures of authority ("Goliaths"). Bertram Cates is the novel's first "David." He has placed himself in opposition to the law of his state, for the sake of an idea—that science ought to be taught in a science classroom. If Cates is a David, then, the whole of the state, and especially Brady, are the Goliaths to

which he is opposed. And Brady is, physically, a Goliath—he eats prodigiously, speaks loudly, and wins over audiences with torrents of words. But Brady compares himself to David (I.1), saying that Drummond, his opposition, is Goliath, since Drummond is a successful attorney himself, who has managed to succeed in the courtroom against overwhelming odds.

Drummond, for his part, seems *also* in the position of an underdog, once the trial proceeding gets underway. The Judge, in the beginning, appears to take the prosecution's side, and does not allow Drummond to call expert witnesses in the sciences. Rachel is an "underdog" as regards her relationship with her father, the fiery preacher Reverend Brown, who is the town's serious religious "authority." After the trial, when Cates is convicted but fined only a paltry amount, Rachel decides to leave her father, and Hillsboro, with Cates, starting a new life elsewhere. She therefore escapes her father's religious and moral authority.

In the Biblical story, David conquers Goliath through his ingenuity. In the play, too, the "underdogs" tend to triumph, although only the "true" underdogs. In other words, Brady turns out not to be a "David" figure after all—he, a clear Goliath of American religion and politics, appears ridiculous on the stand, and after the trial, when the verdict is reported, almost no time is reserved for Brady's speech. Brady then dies, unexpectedly, and Drummond, though happy that Brady's views have been shown to be ridiculous and erroneous, nevertheless celebrates the strength of his opponent's belief. Cates, for his part, has "lost" the trial but won the war—his views have been made public, and championed, through Drummond's efforts and Hornbeck's reporting.

More broadly, the opposition of "underdog" and "authority" is shown to be too simplistic, by the play's end. Each side tends to conceive of itself as the "underdog"—Christians believe they are in the minority; followers of Darwinian evolution believe the whole country has lined up against them. In truth, Cates, Drummond, and many Americans in the fictional world of the play, and in the US after the Scopes Trial, fall (or fell) between these two camps—they believe in religion *and* think science ought to be taught in schools. These are not relationships of underdogs and authorities—rather, in the play and in American life, there are two complementary systems, religious and scientific, each coexisting with the other.

ORATORY, PERFORMANCE, AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

The play dramatizes oratory, performance, and public speaking as means of persuasion. The play's most notable orator is Brady, famous for his grand speeches and his presidential campaigns. Brady's speeches, in favor of "old-time" Christian values, are well-received by Hillsboro residents in the beginning of the play, but as the trial goes on, Drummond eventually gains the upper hand. Specifically, when Brady is called to the stand, and when Drummond cross-examines him regarding the literal truth in the Bible, Brady appears to splutter, and to offer no coherent explanation of how the Bible provides verifiable truth. Drummond, then, has used his own techniques of performance—which include a sarcastic and joking manner—to best his "champion speaker" colleague, and to win the approval of the town, if not the jury. The third of the four major public speakers, or writers, in the play is Reverend Brown, Rachel's father, who gives a fiery sermon, at night, outside the courthouse—one so inflammatory, and so strident in its criticism of Cates and Drummond, that it causes even Brady to blush, and to preach that Christianity is not so much concerned with punishment as with forgiveness. Brown's oratory is mostly designed to intimidate, whereas Brady's is designed to cajole and persuade, as is Drummond's. Finally, Hornbeck, the reporter, is the play's "chorus," or observer who comments on the action of the play from a position somewhat removed from "center-stage." Hornbeck's commentary, which praises Cates and his resolve in fighting the state's anti-evolution law, provide a sharply secular viewpoint, contrasting with Brady's pro-Christianity, anti-evolution stance.

After Brady's death, however, Drummond does not agree fully with Hornbeck—Drummond does not take the view that Brady was merely an antic-science buffoon. Instead, Drummond takes a more nuanced view, in his final speech, arguing that it is exactly Brady's passion in arguing his cause that makes Brady a good man, if not always a correct one. Drummond respects Brady for his moral courage in expressing his views, just as he respects Cates for initially teaching evolution in the classroom, and for standing up for his beliefs.

In the end, the play privileges a kind of persuasive public speaking in which people stand up, courageously, for what they believe in—for people who argue based on fact and good reasoning, even if to argue, ultimately, for a compromise, as between freedom of religion and the freedom to teach science. In this sense, Drummond and Cates and Brady are all exemplars of noble public speaking, each according to his own manner. And Reverend Brown, along with Hornbeck, is motivated only by a desire to stir up and manipulate people's emotions.

MORALITY, JUSTICE, AND TRUTH

The play is also an examination of moral teachings, justice, and the relationship of each to truth. Cates teaches human evolution in class because this is the best scientific theory humans have to explain the existence of humans on earth. Members of the local school board, however, consider that Cates has done something irreligious—that his teaching of Darwin goes against Christian moral precepts. The state law banning teaching of evolution regards the Bible as the sole vehicle of incontrovertible truth. But the America of the

early to middle 20th century was not stuck in what some characters call a "medieval" view of learning—this America did not regard the Bible as the ultimate authority in all matters. Cates and Drummond merely wish, ultimately, to restore the Bible to its place as a religious document offering religious teachings and religious precepts.

Brady, for his part, believes that Christian teaching simply *is* truth, and that to argue otherwise is blasphemy. But he takes a more tolerant view than Reverend Brown, who argues that those who disregard Christian teachings are not just wrong—they are "heathens," or willful violators of God's principles. Hornbeck is diametrically opposed to Reverend Brown: a progressive, agnostic reporter, Hornbeck believes that anyone who ascribes to religious teachings is an imbecile, one not accord with modern views. Drummond and Cates, however, fall between Hornbeck and Brown. They understand that some questions of moral truth might be best handled by religion, and that other questions of scientific truth ought to be handled by science.

Justice in the play takes two forms. The "justice" served by the court is, technically, an injustice; Cates is tried and convicted based on a state law that is, as Drummond argues, silly and outmoded. The Judge seems to recognize this, and therefore only fines Cates $100. This smaller injustice is framed by the larger "justice" reached in the end of the play: that Cates is not imprisoned but allowed to go free, and that, as Drummond indicates, Cates will be an example to others who dare to speak their mind, to follow their own conscience as regards truth, and to push back against authorities who would force one unified religious theory on all inhabitants of a varied, complex country. The playwrights seem to recognize that, although the progress of justice is sometimes slow, halting, and imperfect, humans nevertheless tend to recognize that believers can be allowed to believe, and practitioners of science can be allowed to do their work, without either camp silencing or excommunicating the other.

OPEN-MINDEDNESS VS. CLOSED-MINDEDNESS

Finally, *Inherit the Wind* contains a detailed discussion of what it means to open- or closed-minded in a complex, modern society. Drummond is the primary vehicle for this discussion, as he conceives of the trial's fundamental question as, essentially, a philosophical one: Drummond believes he is fighting for the right of private citizens to think whatever they want, and to share their thought-processes with others. Cates, for his part, questioned the balance of evolution and creationism, and urged his students not to reject religion but, rather, to examine both thought-systems critically. It is this process of questioning that Drummond champions.

In this way, Reverend Brown becomes a "villain" in the play because he is closed-minded: he will not allow that scientists can believe in God, and damns all who don't believe in creationism to hell. Hornbeck at first seems a more sympathetic figure, with his support for Cates and mockery of the closed-mindedness of the town. But by the end of the play Drummond has rejected Hornbeck's viewpoint as also being closed-minded—Hornbeck refuses to acknowledge that religious people can be intelligent. Both Brown and Hornbeck's closed-mindedness causes them to behave cruelly to others—to ignore other possible viewpoints, and to argue, instead, for a kind of cynical violence against those who disagree with them. In contrast, Drummond and Cates are open-minded because they are willing to question the dogmas of religion *and* the dogmas of secularism. And Rachel, who finally realizes how important it is to think for herself, leaves her closed-minded father and begins a new life with Cates—a life unfettered by narrow viewpoints. Even Brady, a man of strong religious feeling, stops short of arguing, as Brown does, that non-believers ought to be sent to hell, castigated as sinners forever.

Thus Drummond's final "weighing" of Darwin's writings and the Bible has a clear symbolic meaning. Drummond believes, firmly, that one should not have to decide between two apparently restrictive viewpoints. Rather, Drummond takes both books with him, showing that he is open to a thought-system that includes elements of belief and fact—a mixture of ideas from many different places, representative of the broad, multifaceted nature of American life and culture itself. This openness toward all aspects of society becomes a central message of the play.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

THE WIND

As the play's title indicates, the wind is a central symbol of Lawrence and Lee's work. The line from Proverbs, quoted by Brady and then, after Brady's death, by Drummond, goes as follows: "He that troubleth his own house . . . shall inherit the wind." The phrase may be interpreted a number of ways, but one seems clear: if a man sows discord among those that he loves, and among those that love him, he will soon learn that physical nearness, and kinship, will desert him—that only "the wind," or the idea of those relationships, will remain to him. Reverend Brown preaches not God's love but God's hate, and his daughter Rachel leaves town to be with Cates, at the play's end. Brady, though he tries to love his fellow man, falls prey to his own sense of personal vanity, and watches

as his loving crowds dwindle to only a small group, then to no one at all, as the trial comes to a close. Drummond also senses the "winds" of change that sweep through the court during the trial—the people of Hillsboro, and of America, come to realize that a compromise between religious belief and scientific fact is not just possible—it is the bedrock of an open-minded society, one that is inclusive of different opinions, and one that champions a person's right to think for himself or herself.

MONKEYS

The Hillsboro Trial, like the Scopes Trial on which it is based, is called, in the press, a "monkey trial." This derives from the teaching of evolution, and the misbegotten, popular notion of evolution, that humans are descended from monkeys. (In reality, Darwin's theory suggests that monkeys and humans shared a common ancestor, and diverged from one another biologically many, many millions of years ago). Hornbeck talks to a monkey, accompanying an organ-grinder, in Act One, joking that the monkey might be related to some of those present in Hillsboro. The idea of a "monkey trial" also includes the colloquial sense of "monkey-houses" as places where crazy people live with, and attempt to communicate with, one another. At times, the Hillsboro Trial verges on the absurd, as ideas about the nature of God and humankind are thrown around in a courtroom, and as Brady and others make grand pronouncements about God's will for his people. Lawrence and Lee wish to show that monkeys ought *not* to be a replacement for man's relationship to God. Rather, monkeys merely serve as a vestigial indicator of man's heritage on earth—his interrelation to other animals, and his scientific lineage as a product of earth's own development.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Ballantine Books edition of *Inherit the Wind* published in 2003.

Act 1, Scene 1 Quotes

❝ Bert, it's still not too late. Why can't you admit you're wrong? If the biggest man in the country . . . –if Matthew Harrison Brady comes here to tell the whole world how wrong you are . . . .
You still think I did wrong?

