



The School for Scandal

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

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"The School for Scandal" is Richard Brinsley Sheridan's classic comedy that pokes fun at London upper class society in the late 1700s. Often referred to as a "comedy of manners", "The School for Scandal" is one Sheridan's most performed plays and a classic of English comedic drama.

The School for Scandal Details

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From Reader Review The School for Scandal for online ebook

Yani says

Relectura febrero 2016

[...] tan malos son los que transmiten historias como los que las inventan.

Algo así como *Gossip Girl* en 1777, pero con personajes más adultos y sin tanto drama adolescente. La obra es muy entretenida y se lee rápido, porque no presenta dificultades en el argumento ni nada parecido. Creo que la intención de Sheridan fue que se entendiera el mensaje, precisamente.

A grandes rasgos, se trata de un grupo de gente bien posicionada socialmente que disfruta de inventar rumores (las víctimas pueden estar hasta en el mismo círculo íntimo) para luego hacerlos circular. Y si se le gana al periódico, mejor. La trama está centrada en los hermanos Surface (uno está en la ruina económica mientras el otro se entretiene intrigando en contra de medio mundo) y en el matrimonio Teazle, que tiene a cargo a María, quien está interesada en uno de los hermanos (no específico nombres así no arruino mucho la historia).

Pequeño punto que quiero señalar: los rumores de infidelidad siempre los protagonizan las mujeres, mientras que los hombres sólo son noticia si están en bancarrota. Detalles, detalles.

A lo largo de los actos se van a tratar temas muy universales: la convivencia de un matrimonio, la ambición de las personas, el despilfarro en la ciudad, la malignidad de los chismosos, la hipocresía y las dificultades que todo esto genera. Por supuesto, no faltarán los equívocos y las conversaciones que se escuchan a escondidas. Es un obra muy clásica y creo que por eso es tan directa en lo que está contando. Viniendo de un escandaloso como Sheridan, no esperaba menos.

Aila says

This was surprisingly funny.

Quick to read and quite witty.

Now I have to prepare for a test on it tomorrow. :'^)

Adam Floridia says

Although written 100 years later, this is a very typical Restoration drama: mistaken identities, love triangles, characters hiding behind screens, etc.. Devoid of wit, though, this can best be compared to a modern day soap opera.

Alan says

I found Wycherley's Country Wife to be better, and also more teachable for my mostly female two-year college students. Perhaps the earlier, Moliere-influenced Restoration plays reflect better the initial dynamics of country Whig versus Court Tory, which lasted over a century.

Fascinating that Sheridan was performed during the American Revolution, around the time Johnson was completing his first English Dictionary in his house still there near the 17C Cheshire Cheese pub off Fleet Street.

Bruce says

What a droll and clever play! Sheridan plays with high society and its hypocrisy, its love of gossip and rumor. Combine this with mixed and feinted identities, crossed love tangles, and the combination of old husband and young wife, and the ingredients are in place for a delightful stew of confusion and sharp repartee. Fun as such is to read, it would be doubly delightful seen in a skillful stage production. This is one of those comedies of manners, like Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest, that can rise or fall on the skill of the particular actors, much of the charm being in perfect pacing. Done well, such plays are magnificent; done less well, they fall very flat. I hope that I can see this play produced well someday; it would be a treat.

Brigid says

This fun play parodies the social lives of 18th century lords and ladies, poking fun at their interactions and adding a moral lesson or two about spreading gossip. All the stereotypes are at play: the aging man and his much-younger bride; the two brothers both beset in dramas of their own; the young ward promised to one brother but in love with the other; the vengeful older woman with a mind for destroying others' matches; the gossip unaware of her own sharp tongue; as well as a bevy of others. "The School for Scandal" is said to be based on the lives of the Duke and Duchess of Devonshire as well as their inner circle. It is a funny, biting story with witty dialogue and a meandering-yet-engaging plot.

Nurhan El-Badawy says

"" Never believe what is said "

Every person we meet has two faces Reality and Appearance . Unfortunately we can't discover that we are deceived until fate reveals every thing .

Throughout the relations between members of the scandal's school , we mock at some behavior of 18th English communities . Actually and Arabic communities also ."