Related Characters: Rachel Brown, Bertram Cates (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 8

Explanation and Analysis

Bert Cates and Rachel Brown are discussing Cates' upcoming trial, for a crime Cates has knowingly committed: the teaching of evolution in school. Rachel is inclined to believe both that Cates is a moral man, and that one ought to be obedient to the teachings of religion. Cates does not so much disagree with Rachel as he does argue, respectfully, that science, and not religion, ought to be taught in the classroom. Thus Cates is somewhat surprised to learn that Rachel believes he has "done wrong" in this instance. Cates instead believes that he has broken an "unjust law"—he has not sinned so much as fallen afoul of the town's restrictive, close-minded guidelines for scientific teaching.

This problem of moral authority as it runs up against the "law of the land" will recur throughout the play. Rachel's position will adjust over time, and will eventually approach Cates' worldview, this quote shows that even at the start of the play both Cates and Rachel are doing their best to live their own versions of moral lives.

❝ The Good Lord guv us the heat, and the Good Lord guv us the glands to sweat with.

Related Characters: Mrs. Krebs (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 10

Explanation and Analysis

Mrs. Krebs here expresses a common belief in town, in the run-up to the "monkey trial": that all things come from God. By this logic, even science must be subordinated to the plan of the Christian deity. Mrs. Krebs believes that any problem created by God likewise has a solution created by Him. Thus evolution, as taught by Cates, would not fit into God's overarching template for the world, since it is a solution that requires no guiding entity—it is, instead, a system that works on its own.

Although Mrs. Krebs does not engage in the debate between Cates, Drummond, and Brady in these terms, she nevertheless understands, as much of the town's population does, what is at stake between religious and secular (or scientific) concerns.

The unplumbed and plumbing-less depths! Ah, Hillsboro—Heavenly Hillsboro. The buckle on the Bible Belt.

Related Characters: E. K. Hornbeck (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 15

Explanation and Analysis

Hornbeck, speaking here in an aside to the audience, helps to set the stage for the trial, defining Hillsboro as a town concerned primarily with Christian teaching, and therefore, according to him, a backward place. Hornbeck believes that many in Hillsboro are not interested in open-mindedness or pushing beyond the received wisdom they have learned in Sunday School—that, for example, the world was created in six days, or that God has a plan for every person. Hornbeck considers these ideas ridiculous, and has no guilt about poking fun at those in Hillsboro who cling so tightly to religious teachings in the face of scientific reason.

Thus Hillsboro, for Hornbeck, is "heavenly" only because it is obsessed with religion in an age that, by Hornbeck's logic, has left religion behind. He uses the word "heavenly" not to praise Hillsboro, but rather to mock it. This sarcastic compliment, as well as his other jokes (like assuming that the town is so stuck in the past that it lacks plumbing), offer examples of Hornbeck's sharp, witty rhetorical style as he acts like a kind of "chorus," commenting on the action to the audience.

I understand your loyalty, my child. This man, the man in your jailhouse, is a fellow schoolteacher. Likeable, no doubt. And you are loath to speak out against him before all these people. Think of me as a friend, Rachel. And tell me what troubles you.

Related Characters: Matthew Harrison Brady (speaker), Rachel Brown

Related Themes:     

Page Number: 25

Explanation and Analysis

Matthew Harrison Brady, the famous public speaker and former presidential candidate, has pulled Rachel aside during his grand entrance into the town, for he has heard that Rachel is close with Cates, the man whom Brady is to prove guilty of breaking the law. Brady here performs a kind of performance of empathy, pretending that he respects Rachel for her unwillingness to speak ill of Cates. But Brady, as will be shown later in the play, is perhaps not so understanding as he initially seems. Brady does in fact believes that Cates is morally wrong to teach evolution, and he wants Rachel, whose father is the town's influential minister, to be on his, Brady's, side in the matter. He will use his prodigious charm to this effect.

Rachel, for her part, tries to be polite to all parties, but she does not waver in her support for her friend—despite the fact that he is being prosecuted by a man as famous and powerful as Brady. Rachel is loyal to Cates even when she does not agree with everything Cates does—in other words, she can separate the deed from the person. Brady, though he promotes himself as a Christian, is less able to extend this compassion and empathy to others.

You make it sound as if Bert is a hero. I'd like to think that, but I can't. A schoolteacher is a public servant: I think he should do what the law and the school-board want him to.

Related Characters: Rachel Brown (speaker), Bertram Cates

Related Themes:    

Page Number: 33

Explanation and Analysis

Rachel makes the case here for why Bert Cates might perhaps deserve punishment even though he is not a bad person. Rachel does not think that Cates is ungodly or wicked, but she does argue, in a rather convincing way, that Cates ought to uphold the teachings of the place where he is employed—that there might be considerations beyond Cates's own ideas as to how things should work. This shows Rachel displaying her own kind of open-mindedness, even though at this point in the play she is still one of the "closed-minded" townspeople who oppose the teaching of science over religion.

Cates would counter, however, that an unjust or incorrect law ought not to be observed. Instead, a man or woman has a moral obligation to *oppose* a law he or she knows to be wrong or misguided—no matter how powerful the institutions or people behind such a law might be. Thus Cates and Rachel disagree fundamentally, at this point in the play, as to what Cates ought to have done about

individually promoting evolution and ignoring the school board's dogma.

Hello, Devil. Welcome to Hell.

Related Characters: E. K. Hornbeck (speaker), Henry Drummond

Related Themes:

Page Number: 36

Explanation and Analysis

Here Hornbeck welcomes Drummond to Hillsboro, again using religious language in an ironic way. He calls Drummond "the devil," but does not mean that he really is "devilish." Rather, Hornbeck is using the language of those in Hillsboro—who have heard of Drummond's support for secular causes in previous cases—as an ironic joke, one which mocks the townspeople rather than Drummond himself.

Earlier in the scene Hornbeck, again ironically, called Hillsboro "heaven." Now he is calling it hell. There are many reasons for this. It is "hell" because, if Drummond is the devil, then hell is the proper place for him to hold sway. It is also a "hell" because Hillsboro is, for Hornbeck, a closed-minded place, one without much nuance, and without citizens willing to question authority.

What will become clear as the play continues, however, is that Hornbeck's belief that a place can be either heavenly or hellish is *itself* a form of dogma. Drummond, in contrast, considers Hillsboro to be neither a wholly perfect nor wholly imperfect place, but rather sees it as a normal community with normal people, who contain a mixture of good and bad within them.

Act 1, Scene 2 Quotes

Does Mr. Drummond refuse this man [Dunlap] a place on the jury simply because he believes in the Bible?
If you find an Evolutionist in this town, you can refuse him.

Related Characters: Matthew Harrison Brady, Henry Drummond (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 41

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond and Brady debate the composition of the jury before the start of the trial. Drummond argues that any Christians who openly profess their beliefs might be too prejudiced to serve on the jury—that is, they might be inclined to believe that Cates broke the law without considering the facts of the case. Brady counters that it would be difficult to find people who are not believers in the Bible in the town of Hillsboro—and he does so in his usual manner of speaking, appealing to the idea of the "good Christian American," and assuming that believing in the Bible isn't any kind of prejudice or anomaly, but is something everyone should do. To many of the people involved in the case (like Brady), morality and justice are inseparable from Christian belief, so there really isn't such a thing as secular justice, and excluding a jury member because he is a Christian seems absurd.

To this, Drummond responds that Brady could willingly exclude from the jury any "Evolutionists" in the town. Of course, Drummond knows he is far less likely to find such a person in Hillsboro. (This fact also points to the weight of local opinion against Cates, and how unlikely it is that he'll be found innocent.) But his point still stands—there is no one in Hillsboro who is "outside" this debate, as it concerns religion, science, and the way these two systems interact in the schools.

Well, I'm pretty busy down at the feed store. My wife tends to the religion for both of us.
In other words, you take care of this life, and your wife takes care of the next one?

Related Characters: Henry Drummond, George Sillers (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 45

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond examines George Sillers in the witness box toward the beginning of the trial, to see if he can be a part of the jury. Drummond is making the point that there are some people in Hillsboro for whom religion is more of a background concern, and less of a primary one. Brady's religious posturing has been ostentatious and over-the-top, and Rachel's father teaches plainly that religion is of the utmost importance in people's lives, but here Drummond

implies here that these are not necessarily the views of everyone in town.

The logic of Drummond's point is powerful. If there are those in town for whom religion is not the defining feature of life and law, then there are people who might be more open to the teaching of evolution in the schools, as Cates has done.

I've seen what you can do to a jury. Twist and tangle them. Nobody's forgotten the Endicott Publishing case—where you made the jury believe the obscenity was in their own minds, not on the printed page.

Related Characters: Matthew Harrison Brady (speaker), Henry Drummond

Related Themes:

Page Number: 47

Explanation and Analysis

Brady argues that Drummond is well known for "influencing" juries, either by selecting certain "prejudicial" groups to fill them, or by keeping others, who might go against Drummond's beliefs, away from them. For Brady, there is no difference between tolerating some conversation between religion and science (on the one hand) and wholly supporting science (on the other). Brady believes, or at least advocates in his speeches, that religion is bound up in the character of the country, and in its small towns—that America is great because it is a Christian country.

But Drummond has a different view of things. He believes that people ought to be able to make up their own minds—and although he does wish to keep ardent Christians off the jury, he does so, by his own logic, to make room for people who are least willing to consider the other side, Cates's side, of the case. In general, Drummond is the advocate for a more secular, unbiased kind of justice, while Brady appeals to a justice of emotion of popular opinion.

Mr. Drummond. You've got to call the whole thing off. It's not too late. Bert knows he did wrong. He didn't mean to. And he's sorry. Now why can't he just stand up and say to everybody: "I did wrong. I broke a law. I admit it. I won't do it again."

Related Characters: Rachel Brown (speaker), Henry Drummond, Bertram Cates

Related Themes:

Page Number: 49

Explanation and Analysis

Here Rachel begs Drummond to avoid the trial altogether, to keep Bert Cates out of the spotlight, and to let him confess to a lesser offense. There are several problems, however, with Rachel's logic in this instance. First, Cates does not believe that he did do anything wrong—Rachel still believes it was immoral to go against the school board's wishes, but again, Cates feels that to disobey an unjust law is just. Second, Cates himself is not willing to let the case go away—instead, he believes it is his right and duty to fight, tooth and nail, in his own defense. Cates does this not simply to clear his own name—although surely that is part of the consideration—but also to prove a point about open-mindedness in education. And to do this, he must air his grievances openly, in the courtroom.

If you'll stick by me, Rache—well, we can fight it out.

Related Characters: Bertram Cates (speaker), Rachel Brown

Related Themes:

Page Number: 53

Explanation and Analysis

Here Cates asks Rachel directly if she will support him. He does not wish to test Rachel's loyalty, but he knows that Rachel is a true friend, and Cates still believes that his side is the morally just one. He recognizes, too, that Rachel's influence in the town is significant, because Rachel's father is an important preacher and moral authority. If Rachel can be seen as sympathetic on Cates's behalf, then Cates, by this logic, cannot appear so bad to the rest of the town.

Rachel, for her part, walks a thin line. She does not wish for Cates to be punished too harshly, but she does want to uphold the laws of Hillsboro as she sees them. Both characters also recognize that they are essentially lone individuals against the weight of public opinion in the town—so even if they can prove a point, it will still be almost impossible to overcome the odds.

Can they make me testify?
I'm afraid so. It would be nice if nobody ever had to *make* anybody do anything. But—Don't let Brady scare you. He only *seems* to be bigger than the law.

Related Characters: Rachel Brown, Henry Drummond (speaker), Matthew Harrison Brady

Related Themes:

Page Number: 54

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond reassures Rachel before she might be called to the witness stand. Drummond knows that Brady is a very effective advocate in the courtroom, and that he can be intimidating to a witness. He is a nationally famous figure, his speeches tend to arouse the sympathies of large crowds, and his Christian apologist stance plays well among small towns in the middle of the country, where Christian beliefs are still strong and are interwoven with a powerful patriotism.

Even here, however, Drummond does not demonize Brady the way that Hornbeck does. Drummond believes that Brady advocates for his views occasionally too avidly, but Drummond does not believe these views to be ignorant and destructive. This fact will be important later in the play, when Drummond makes clear to the audience that Brady, though flawed, was not a bad man.

Act 2, Scene 1 Quotes

I know it's warm, Matt; but these night breezes can be treacherous. And you know how you perspire.

Related Characters: Mrs. Brady (speaker), Matthew Harrison Brady

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 61

Explanation and Analysis

This is an instance of foreshadowing, in which Mrs. Brady tells her husband to be careful not to exert himself too much in the heat. Interestingly enough, a cooling breeze might be useful for Brady, who has more trouble in the heat than he does in a particularly windy situation. Nevertheless, "breeze" and "wind" are concepts strongly connected to Brady—his speeches tend to be on the "windier" side, and Hornbeck believes that Brady might be nothing more than "hot air," a speaker who cares more about his reputation than he does about the "common people" he champions.

Brady is therefore a complex character—seemingly invulnerable, but physically more frail than those around him.

Do we call down hellfire on the man who has sinned against the Word? . . . Strike down this sinner, as Thou didst Thine enemies of old, in the days of the Pharaohs!
No! No, Father. Don't pray to destroy Bert!

Related Characters: Rachel Brown, Reverend Jeremiah Brown (speaker), Bertram Cates

Related Themes:

Page Number: 66

Explanation and Analysis

Jeremiah Brown preaches a fire-and-brimstone sermon against Bert Cates and anyone in the town who dare to elevate science and go against the teachings of the Bible. This sermon draws into high relief the difference between Rachel's views and those of her father. Jeremiah Brown is rigid and close-minded in his beliefs, and believes that sinners must be dealt with harshly and punished with destruction and damnation. But Rachel, for her part, believes more in the Christian concepts of forgiveness and love. She refuses to accept the idea that Cates, a friend of hers for many years, is fundamentally immoral or deserving of such punishment. She instead wants to think that Cates has simply made a mistake—one for which he can atone.

All motion is relative. Perhaps it is you who have moved away—by standing still.

Related Characters: Henry Drummond (speaker), Matthew Harrison Brady

Related Themes:

Page Number: 67

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond here introduces a scientific concept to indicate

that Brady is perhaps more out of step with the mainstream of the American public than Brady is willing to admit. Drummond implies that the world has moved forward—that scientific ideas are more broadly accepted by the American public and seen not to be in conflict with the realm of the religious. For Brady, however, religious teachings remain absolute—thus Drummond notes that Brady has "stayed still," and has not moved forward with the rest of society. And, of course, from the perspective of those walking ahead, Brady does indeed appear to be close-minded and clinging to a kind of nostalgic past.

Act 2, Scene 2 Quotes

Did you hear that, my friends? "Old World Monkeys"! According to Mr. Cates, you and I aren't even descended from good American monkeys!

Related Characters: Matthew Harrison Brady (speaker), Bertram Cates

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 69

Explanation and Analysis

Brady riles up his crowd, indicating that Cates's scientific teachings are not only unreligious but unpatriotic. Drummond and Hornbeck believe that it is instances like this that show Brady is "playing to his audience," and is, perhaps, relying on the ignorance and pliability of those around him. Brady likes to speak in longwinded paragraphs, and he is unafraid to make a jarring statement such as this one (bringing up the idea of "monkeys" again in order to make his audience feel outraged and superior), if it means it will pull the sympathies of those around him to his side.

But Drummond believes that Brady ultimately does his audience a disservice by appealing to their emotions rather than their intellect. Brady seems not to want to consider that those around him are capable of thinking critically, on their own, about the relationship between science and religion. This is exactly the opposite of Cates's original intention of teaching his students to keep an open mind.

Let's put it this way, Howard. All this fuss and feathers about Evolution, do you think it hurt you any?
Sir?
Did it do you any harm? You still feel reasonably fit? Did it hurt your baseball game any? Affect your pitching arm?
No, sir. I'm a leftie.

Related Characters: Henry Drummond, Howard (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 72

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond indicates, via his subtle interrogation of Howard, that the notion of a grand debate between religion and science is in many ways a construct, a falsity that is played out in the public eye, but that does not affect the day-to-day lives of the town in a significant way. For religious belief, Drummond implies, is an important method of orienting oneself toward the moral universe. With that said, religious belief has no effect on something practical like a baseball game—or, by this logic, on scientific realms, such as the objective study of the origin of human beings.

Drummond makes plain that there can be religion in American society in the twentieth century, but there cannot be religious absolutism. Modern society does not function if all is subordinated to religious belief. But religion can be a significant part of the moral systems of American communities, and can coexist with more "worldly" matters like baseball or scientific study.

One of the peculiar imbecilities of our time is the grid of morality we have placed on human behavior: so that every act of man must be measured against an arbitrary latitude of right and longitude of wrong . . . .

Related Characters: Henry Drummond (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 74

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond here eloquently argues before the court that there are some moral laws imposed on human behavior "from without." Drummond clearly believes that religion is capable of "overstepping" its bounds. One instance of this is, of course, in the classroom evolution debate, where the Biblical notion of the conception of human life has no

scientific or observable basis. But Drummond is speaking, more broadly, about the way in which people like Brady use religious teachings to divide the world into good and bad, right and wrong. It is this closed-minded moral "grid" that angers Drummond.

One way out of the "grid" mentality is to accept that people are, instead, somewhere in between good and bad—that there are gray areas between. Likewise, one shouldn't necessarily accept the absolute truth of any belief system, but should always remain open-minded and questioning.

> Tommy Stebbins used to come over to the boarding house and look through Bert's microscope. Bert said the boy had a quick mind, and he might even be a scientist when he grew up. At the funeral, Pa preached that Tommy didn't die in a state of grace, because his folks had never had him baptized . . . . Tell 'em what your father really said! That Tommy's soul was damned, writhing in hellfire!

Related Characters: Rachel Brown, Bertram Cates (speaker), Tommy Stebbins, Reverend Jeremiah Brown

Related Themes:

Page Number: 76

Explanation and Analysis

Rachel's testimony here indicates several facets of Bert Cates's character, and of his relationship to others in the town. Cates believed it was important to encourage scientific speculation on the part of his students. But the case of Tommy Stebbins is an important one, as both Cates and Rachel recognize, because Stebbins's untimely death is viewed, among the religious community of Hillsboro, as a tragic case of a death without the promise of religious salvation, rather than a case of a promising young student and scientific investigator passing away. Furthermore, Reverend Brown's harsh reaction to Tommy's death paints the religious absolutism that Cates wants to avoid in a damning light—as it seems shockingly cruel to preach at a child's funeral and declare that the child is now being tortured in Hell.

Cates has hoped to stoke a fire of scientific inquiry in his students, but he also realizes that this is difficult in a town where a great many other factors—including the state of one's soul before death—are still considered deeply important.

> "God created Man in His own image—and Man, being a gentleman, returned the compliment."

Related Characters: Rachel Brown (speaker), Bertram Cates

Related Themes:

Page Number: 79

Explanation and Analysis

Here Rachel is reporting something that Cates once said to her. Before this Rachel was worried, of course, and expressed to Drummond her fear of having to incriminate her friend. But Rachel also believes in telling the truth, and though Cates's comments to her were probably in jest—for it is never made certain just what Cates really thinks of Christian religion as a moral system—they appear to the courtroom to be an indicator of Cates's lack of concern for Christian teaching.

Cates's comments indicate that he is, at minimum, willing to critique the ideas set forward in the Bible and in the church in Hillsboro. This alone should not be enough to convict him. But Brady has created an atmosphere in the town where any kind of deviation from the Christian norm ought to be considered suspect.

> In this community, Colonel Drummond . . . the language of the law is clear; we do not need experts to question the validity of a law that is already on the books. In other words, the court rules out any expert testimony on Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* or *Descent of Man*? The court so rules.

Related Characters: Henry Drummond, The Judge (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 83

Explanation and Analysis

The Judge does not permit any scientist to testify as to the accuracy of the theory of evolution by natural selection. This unwillingness to even consider evidence that might bolster Cates's position is an indicator of just how far the deck is stacked against Cates. Cates's entire argument, indeed, is predicated on the idea that one ought to teach evolution in school because evolution, as Darwin developed

the theory, is good science. Christian teachings are not science at all—they are a system that deals not in the objective but in the subjective, and therefore they ought to be part of a theological or philosophical course instead.

But the judge here argues that "good" and "bad" science are irrelevant, and the only thing that matters is if science goes against the rules of the school board. Thus the experts cannot testify, and an objective kind of justice is again compromised in the trial.

Now tell me. Do you feel that every word that's written in this book should be taken literally?
Everything in the Bible should be accepted, exactly as it is given there.

Related Characters: Henry Drummond, Matthew Harrison Brady (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 87

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond, recognizing that he has little chance of actually winning the case, still wants to prove a point and get to the bottom of Brady's ideas in the courtroom. Brady argues that the Bible is literal truth—that is does not set up metaphorical expectations on the part of the reader, but that it instead ought to be understood literally and at face value. Drummond will go on to show that this simply cannot be true, however—there are items in the Bible too fantastical or contradictory to be believed, and the "truth" of the Bible cannot be so inflexible as to be exactly what is found, literally, in the pages of the book.

But Drummond is making a larger point, too—that any too-narrow or too-literal framework for interpretation, in any moral system, is bound to be a failure. Drummond argues that it is precisely in our human nature to question, to prod, to ask whether "the truth" is really always true.

Is that the way of things? God tells Brady what is good? To be against Brady is to be against God!

Related Characters: Henry Drummond (speaker), Matthew Harrison Brady

Related Themes:

Page Number: 100

Explanation and Analysis

Here Drummond finds a weak spot in Brady's argument. Because if the Bible is the word of God, and if Brady is the one doing his own reading of the Bible, then really the word of God is Brady's word. Drummond uses this as an opportunity to show just how important public speaking, and reputation, are to Brady. He paints Brady as a kind of megalomaniac, a man claiming to speak directly for God—and this sort of pride is, at best, un-Christian.

Drummond does not appear to have a personal grudge against Brady, but he does object a great deal to Brady's opinions. Drummond's belief system is predicated on the idea that no one person can know everything, and that the world is far more complex than we, as humans, might like it to be. Certainties are hard to come by. But for Brady, certainty is an essential part of his experience—and he likes explaining his certainties to others.

Act 3, Scene 1 Quotes

Bert, whenever you see something bright, shining, perfect-seeming—all gold, with purple spots—look behind the paint! And if it's a lie—show it up for what it really is!

Related Characters: Henry Drummond (speaker), Bertram Cates

Related Themes:

Page Number: 110

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond makes a distinction here between appearance and reality, as Cates waits to hear the verdict against him. For Drummond, it is important always to investigate the root causes of any particular event. Sometimes a thing might seem perfect, moral, and upright, but might have behind it baser human motivations. Drummond believes that Brady is not a bad person, but that Brady has become caught up in his own crusade, in his own popular image. And, according to Drummond, this has caused Brady to use religious teaching to further his own public fame.

Thus Drummond encourages Cates, and members of the audience watching the play, to continually question authority and probe beneath the "shiny" surface of things—to not accept teachings that just appear plausible, but rather to be objective and to think for oneself.

> The jury's decision is unanimous. Bertram Cates is found guilty as charged!

Related Characters: The Judge (speaker), Bertram Cates

Related Themes:    

Page Number: 113

Explanation and Analysis

The judge has, from the beginning, seemed to take Brady's side against Drummond and Cates, and the "justice" involved in the trial has seemed far from objective. Cates has never really felt that he would win the trial, but he and Drummond have each hoped that their side would be, at least, vindicated—that in the larger media swirl surrounding the case, their belief in scientific rationality and open-mindedness might be seem to prevail over religious absolutism.

But there is still the matter of the courtroom, the judge, and the jury. The jury is, after all, composed of people who live in Hillsboro, and the town has had a problem with Cates's teachings from the start. Thus the verdict is no great surprise, but Cates nevertheless might hope, at this point, that his side will "win out" in the national conversation about the events in Hillsboro.

> I feel I am . . . I have been convicted of violating an unjust law. I will continue in the future, as I have in the past, to oppose this law in any way I can.

Related Characters: Bertram Cates (speaker)

Related Themes:     

Page Number: 115

Explanation and Analysis

Here Cates restates, to the crowd in the courtroom and to the audience, the fundamental position he has taken throughout the play. Cates is not a revolutionary—he does not wish to destroy the legal and educational systems as they are. He is not against religion or Christianity in the abstract. But he believes that there are realms better explained by science than by religion—that religion cannot be absolute force defining all humans' lives, especially the modern lives of the 20th century.

Cates thus argues that he has done a moral thing by defending what he believes to be right, even in the face of public opinion and local law. Cates believes that the law can deviate from what is morally correct. In instances where this happens, a citizen has an obligation to follow his own moral compass, as Cates says he has done.

> He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise in heart.
>
> We're growing an odd crop of agnostics this year!

Related Characters: Henry Drummond, E. K. Hornbeck (speaker)

Related Themes:     

Related Symbols: 

Page Number: 126

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond quotes from the Bible (the text which gives the play its title), and Hornbeck is surprised to hear that Drummond is willing to find any wisdom in that text. This draws the significant difference between these two men. For Drummond, the Bible can be a source of real ethical teaching, and a source of spiritual power for those who believe in it. The problem comes when the Bible is trotted out to prove one's personal arguments or vendettas, or to keep people from thinking on their own—in other words, to quash the independence of spirit.

Indeed, Hornbeck's unwillingness to consider the position of those who are accepting of religion—who are believers or agnostics but not absolutists—is in a way just as dogmatic as Brady's position. Drummond believes this to be true, and the playwrights make it clear that Hornbeck's position is as blinkered as Brady's.

Within the actual Bible quote itself, the writers again bring up the concept of wind. Here the symbol represents both wind as a kind of emptiness—the result of turning against truth or basic compassion and clinging to absolutism—but also as a kind of wind of change, bringing in new ideas to the public—as this trial hopefully will do.

> I'll tell you Brady had the same right as Cates: the right to be wrong!

Related Characters: Henry Drummond (speaker), Bertram

Cates

Related Themes:

Page Number: 127

Explanation and Analysis

Drummond summarizes his position effectively in this final statement, in which he again attacks the seemingly unassailable public persona of Brady. The "right to be wrong" is, for Drummond, paramount, because the right to be wrong is bound up in the right to think for oneself. No one would do this kind of thinking if he or she were afraid of being taken to trial for an incorrect belief.

Drummond believes, instead, that more conversation is needed between parties—and that some kind of compromise ought to be reached, wherein intolerance of all forms is quashed, and free thinking is always allowed. Thus science could be taught in scientific classrooms in school without disrupting religious systems with open-minded practitioners.

> You see, I haven't really thought very much. I was always afraid of what I might think—so it seemed safer not to think at all. But now I know. A thought is like a child inside our body. It has to be born. If it dies inside you, part of you dies, too!

Related Characters: Rachel Brown (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 124

Explanation and Analysis

Here Rachel acknowledges to herself, Cates, and the audience that she has grown in her thinking on the subject of religion. Before, she believed that religious teachings should be followed because they represented authority—either the authority of her own father, or of the church and school board. But Rachel has now finally come around to Cates's position, and believes that one must think for oneself at all times.

It's important to note that this does not mean that religion ought to be discarded, that science should explain everything in the world, and that believers should be ridiculed, as Hornbeck argues. Instead, Rachel finds that she, Cates, and Drummond can all agree that free thought and the pursuit of truth is the foundation of human experience. If people are taught to think for themselves, then a greater conversation about right and wrong, true and false—with shades between—can be had in a community, for the benefit of all.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

ACT 1, SCENE 1

The play opens "not too long ago" (around the 1950s), in a small town, Hillsboro (the state is unnamed), in the oppressive heat of summer. The town is modeled on Dayton, Tennessee, and the trial in the play is based, with some important variations, on the famed Scopes **Monkey** Trial of 1929.

Though the play is based on the Scopes Monkey trial, it is not an exact representation of it. Some details have been changed. For example, Rachel and her father, the Reverend Brown, have no precedent in the real-life event.

The stage is arranged on two levels. On the first, lower level is the courtroom, with benches but no walls; and beyond it, on the higher, second level, is a scene of the courthouse square, the town square, and of houses beyond it. Howard, a thirteen-year-old boy, enters the courthouse square and is followed by a girl nearly his age, Melinda, whom he knows from school.

The stage design makes the courtroom "loom" over the town, giving the audience the feeling that the court case is the most important event to have happened in Hillsboro in some time. Interestingly, no church is front-and-center on the stage—and the later church prayer meeting takes place in the court square, suggesting a merger of church and state in the town.

When Melinda wonders how Howard can play with the disgusting worms in the ground, brought up by a recent rain, Howard replies that Melinda's family once was worms—or blobs of jelly, long ago, in prehistoric time. When Melinda becomes upset, and says she will tell her father what Howard has said, she runs off, and Howard yells that her father is a **monkey**.

Howard's comments to Melinda, though derived from what he believes to be Cates' teachings of the theory of evolution, are, of course, not really accurate at all. Although much is said differently in the play's "trial" scenes, Darwin's theory states that monkeys and humans had a common ancestor—not that humans descended from monkeys.

Melinda exits and Rachel Brown enters. Rachel is 22 and a teacher at the local school. She notices Howard, still playing with worms, then walks down to the lower, courtroom level, asking for a man named Mr. Meeker, the town bailiff. Rachel asks to see Bert Cates, a teacher imprisoned in the court jail, and asks also that Meeker not tell her father that she has come to see Bert. Meeker agrees and brings Cates up to the courtroom, to talk to Rachel alone.

The nature of the relationship between Cates and Rachel is never made explicitly clear in these early scenes. Clearly, the two are close friends and confidants, and their closeness might be romantic in nature. But one gets the sense, later on, that Rachel is afraid of becoming close to any man, lest she anger her controlling father.

Cates is happy to see Rachel, but believes she has put herself in a difficult position with her father by coming to visit him. Rachel brings Cates some extra clothes and other items from his home, and Cates says the jail is not uncomfortable.

Cates' jailhouse situation in Hillsboro is rather comfortable, and Meeker seems to be kind to him—Meeker does not appear to judge Cates too harshly for his "misdeeds."

Rachel tells Cates that Matthew Harrison Brady, the "second most-powerful man in America, after the President," is coming to town, and that he will be arguing for the prosecution in the case against Cates. Rachel asks why Cates "did it," and Cates answers that he merely did as he felt, as a schoolteacher, he was supposed to do: he taught his sophomore science class a bit of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, excerpted in the class's science textbook. Cates says evolution was a "long miracle," that it didn't just happen in "seven days."

The problem of the play is revealed. Cates taught evolution in a state where the teaching of this subject was banned. The trial in Hillsboro, then, takes on a personal and a public dimension. Cates' professional life has been put in jeopardy by his imprisonment, but, more importantly, the trial seeks to confront whether or not, in the United States, a government can declare certain branches of science "off-limits" because of Christian religious principles.

Rachel reminds Cates that there is a law against teaching evolution, and Cates says he knew about that law when he taught the lesson. Cates asks Rachel to continue loving him, and they hug as Meeker enters, saying he must sweep the courtroom. Rachel exits quickly and Cates thanks her for bringing some of his clothes.

At this point in the play, Rachel believes it is more important, as a "civil servant," to respect the laws of the place in which one teaches than it is to speak one's mind and to teach according to one's conscience. Cates, for his part, believed that teaching science in a science class was simply the right thing to do.

Meeker remarks to Cates, when the two are alone, that Meeker voted for Brady for President twice (Brady has run three times, but has lost each one). Meeker also says he once saw Brady speak, and that his oratorical powers are impressive. Meeker asks who will be representing Cates in court, and Cates says that he wrote to a newspaper in Baltimore, sympathetic to his cause, and that the paper will be sending a lawyer from Chicago on his behalf. The scene fades out as Cates returns to the basement jail, even though Meeker offers that Cates can spend the night in the courthouse, if he pleases. The lights in the court dim.

Brady is based on the real-life character William Jennings Bryant, a powerful orator and "populist" who himself ran for President, and was defeated, three times. That a famous politician and a famous lawyer are coming to Hillsboro to take up Cates' case indicates the public nature of the debate—and the fact that Hillsboro is to be a proving ground in the conversation between the importance of religious belief and of scientific inquiry in America.

The lights rise on the town level of the stage. It is the next day, and a Storekeeper opens his shop, remarking to Mrs. Krebs, a townswoman, that it is very hot. Mrs. Krebs replies that the Lord "gives the heat, and gives us glands to sweat with." Reverend Brown, Rachel's father, enters, says hello to Krebs and the Storekeeper, and asks why the banner isn't up yet, welcoming Brady to Hillsboro.

An interesting evolutionary take, from Mrs. Krebs, on why human beings have sweat glands. Of course, a Darwinian would answer that the incremental and accidental development of sweat glands made some humans more fit than others, causing those fitter humans to survive and pass on the genes, thus making sweat glands more common.

The town is a-bustle with excitement; it seems that every member of the town welcomes Brady's arrival, and that his coming to Hillsboro is one of the biggest events in the town's history. Melinda, the young girl from the opening of the play, is selling lemonade, and Mrs. Blair, Howard's mother, tells Howard to "spit down" his hair. Reverend Brown wants the town to appear cheerful, neat, and "Christian" for Brady's big arrival party. A boy named Elijah is selling Bibles to the crowd.

More of an indication that Brady's arrival is one of the greatest events in Hillsboro's history. The town appears, from this scene, to be rather unified in its acceptance of Brady's pro-Christianity, anti-evolution arguments, and in its belief that Christian teachings ought to be the foundations of scientific thought taught in schools. This attitude will change as the play goes on, however.

A man named Hornbeck, a reporter from the same Baltimore paper to which Cates has written, walks on-stage. Mrs. Krebs asks if he has a "clean" place to stay, and Hornbeck jokes, sarcastically, that he left a "clean place" to come to the town of Hillsboro—the "buckle on the Bible Belt," he jokes aloud.

Hornbeck has a hard time believing that Hillsboro would have the comforts and amenities of a major metropolitan area. He assumes, from the beginning, that Hillsboro residents are "backward" and unthinking in their Christian beliefs.

Elijah offers Hornbeck a Bible, but Hornbeck declines, buying a hot dog from a vendor instead, and saying he prefers treating his stomach to his soul. Elijah asks if Hornbeck is a sinner, and Hornbeck says he's worse—a newspaper reporter for the Baltimore *Herald*. When an organ-grinder, a street entertainer, enters with a dancing **monkey**, Hornbeck jokingly talks to the monkey, and asks if it will be testifying in the trial. A townsperson announces the arrival of Brady's train.

Elijah was the name of an important Biblical prophet, and Hornbeck seems to be poking fun at the boy Elijah, who cannot read the Bibles he sells, and who therefore is unaware of the importance of his name as a Biblical and literary allusion. Hornbeck's scene with the monkey is played for comic relief, in a play that mixes both comic and tragic elements.

As the townspeople rush to greet Brady at the platform, Hornbeck asks the Storekeeper whether he has an opinion on evolution; the Storekeeper responds that "opinions are bad for business." Hornbeck jokingly talks again to the organ-grinder's **monkey**, saying he (the monkey) is Brady's ancestor. Townspeople waive banners (DOWN WITH DARWIN and DON'T MONKEY WITH OUR SCHOOLS). As Brady exits the train many of the townspeople, having been coordinated by Reverend Brown, begin singing "Gimme that Old Time Religion."

The Storekeeper, like Sillers later in the play, is more passively Christian—believing that the Bible is an important document in the lives of Hillsboro citizens, but also believing that Christianity need not play an active role in every part of his life. The Storekeeper's main focus is on making sure his store turns a profit, in order that he can provide for his family and maintain his business.

Brady gives an impromptu speech to the crowd. He thanks them for the song and warm welcome, jokes about the hot summer weather in Hillsboro, and says he has come for two reasons: to defend the "Word of God" against Cates' "attack" on that Word, by the teaching of evolution; and to defend the state's law against evolution from Northerners, who believes that laws banning evolution should themselves be stricken from the books.

Brady outlines his reasons for coming to Hillsboro—he wishes to take up the town's own "private" cause, in the fight against Cates; and he wishes to make a national political debate out of the teaching of evolution in schools. What goes unmentioned is the probable third reason: that Brady wishes to find another stage from which to state, loudly, his political and moral views.

Brady has a picture taken with the Mayor, a shy man who is in awe of Brady's celebrity. Brady asks to meet the town's "spiritual leader" and is introduced to Reverend Brown. The Mayor gives a brief, prepared speech, thanking Brady for coming, and names Brady to the position of Honorary Colonel in the State Militia. Hereafter, many townspeople refer to Brady as Colonel Brady, even though this "commission" is only symbolic.

The Mayor appears to be quite nervous in Brady's presence—who he seems to feel is a "superior" political force, and his prepared remarks seem stilted and mechanical next to Brady's impromptu loquacity. Brady's designation as "colonel" will become an object of scrutiny and humor later in the trial.

Brady meets Tom Davenport, the district attorney with whom he is partnered in the prosecution—Brady vows to work with him to punish Cates. A luncheon has been prepared for Mr. and Mrs. Brady, and Mrs. Brady warns Brady not to "over-eat" on account of the day's heat and excitement. Brady says he will not eat too much, but he nevertheless gorges on a very large amount of food. Brady is described as a paunchy man, aged about 65, very large, with a ruddy complexion.

Mrs. Brady is like the Greek character Cassandra—she prophesies that something bad might happen to Brady, that he might over-exert himself and fall ill, but Brady pays little attention to her admonitions. Later on in the play, however, it will become clear that Brady has pushed himself, and his ailing body, too far in his pursuit of justice in Hillsboro.

Brady, after eating, asks the crowd whether Cates is a "criminal by nature." Rachel, who emerges from the sea of townspeople, answers that he is a good man, and after Brady expresses interests in Rachel's opinions, asking if she is a friend of Cates', Brady pulls Rachel aside and has a conversation with her about Cates' personality and temperament, as the welcome party continues around them.

The audience knows, or would reasonably infer at this point, that Cates is of course not a "criminal," but rather a science teacher attempting to teach science in his classroom. Brady, to his credit, seems open to the idea that Cates is simply "misguided" in his efforts, whereas Reverend Brown wishes only to castigate and excommunicate Cates.

A townsperson asks Davenport who the defense attorney representing Cates will be; Davenport confesses he does not yet know, but he thinks this attorney will stand no chance against Brady. Hornbeck enters this conversation and tells the Mayor and Davenport, along with others gathered around, that he disagrees—that he, Hornbeck, represents the Baltimore Herald, and that the paper has sent him to report on the trial, and Henry Drummond, from Chicago, to be Cates' attorney. The town gasps at this latter piece of news.

Drummond is, apparently, a lawyer of national renown. Drummond was based on the progressive lawyer Clarence Darrow, also known for his spirited defense of people or parties often not accorded opportunity in the eyes of the law. Drummond, like Darrow, is also fairly open-minded, despite his probable lack of religious belief—it will become clear, later, that Drummond does not automatically assume that Christian adherents are "backward" or unintelligent.

Reverend Brown refers to Drummond as an "agnostic" and a "vicious, godless" man, saying that he once observed Drummond in a trial, "perverting" the evidence and causing a guilty man to go free, by implying to the jury that society at large, and not the guilty man, was responsible for the committed crime (Reverend Brown does not name the crime in detail). Brown vows that the town will not admit Drummond within its limits; Davenport says this is not legally possible, but the Mayor says, shyly, that he will look into the possibility of barring Drummond.

Brown apparently is not satisfied merely referring to Cates as a godless unbeliever—he reserves special scorn for Drummond, whom he believes is more "evil" than Cates because Drummond willingly travels the country, representing criminals whom Reverend Brown believes to be beneath legal representation at all.

But Brady, returning to the party after conversing with Rachel, is told of Drummond's arrival, and after a moment's pause, he remarks that the town ought to welcome Drummond, because Drummond is a legal "Goliath," and it means that the "whole world" will watch as Brady and his team defeat Drummond and defend the Word of God.

It seems hard to take Brady's statement at face value, since he is of national renown himself, and is surely one of the greatest orators in the United States. But Brady prefers to make it seem that Drummond is the established figure, and that Brady is the underdog in this fight.

As the party ends, Brady thanks the Reverend Brown for the warm conversation he has had with Rachel—Brady implies that Rachel has given him key insight into Cates' character, but Rachel looks nervous as to the information she has shared with Brady. Brady thanks the party again and leaves with Mrs. Brady to take a nap at his hotel; the party breaks up. Rachel goes to the courthouse, now lit, and Hornbeck follows behind her, watching.

Brady's conversation with Rachel becomes an immensely important part of the actual trial, once it begins. Brady has gained insight from Rachel that will allow him to press her for details of Cates' non-religious, pro-science beliefs. It is unclear whether this testimony would be admissible in other courts, but the Judge determines that this "hearsay" is okay in Hillsboro.

Rachel asks after Meeker but cannot find him in the empty courthouse. Hornbeck enters after Rachel and begins to speak with her. He shows a draft of an article he has written about Cates to Rachel—Rachel seems surprised that Hornbeck is on "Bert's side" in the trial. Rachel says she believed Hornbeck was only a cynical critic (which Hornbeck himself admits, mostly, to being); but Rachel believes that Hornbeck has made Cates out to be a hero. Hornbeck agrees with this assessment of Cates.

One might imagine that Rachel would realize Hornbeck's sympathies lie with Cates—but Rachel appears so distrustful of "city folk" that she naturally believes all of them wish to make fun of Hillsboro residents, regardless of those residents' beliefs. Hornbeck, for his part, appears more motivated by the excitement of the trial than by the particular idea of helping Cates' cause.

But Rachel tells Hornbeck that Cates, as a teacher, is a public servant, and public servants ought to do as the law intends—and the law in the state forbids the teaching of evolution. Rachel tells Hornbeck she believes all answers to human evolution can be found in the Bible, and that she believes Brady would not have come unless Cates were truly wrong to teach evolution.

Rachel again voices the belief that Cates' primary obligation is to the school, the school board, and the state, and not to his own conscience. In this view, Cates was selfish to put his interest in evolution above his duty to serve the people of the school district of Hillsboro.

But Hornbeck responds that Brady only pretends to be a champion of the people; Hornbeck implies that Brady's speeches are intended more for his own self-aggrandizement than for the sake of the "common man." Hornbeck tells Rachel that the times have changed, and that the modern world no longer has room for Brady's antique speechifying and his Bible-centric theories of science. Hornbeck and Rachel leave the court, which goes dark.

Hornbeck seems to see through some of Brady's posturing, but probably goes to far in ascribing to Brady a kind of fascination with public acclaim—after all, as Drummond later points out, Brady does have firmly held beliefs, and does have an interest in public service. Hornbeck, on the other hand, is mostly a muckraker and trouble-maker, without concern for any particular set of beliefs—he makes fun of anything he sees as backwards.

The Storekeeper ends the scene by telling a townswoman that it looks to be a hot night. Melinda screams as she sees a shadow walking toward the town from the station—a man Hornbeck identifies as Drummond, but whom Melinda calls the Devil. Hornbeck jokingly welcomes Drummond, "the Devil," to Hell (the hot town of Hillsboro), under his breath. The scene ends.

Hornbeck likes to participate in the religious fervor of the town, but only to make fun of it—thus he revels in the idea that Drummond would be considered a devil-figure, and hopes to make light of it during the course of the trial. The heat of the night is a useful symbolic indicator of the heat of hell.

ACT 1, SCENE 2

The scene opens with the trial, which is the jury-summoning phase. The Judge is seated before the court: Brady sits with Davenport and Drummond sits with Cates. Rachel sits nervously in the courtroom, and Hornbeck is perched on a ledge, observing all. Davenport asks a potential juror, a townsman named Bannister, if he attends church—Bannister answers that he "only" goes on Sundays. Davenport says he accepts the man as a juror.

The jury selection process is not dissimilar from selecting teams in softball—both the prosecution and defense have the chance to accept or reject a certain number of jurors, and these objections need only be "reasonable"—they also do not need to be motivated by any strict legal principles, so long as they are not overtly prejudicial.

Drummond then questions Bannister, asking if Bannister has read Darwin or the Bible. Bannister answers that he cannot read, and Drummond, smirking, says this works for him—he agrees to have Bannister on the jury, and the Judge permits Bannister to enter the jury-box.

Drummond, like Hornbeck, recognizes the irony in the fact that a good part of Hillsboro, despite being Christian, has not read Darwin, and has not even read the Bible from which the story of Creation is taken.

Brady moves, to the Judge, to ask if men in the court can take off their jackets, since it is so hot; the Judge agrees. Brady jokes with Drummond about Drummond's "city" fashion, and Drummond jokes back with Brady, who is affronted that someone would steal the spotlight from him, and perhaps appear funnier or more entertaining than him in front of the crowd. The trial recommences.

Here is the first indicator that Drummond's humor will not be totally ill-received in the courtroom. Brady had assumed that he had his audience "in the bag," and so seems to sense in this scene that the crowd might not go uniformly in his direction throughout the trial.

Another townsman, Dunlap, is accepted by Davenport as a juror (Dunlap says he believes in God and trusts in Brady); Drummond, however, does not accept Dunlap, implying that all jurors seem to be practicing and fervent Christians, and that no other viewpoints are represented among the jurors.

Drummond wonders whether a fair trial is even possible in Hillsboro, if almost all the townspeople are practicing Christians who worship Brady and who believe that the teaching of evolution is inherently immoral.

When Brady is referred to by the Judge and others as Colonel, Drummond again objects, stating that it is prejudicial that Brady was given an honorary title as he entered the town. The Mayor, confused and upset at what to do, agrees to grant Drummond temporary Honorary Colonel status, and Drummond, smugly, and apparently making light of these meaningless titles, accepts, and the jury selection continues.

Drummond has a point, here—how could one not sense the bias in the courtroom if one of the lawyers for the prosecution has been awarded a town honor, recently, and the other has not. But of course Drummond's "coloneldom" is only a concession to fairness, and is not supported by many of the townspeople.

A townsman named George Sillers, who runs the feed store, is called to testify as a potential juror. Davenport accepts Sillers quickly as a "God-fearing" member of the town population. But as Drummond questions Sillers, Sillers reveals that, though he considers himself Christian, his wife does more of the thinking about religion, and that Sillers just "runs the feed store." Sillers had also not heard of Darwin before the brouhaha surrounding Cates.

Sillers, like other characters in Hillsboro, is not so much concerned with religious principles as he is a passive believer in Christianity and in Christian values. Sillers might state that he is opposed to evolution being taught in schools, but in reality the teaching of evolution has very little impact on his day-to-day life.

Drummond, satisfied by this, accepts Sillers to the jury, but Davenport and Brady both worry that Sillers might be more open to an evolutionist argument, since he seems less fervently Christian than the other jurors. Brady argues, to the Judge, that Sillers is not representative of the town; Drummond accuses Brady of wanting to run the jurors "through a meat-grinder" such that their beliefs are all the same. Brady accuses Drummond of "warping" juries in order to get them to go against their deeply-felt moral beliefs, to encourage juries to sympathize with, rather than punish, criminals.

Now Brady and Davenport wonder about the religiosity Sillers might bring to bear on the trial—this exposes the idea that they are in fact concerned with assembling a jury of Christian believers, since they think that this jury would be more likely to rule that Cates has broken the law in Hillsboro. Brady and Davenport are not dishonest, here, but they are also not above arranging the trial to their own advantage.

The Judge tells both Drummond and Brady to stop—he states that the jury has been set, and orders the court to reconvene at ten the next morning. The Judge also announces that Reverend Brown will be holding a prayer meeting in front of the court that night. After this announcement, Drummond objects, saying that the Judge has not announced that a Darwinist meeting will be held that night—the Judge tells Drummond he is being preposterous, and Drummond seems satisfied to have pointed out to the courtroom's public the "one-sidedness" of the Judge's and the court's interests in the case.

Drummond makes what appears to be another reasonable point—that the Judge is apparently advertising a prayer meeting, which would prejudice the jury for one side of the trial and not the other. Drummond knows that it will be difficult to achieve "neutrality" in Hillsboro, but he will continue to fight for it as much as he can.

As people file out of the courtroom, Rachel comes up to Drummond and Cates, and tells Drummond that he and Cates should "call the whole thing off" and announce that Cates is sorry for what he's done. She asks Cates to admit guilt and end the trial before it's begun.

Rachel makes another stab at trying to convince Cates that he ought to admit his guilt and move on with his life. Rachel's biggest fear, of course, is that her life will never be the same after the trial, and that Cates' will not either. She wishes to preserve the status quo for as long as possible.

Drummond asks Cates if he'd really like to quit—Cates admits he had no idea his teaching of evolution would cause such a stir in town. Drummond laughs and says that, because Cates has "slayed" people's ideas of God and religion, they've become especially angry—and Rachel responds to Drummond's apparent mirth, at Cates' expense, to wonder aloud if Drummond hasn't taken the case just to make speeches against the Bible in public.

Rachel wonders why Drummond has taken Cates' case, but although Drummond appears to joke around in court, he nevertheless understands the seriousness of the trial and of Cates' position. This separates Drummond from Hornbeck, who can take nothing seriously, and whose only preferred position in life is that of the critic and outsider.

But Drummond counters that he cares about Cates and Cates' opinions, and that he has taken the case because he feels Cates' actions were justified and heroic. Drummond says that he understands Cates' position has made him an outcast in the town, but he'll only be more of an outcast, and a coward, if he gives up now. Drummond asks Cates if he wants to continue with the trial.

Drummond makes another reasonable point here: that Cates has already done whatever damage he can do to his reputation, and that, at this point, it would be easier simply to carry on with the trial, in hopes of perhaps winning, that it would to give up and admit defeat altogether.

Although Rachel wants Cates to throw in the towel, Cates, after thinking for a moment, agrees with Drummond that he cannot give up. Rachel is angry, but Drummond appears proud of Cates for his resolve. Meeker tells Cates he must return to jail, and as he leaves, Cates hears Rachel tell Drummond that Brady and Davenport want Rachel to testify before the court.

Cates' resolution, here, is an important one, causing the trial to move into its serious phase—this is a point of no return for Cates, who now must submit to the jury's verdict, after they have heard both Brady's and Drummond's arguments.

Cates, as he's being led away by Meeker, implies that the questions he asked in Rachel's presence—questions about the nature of God and religion—are questions that, if Rachel repeats them, will cause the jury to think Cates is an anti-religious atheist.

Cates is intelligent enough to realize that, although the court is not being asked to rule on his character, his character is very much on trial—and Rachel has the power to reveal just how this character is bound up in "un-Christian" thinking.

Drummond informs Rachel that the court can force her to testify, but he tells Rachel not to be afraid of Brady. He also tells her that it takes "courage" to care for a man like Cates when the rest of society has abandoned him. Drummond ends the scene by saying that, if Cates is confused about what he believes—as Rachel says he is—then Cates is an intelligent man, as only fools pretend to know everything about God, religion, and the afterlife. The scene ends.

Drummond has emerged, at this point in the play, as a defender of some of the basic virtues—courage, pluck, determination—that Brady has paid lip service to, in some of his earlier speeches. Drummond might not make broad public pronouncements on these issues, but he nevertheless has his own set of beliefs to which he firmly adheres. Yet Drummond also doubts a virtue that Brady never would: doubt and uncertainty. Drummond believes that such doubt and its corresponding open-mindedness is a sign of intelligence and that the ability to have such doubts is something worth defending.

ACT 2, SCENE 1

The scene opens with Brady making his way to the prayer meeting outside the courthouse and answering reporters' questions. It is the evening after the first day of the trial. In response to one British reporter's question, about Brady's opinion of Drummond, Brady says that he supports Drummond, personally, as a lawyer and man, but that Brady would fight even his own brother, in a battle of words, if that brother were to take up Drummond's side in the Hillsboro trial—this is how strongly Brady feels about Hillsboro's anti-evolution law.

Brady goes to great lengths to state that his initial allegiance is not to man or even to country, but to God's will on earth—and Brady believes he has a connection to, and an understanding of, this will. Brady's vanity in his religious belief will later be exposed by Drummond, who recognizes that Brady's Christianity has become infected by Brady's desire to be viewed as a public hero.

Brady runs into Hornbeck, the Baltimore reporter, and tells him he has read his progressive, anti-religious, "biased" commentary, and that Brady hopes Hornbeck will stay for the prayer meeting so that he (Hornbeck) might "learn something" about religion. Hornbeck jokes that he does intend to stay for the meeting, but implies that there's not much, new, that he would learn from it. Mrs. Brady warns Brady that the **wind** tonight, combined with the warm air, could be uncomfortable for Brady, but he shrugs off her warning.

One of the few direct interactions between Brady and Hornbeck in the play. Although Hornbeck later states that Brady is a loudmouth and a fraud, he is polite enough to Brady here, even though Hornbeck states that he will only go to the prayer meeting in his capacity as a journalist, and not as a believer who wishes to hear a message from God's representatives on earth.

Reverend Brown and the Bradys sit on a small stage above the courthouse square, overlooking a crowd of Hillsboro citizens. Brown begins his sermon, averring that the Word of God is the true Word, and engaging in a call-and-response with the faithful, outlining for them the seven days of Creation, as told in the book of Genesis. The crowd responds loudly and cheerfully to this part of Brown's sermon.

Brown demonstrates his own abilities as a public speaker, which are nearly on par with Brady's. But it becomes clear, even at this early point in Brown's sermon, that Brown's public speaking has a bitter, a negative edge, a punishing *edge, one which is far less present in Brady's words.*

Brown then turns into a darker part of his speech—he asks the crowd whether they believe that sinners, in their midst, will be punished and destroyed by God. Rachel yells to her father not to damn Cates, as he is implying, to Hell, but Brown plows on, asking God to curse Cates and any who defy God's word.

Brown now breaks into the fully negative part of his speech, and the crowd does not appear to notice, or to mind, initially, that Brown has ordered for Cates to be punished in Hell—a shocking piece of supposedly "Christian" teaching.

At this point, Brady, who has been made uncomfortable by Brown's sermon's darker tinge, takes over the speech, saying that, although religious zeal is good, too much zeal can "destroy the house," or the congregation, in which that zeal is practiced. Brady repeats a famous line from the Book of Proverbs: "He that troubleth his own house . . . shall inherit the **wind**." Brady ends the sermon by asking that, as children of God, all men and women in town remember to forgive one another for their sins.

Brady's statement, from Proverbs, is that from which the play's title derives. The statement can be interpreted many ways, but here, Brady appears to state that Brown must not curse one of the members of his church—one of God's people—but must rather try to help Cates to re-enter the fold. Only by preserving this "house" will Brown be able to maintain the structure of God's family on earth—rather than inheriting the "wind," or a church with no congregants.

At this point, the prayer meeting ends, and Brady moves to Drummond, who is in the audience, asking him, privately, why Drummond has "moved away" from Brady, since, at one time, Drummond supported Brady's candidacy for President, some years ago. But Drummond simply responds to Brady that "motion is relative," and that Brady has "moved away" from Drummond by "standing still," or refusing to become more progressive, on certain social issues.

Another interesting point is here revealed—Brady and Drummond have not always been so opposed, but rather are born of the same political movement in American politics—a "progressive" one that attempted to put the "common man's" interests first. But Drummond implies that Brady has not kept up with the times, and that Brady must liberalize his religious beliefs in order to stay modern and keep pace with a changing society.

ACT 2, SCENE 2

The scene opens in the courtroom, two days later; Brady is examining Howard, a student of Cates', at the witness stand. Howard testifies that Cates taught, in class, that: millions of years ago, the earth was very warm and populated only by "cells"; that man is a mammal; and that man "evolved from Old World **monkey**s," which themselves evolved from lower forms of animal life. Brady laughs at this response, and says that Cates was not even patriotic enough to have humans descended from "New World" monkeys. Brady asks if Howard was taught, by Cates, any Creation stories from Genesis, and Howard says he was not.

Brady delivers one of the more famous lines of the play—and a line not dissimilar from one uttered by Bryant in the Scopes Monkey Trial. Brady wonders why these "monkeys" can't at least be American monkeys—conflating not just religion and science, but religion, science, and patriotism. For Brady, after all, there is no distinction between being a good Christian, a good American, and someone who does not believe in evolution—all these are part of the same general "goodness" of character.

Brady makes a speech to the courtroom crowd, not just to the jurors, saying that Howard, if allowed to continue to be taught evolution, will one day become a Godless young man, with all his faith torn from him. The crowd reacts warmly to Brady's impromptu remarks as Drummond takes his turn to cross-examine Howard.

Brady's argument is one of the "slippery slope"—if children can be taught that they descended from monkeys, what's to stop them from being taught that they don't have to listen to their parents, or that God doesn't exist at all?

Drummond asks Howard whether it's wrong that Darwin thought up his theory of evolution—the Judge temporarily stops Drummond, saying that one's right to think is not on trial in the courtroom, but Drummond counters that Cates' right to think is in fact on trial. Drummond then rephrases, and asks Howard if Howard believes that his learning about evolution has hurt his pitching arm, or caused him no longer to obey his parents. Howard seems confused, but admits that Cates' teaching had no impact on these things.

Drummond makes an important point here, about the apparent logical contradiction of the case. The Judge argues that the trial is not about a man's right to think, but Drummond counters that the no-evolution law is precisely a law keeping a thinking man and schoolteacher from encouraging his own students for thinking for themselves.

Drummond then asks Howard, whose father is a farmer, if his father's tractor was mentioned in the Bible, or their family's telephone—implying that some scientific items simply exceed the scope of religion. But Brady objects here, saying that Drummond is confusing Howard on purpose, but Drummond counters that Brady is the one influencing the jury with his own personal, Christian conception of what is true and right. Drummond states that Hillsboro in general wishes to impose one theory of truth on a man, Cates, who chooses to think otherwise about the nature of the earth's creation.

Brady can always fall back on this argument—that Drummond wishes only to confuse juries with a bunch of mumbo-jumbo in order to distract them from the moral truth of the case—that Cates broke the law. But, of course, Brady's notion of "confusion" is self-serving—Brady argues that anything which is not in accord with Christian teachings is self-serving and therefore not admissible to jury-members in court.

Howard is excused by the Judge, and Rachel is brought to testify. Brady begins questioning her, asking if she and Cates attend the same church. Rachel responds that Cates has not gone to church for two years, ever since a boy named Tommy Stebbins accidentally drowned. Cates had been tutoring Stebbins in science and believed that Stebbins had an aptitude for scientific inquiry. Cates was also angered that, because Tommy was not baptized, Rachel's father refused to comfort Tommy's family after his death, saying he did not die in a "state of grace."

An important piece of backstory, not yet referenced in the play or in the trial. Apparently Cates not only is motivated by a desire to teach science—he also believes that the kind of religion taught by Reverend Brown in Hillsboro is a religion that does not comfort its adherents. And, further, Cates appears motivated by the idea that his students can one day become good scientists, if only they are taught scientific principles at a young age.

Cates, impassioned in the courtroom, yells out that religion is supposed to provide comfort—he is still angry for the discomfort and sadness that Brown's judgment of Tommy, after Tommy's death, caused Tommy's family and others in Hillsboro. Brady asks that Cates' interruption be stricken from the record.

Few would argue that Reverend Brown's reaction to Stebbins' death was not extremely harsh—but Brady chooses to interpret Cates' outburst as another example of his anti-religious bias.

Brady then questions Rachel about some of the things Cates said to her, in private, regarding the nature of God and religion. Drummond objects that these discussions are hearsay and therefore not admissible as evidence, but the Judge permits Brady to continue questioning.

Hearsay refers to any speech which cannot be verified by another party in a courtroom—typically this isn't allowed in court, but the Judge here seems willing to make an exception on Brady's behalf (perhaps due to Brady's prominence and belovedness).

Rachel admits that Cates said to her, once, that "God created man in his image—and man, being a gentleman, returned the compliment." Brady implies that Cates also made comments, to Rachel, about marriage between humans being no different from the sexual unions between other animals. These comments bring Rachel to tears and shock the courtroom, who believe that Cates' words, though sensible from an agnostic standpoint, are vulgar and irreligious.

These comments are interpreted by the jury as implying that Cates is anti-religious, and that Cates hates the idea of Christianity and of God in general. But of course Cates has not done anything of the sort in the classroom, in his capacity as teacher—he has instead merely argued that science should be taught in a science class. Brady brings up Cates' views in the hopes of convincing the jury Cates is an immoral man.

Although Drummond wishes to cross-examine Rachel, Rachel is so upset that Cates asks Drummond simply to let her leave the box, which Drummond does. Davenport and the prosecution rest—meaning they have no further witnesses to call against Cates. It is now the defense's turn to call their witnesses for Cates.

Drummond might have been able to show that Rachel's conservations with Cates were more subtle and wide-ranging than Brady shows, but Rachel is too emotionally exhausted to remain on the stand—and this probably hurts Cates' case. Of course, it shows Cate's goodness and caring nature that he asks Drummond not to cross-examine Rachel, and highlights how insane it is that Brown would want Cates to burn in Hell.

Drummond proceeds to call a professor of zoology from the University of Chicago to the stand, to explain the theory of evolution to the courtroom. But Brady objects, and the Judge admits he can see no reason to allow such an expert to speak—Brady claims that the Hillsboro anti-evolution law forbids even the explanation of evolution in a courtroom—just like in a classroom.

Another important paradox and bias of the Hillsboro trial. The Judge seems to think that evolution cannot be explained in any public forum—and, of course, by not explaining evolution, the Judge ensures that the town will not have a clear idea of what the theory even entails.

The Judge seems to agree with Brady, saying that the experts' testimony—and Drummond has brought along fifteen experts to testify to the various biological, archeological, and geological facets of evolution—has no bearing on Drummond's case.

Another absurd statement, as it would be normal in any trial, first, to establish exactly what the defendant had been doing. And, in this case, Cates had been trying to teach evolution. But the judge won't allow any discussion of evolution.

Drummond has "hit a roadblock," and though he believes that Cates' right to teach evolution would be bolstered by a testimony of the scientific basis for this theory, the Judge counters that, because Hillsboro already has a law banning the teaching of evolution, the case can only try the question of whether or not Cates in fact taught evolution—which of course he did.

Drummond appears unaccustomed to encountering this sort of difficulty in his trials, where he has always managed, for the sake of his client's, to persuade juries that the law is more complex, more subtle, than the jurors might have initially imagined. This seems more challenging in Hillsboro.

Drummond is flummoxed, but he asks if he could call to the stand an expert witness with knowledge of the Holy Bible—Brady, his opponent. Drummond is pursuing a stratagem that he is inventing on the fly—the Judge, though he considers Drummond's question unorthodox, believes it is allowable for Brady, the prosecutor, to testify as a witness, and Brady takes the stand.

Drummond believes that he might have a chance, however, of exposing Brady as something of an exaggerator, as religious values are concerned. Drummond has not had time to formulate this plan beforehand, and so it is unclear if the strategy will succeed.

Drummond gets Brady to admit that, although he is an expert on the Bible, with many passages "committed to memory," he has never read Darwin. Drummond begins making a reference to Darwin, but Davenport again objects, saying only Bible questions may be asked—Drummond says he "gets the scent in the **wind**" and vows to stick to a biblical line of inquiry.

The Judge appears to have amended his previous ruling, arguing that, not only can Drummond not explain to the jurors what evolution is—Drummond cannot even mention Darwin's name, despite the fact that Cates has been accused of teaching Darwin's own observations in his classroom.

Drummond asks Brady if Brady believes in the Bible as the literal truth, always—Brady answers that he does. Drummond asks Brady whether Brady believes literally in the truth of the story of Jonah and the whale, wherein Jonah is swallowed by a whale—Brady says that he does.

Drummond has begun to back Brady into a corner. Brady starts with a somewhat tall tale—that the story of Jonah is literally true, in his mind. Drummond recognizes that he is on a course that will make Brady seem ridiculous.

Drummond asks Brady, then, about Joshua, who in the Bible is claimed to have made the sun stand still. Brady argues that this, too, literally happened, and when Drummond answers that this is opposed to every known natural scientific law, Brady counters that natural law was created in the mind of God, therefore God can do with it as he pleases.

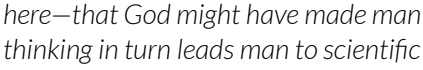
Brady makes an important philosophical point here—that, to him, "natural law" does not exist, but rather is merely an expression of divine law, of God's law. This enables Brady to ignore a great deal of scientific literature, thinking that one needs only to know God to know science.

Drummond then asks Brady whether the sex that ancient Bible fathers engaged in with their wives, which Brady considers an Original Sin (for Brady, all sex is Original Sin)—means that these Bible fathers themselves were both holy men and sinners. At this, Brady appears frustrated, believing that Drummond is trying to twist his words to suit Drummond's own ends.

Although Brady had been good-natured up till this point, he now seems to recognize the possibility that Drummond might be able to make him seem like an imbecile on the stand. In reality, Drummond knows that Brady is an intelligent thinker, but Drummond also sees the logical impossibilities of some parts of Brady's worldview.

But Drummond counters that Brady is not willing to concede to men the things that makes them human at all—the privilege to think. Drummond states that advances in science and technology are products of men's thought, which, if God created man in whatever form, God surely intended that man have—in other words, a Christian God created a thinking man in order that man might think. This speech of Drummond's garners increased applause from the audience, and Brady appears somewhat defensive and flummoxed by Drummond's offensive.

Drummond more thoroughly elaborates his personal philosophy, which is that man's most important ability is his ability to think for himself, and to figure out solutions to problems without resorting to empty truisms about God's will or God's plan. Drummond also makes his case for a synthetic religion and scientific worldview here—that God might have made man to think, and that this thinking in turn leads man to scientific developments.



Drummond shows Brady a rock, with a fossilized marine creature inside, saying that the rock and creature both lived millions of years ago. But Brady claims that a Christian bishop determined that the earth was created in 4004 BC, meaning that no rock can be older than about 6000 years old.

Brady parrots a long-held but clearly false religious belief, that the world cannot be older than the first events recorded in the Bible. Drummond knows that he is very close to poking a large hole in Brady's supposed scientific-religious arguments.

Drummond continues in this line—he asks whether, in the first days of creation, these days lasted 24 hours or some longer amount of time. Brady admits that he does not know how long these first seven days actually lasted, and Drummond seizes upon this lack of knowledge, stating that these "days" of creation each could have lasted as long as ten million years—meaning that both the "Creation" story and science could be compatible, if the Creation story were not taken literally.

Drummond argues here for an allegorical interpretation of the book of Genesis, meaning that the events described in the Bible might not have happened literally, but that Genesis can remain a religious document of religious value to believing Christians. What Drummond objects to is the idea that Genesis might be used to explain scientific phenomena that have better explanations in the field of science itself.

Brady has no quick answer for Drummond, but Davenport yells, objecting to the Judge, that Drummond is trying to ruin this Christian audience and convince them not to believe in God. Drummond counters, however, that he merely wishes to keep the schools from teaching their students incorrect factual information about the beginning of the world.

Davenport can make only the most basic counter-argument to Drummond's argument—that Drummond is once again trying to pervert and confuse the members of the community, that Drummond is going against public morals in his arguments.

Brady says Drummond is attacking the Bible, but Drummond answers that the Bible is a good book—and not the only good book. He says that Darwin's writing are also good, but Brady says Darwin is evil, and implies that he, Brady, is informed by God what to read and what not to read. This exposes Brady's vanity—Drummond draws out and highlights the idea, espoused by Brady himself, that Brady has a special connection with God—and the crowd begins to laugh at Brady's pomposity.

Again, Drummond seems to be taking a middle way—arguing that the Bible should be used for religious purposes, and that Darwin should be used for science purposes—and it is this middle way to which Brady strenuously objects. Brady's Christianity, at this point, seems to allow for no gray area—if he believes in the literal truth of the Bible, then he cannot admit to the power of science at all, even despite major evidence refuting Brady's pseudoscientific arguments.

Brady becomes extremely upset, as Drummond states that only Brady is allowed to determine what is right and wrong, not just for himself, based on his religious beliefs, but for others—excluding Cates from making the same choices about what is right and wrong for him. Drummond stops his questioning and says Brady can be dismissed; Brady gasps as the Judge excuses him from the stand, and Brady begins, nearly overcome with rage and embarrassment, naming the books of the Bible in succession.

Brady has been shown not just to be overly religious but to believe that he has a special connection to divine principles—and it is this that serves to make the audience in the courtroom believe that Brady is too vain for his own good, and too vain to be trusted as a religious leader. At this point the trial has become something of a circus, and all the Judge can do is order Brady dismissed from the stand.

Davenport attempts to have this whole testimony stricken from the record, while Brady is led by a consoling Mrs. Brady away from the court—Brady tells his wife that he cannot stand it when the crowd laughs at him, as it has just done. The Judge adjourns the court until the next day at ten in the morning.

Brady appears most surprised that anyone could possibly laugh at him—he seems unaccustomed to the idea that his speeches would be received with anything but reverence and rapt attention.

ACT 3, SCENE 1

The scene opens as Hornbeck buzzes around Brady and Drummond, asking them how they feel about the trial—but both men ignore the reporter. Cates then asks Drummond what will happen to him—how the trial will end. Drummond says that the case is a long shot, for sure, and that Cates could very well go to prison.

Cates has realized, all along, that he might be punished severely for his beliefs, but only now, with the verdict so close to being delivered, does he appear somewhat afraid of what might happen to him. Cates might be commended for his stoicism thus far in the trial.

Drummond then tells a story from his childhood: his father, a working man, and his mother saved up money for a month to buy young Drummond a shiny purple and gold rocking horse, but when Drummond sat on his gift for the first time, it split in two—underneath its shiny veneer, the wood was "all rotten." Drummond tells Cates that it's always important to reveal lies for what they are—nice stories on the outside, hiding something "rotten" inside.

A brief window into Drummond's young life, delivered not for the sake of biography but rather to show that things appearing shiny and trustworthy—things like broad religious statements about God's involvement in the life of humans—should always be investigated. Drummond here does not say that religion itself is complete bunk—only that religion must be investigated when it begins to make claims about scientific fact.

A radio man asks the Judge if the verdict can be broadcast live from the courtroom, and the Judge agrees. The Mayor comes to speak with the Judge and tells him, quietly, that Hillsboro is starting to make state and national news, and that the Judge ought to let things "simmer" a while and consider making his verdict rather lenient, if Cates is in fact convicted. The Mayor leaves.

The Mayor, who appeared so shy in earlier parts of the play, now realizes just what a guilty verdict and a harsh sentence might do to Hillsboro on the national scene—it might make the town seem incredibly "backward" and closed-minded in its unwillingness to take on the scientific theories of the day.

Meeker brings back the jury and the radio man announces, over the wires, that the Hillsboro **Monkey** Trial verdict is about to be delivered. The jury foreman reports that the jury has found Cates, unanimously, guilty of the charges against him. Hornbeck shouts out that the court, and the town, have returned to the Middle Ages, and Drummond requests that Cates may be given the right to speak, briefly.

Although it seemed at least possible that Cates might succeed in his trial, the townspeople apparently could not come to terms with the idea that Cates was simply trying to teach science in a science classroom. Instead, the jury delivered a "just" verdict as far as the law on the books was concerned—the law barred teaching evolution, and Cates did just that.

Cates says that he is only a schoolteacher, no good at public speaking, but that he believes he has been convicted of an unjust law, and he plans to fight that conviction. He trails off, and the Judge announces that the punishment of Cates will be, simply, a $100 fine. Brady believes this punishment is far too light, but Drummond argues that Cates will never pay any fine, because he and Cates will fight the case to the Supreme Court.

Cates might be respected for once again vowing to stand up for his beliefs, even though at this point he has been defeated in a trial that has put his deepest-held beliefs on the line. The Judge's light punishment, however, basically means that Cates will not be punished at all, and that he has "won" the trial by losing it. The Judge meanwhile, has found a way to make Hillsboro not backward even as the town upheld the law against evolution—his fine makes it clear that the law must be obeyed, but not too strictly.

Brady says that he has a few remarks, but Drummond and the Judge say that these remarks, for the town and broadcast over radio, can occur in the court after the trial ends. Melinda and Howard, together in the crowd, ask who won, and Howard says he does not know, but that the trial is certainly over.

It is exactly this confusion of winning and losing that makes it difficult for Howard and Melinda, and for others in the crowd, to understand what has happened. Only Drummond appears to recognize that Cates has lost the battle and won the war.

Brady begins making his remarks, but quickly the radio man shuts off the "enunciator," saying that the Chicago station has cut to a different bit of news. Brady is stopped mid-speech and appears not to understand what is happening—people in the court also drift away from him as he attempts to continue. Suddenly, Brady has a terrible fit—the townspeople are alarmed—and Mrs. Brady worries that Brady might be dying. A doctor is called for, and Brady is carried quickly out of the court.

Brady makes an attempt to shore up his public image in Hillsboro and beyond, but the radio man's cutting off of Brady's speech just how far behind the times Brady is—the fact that Brady no longer appeals to the broad audience he once held in the Presidential elections of the past. He wants to be bigger than the trial; but the trial is bigger than him. Brady's illness has been his wife's concern throughout the play, and now in the shock of his sudden realization of his fall from prominence does it catch up to her husband.

As Brady is carried out, he begins reciting one of his "inaugural speeches," stored in memory, from the three times he has run for, and lost, the Presidency. Drummond appears to feel sorry for this apoplectic Brady, as he is taken outside, but Hornbeck claims, in an aside to the audience, that Brady is nothing more than an overgrown child, accustomed to bullying others and getting his way, loudly.

Hornbeck seems to have no problem criticizing Brady immediately after Brady has fallen ill—meaning that Hornbeck himself is not overly concerned with the kind of basic morality and human concern that would characterize a more humane, and kindly person—like Drummond, or even Brady himself.

Cates asks Drummond, after the Brady crisis has calmed in the courtroom, what will happen to him. Cates believes he has lost, but Drummond tells him he's won—that he's "smashed a bad law." Meeker announces that Cates can leave jail right now—that Hornbeck has put up the 500 dollars bail to allow him his freedom, compliments of the Baltimore Herald.

Cates realizes that he is now essentially free to go, and that he is free, also, to live the life he wants to lead—just away from Hillsboro. Drummond is happy that this has happened for Cates, and even more happy at the thought that the Hillsboro law has been shown to be ridiculous on the national stage.

Rachel also arrives and speaks to Cates, saying that she is leaving her father's house, and wishes to go with Cates wherever he's headed. Rachel tells Cates and Drummond that she's still not sure whether she believes in what Darwin wrote, but Rachel now knows that it's important to think for one's self, and that Drummond has taught her that—to read for herself and make up her own mind.

Rachel has exactly the kind of revelation that Drummond has wanted the people of Hillsboro to have—she has realized just how important it is to think for herself. That Rachel is ready, also, to leave her strict father's house indicates that her father has inherited only wind—he no longer has an intact family of which he can serve as lord and master in Hillsboro.

The Judge comes back in to announce that Brady has died. Drummond is greatly saddened by his death, but Hornbeck seems to rejoice, thinking that the world is rid of a loud, obnoxious man. But Drummond takes on Hornbeck, telling him Hornbeck has as much right to make of Brady's religion as he does to make fun of Drummond's non-religion—meaning no real right at all.

An important moment in the play. The audience has long since learned that Drummond is a more moderate thinker than they have been made, initially, to believe—and Drummond here shows that he is willing to separate a few of a man's silly ideas from the overall greatness of his life.

Drummond then finds Brady's Bible and the verse from Proverbs: "He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the **wind**: and the fool shall be servant to the wise in heart." Drummond says that "there was greatness" in Brady, and when Hornbeck makes fun of Drummond, an agnostic, for quoting from the Bible, Drummond counters that Hornbeck is only a cynical critic, making fun of everything, without any ideas or morality of his own.

Drummond even goes so far as to repeat Brady's own line from Proverbs regarding Brady's life—for Brady believed that he had a special connection to God, and that caused him to believe he could dictate the morality of others. This vanity ultimately defeated Brady, and caused him to appear ridiculous to the country at large—he inherited the wind.

Hornbeck believes that Drummond is being too kind to Brady, but Drummond counters that Brady was simply a man who "was looking for God too high up and too far away." Hornbeck says he is off to write a story of Drummond the hypocrite, the atheist who quotes the Bible—and Drummond tells him good riddance.

Drummond is a "good progressive" while Hornbeck is merely a "critic" who appears to be liberal and understanding. In reality, Hornbeck is just as closed-minded as the religious folks compared to whom he believes he is far superior, more intelligent, more "advanced." His closed-mindedness is founded on his sense of being more open-minded than these people he sees as religious country bumpkins.

Drummond then says to Cates and to Rachel that he ought to be going, and when Cates says he can help Drummond pay for the appeal on Cates' case, Drummond says he's not in this case for the money. Rachel and Cates say they will go to the train station with Drummond, and they walk out together into the court square. Drummond, following behind, sees that Rachel left her copy of Darwin's writings, and there is a copy of the Bible left on the Judge's bench. Drummond takes each book, balances them in his hands "as if they're scales," and puts them side by side in his briefcase. Then he walks out, alone, into the square. The play ends.

An important final scene. Drummond takes great care to show that he is aware of the symbolic significance of both the Bible and of Darwin's writings—but he does not cast aside the Bible entirely. Rather, he takes both books with him, showing that there is space in his own mind, and in his own heart, for the possibility of religious belief, at the very least for others, and for the reality of scientific advancement. This is a kind of modern, complex, and ultimately welcoming society that Drummond embraces, and which he feels to be distinctly "American."

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