"Let's start with analyzing the main characters :

- Joseph surface : He seems to be a model of moral man , or as sir Peter Teazel said " a model for the young men of the age " , this is his appearance but the reality is more awful . His bad behavior appears in his attitude towards his uncle " Oliver Surface " when sir Oliver disguises as their needy relative

Mr. Stanley and when he agrees with Lady Sneerwell to fabricate facts to hinder the marriage of his brother Charles and Maria because he is in love with Maria's Fortune ; and throw dust in people's eyes .

Actually I see him as one of the most horrible scandal-mongers .He is selfish , hypocrite and treacherous man .

- Charles Surface : He seems to be reckless , irresponsible and dissipated . Despite his bankruptcy and debts , he is very oppressed as his brother spread a scandal that Charles is having a love affair with Lady Teazel to stop any communications between him and Maria .

The conduct of the two brothers is the base of this play . But the play discusses another essential idea , the domestic life of Sir Peter Teazel and Lady Teazel.

First : Lady Teazel is a rural young wife married an old man because of his wealth and his social rank . She always quarrels with him as she spend a lot of money in nonsense . Her husband suspects that she has a love affair with Charles but in Screen Scene truth appears , without her the Screen scene loses its meaning .

Second : There are many contrasts between the life of Sir Peter and his wife . She is a young woman full of youth power and wants to feel as a real woman but Sir Peter is an old man wants to live his last days in peace with a rational wife .

- Lady Teazel is a rural woman used to live a simple poor life in countryside but Sir Peter is a noble rich man. I don't know how they get in touch with each other !

There is no means of communication in their relationship .

I don't believe in social classification but I already believe in cultural classification ."

"Sheridan uses the comedy of manner to ridicule this community that's only interested in appearances .

This play has a multiple complex plot but I think it is not boring .

we should know that " Tale-bearers are as bad as tale-makers " and even you try to approve a scandal , it dies

- we should take care of our tongue and think of the word before we say it as a character dead at every word."

I do enjoyed reading it , but I'm tired of doing its review .

Finally I do it ^^

Muhammad Galal says

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David Sarkies says

It's About the Money

16 September 2017

I have to admit that I hate it when I go to all the trouble to write a review and then proceed to lose it. One of the main reasons is that I write it in a word processor, and then read through it before posting it up on Goodreads. Anyway, I went to all the trouble of writing it while I was on the train heading down for an exploration of Kew, and when I get home I suddenly discover that it has disappeared, which means that everything that I had written had suddenly gone and I now have to sit down and write it all again. Oh well, I guess that is life, and maybe I should make sure that I save it properly next time.

Anyway, it baffles me with all of the Hollywood rubbish that they have been producing of late that they don't dig into some of these older plays, tweak them, and turn them into a movie. From what I gathered from Wikipedia, The School for Scandal had been made into a couple of movies in the past, though one is lost and the other is a silent movie (I believe that there is a third which is a BBC production, though that could be the lost one due to the BBC having a habit of making movies and then getting rid of them for some unknown reason).

The thing is that there are actually some really good stories, such as this one, that could easily be made into a rather engaging movie. However, it seems that Hollywood simply sticks with things that it believes to be tried and true – remakes, rom-coms, and mindless action flicks. Okay, you do get some directors, such as Guy Ritchie, that do push the boundaries, but in the end once they become famous they end up simply falling into the tried and true category (which I've noticed that of late hasn't actually been working all that well, if the monumental flops of 2017 are anything to go by). Maybe I could create some Youtube videos in that regard, but then again I would need a crew, and a half decent camera that isn't my mobile phone, for that to work.

So, the School for Scandal is a pretty complex story, one so complex that the synopsis on Wikipedia goes into so much detail that I found myself getting lost in that in the same way that I became lost in the play. This is probably why I would like to see Hollywood (or other filmmakers) take some risks with these plays because they are actually pretty good, and unfortunately because they aren't Shakespeare they don't get performed all that much. Okay, I did find a website that has a heap of videos of plays on it, but unfortunately the only way you can access it is if you are studying at a University that happens to have an account with the site – if you are just an individual mug like me then unfortunately you don't get the chance. Sure, I can understand the reluctance of the theatre from filming and releasing their plays on video because it would have the effect of lowering audience numbers, and there isn't a huge amount of money in theatre as it is (though obviously enough to keep it as a going concern). Actually, I should have done some research before writing this because there is a film from 1976 (currently on Youtube), of this play.

In short this is a play about money. It's about people who have money, who owe money, and who want money and will stoop to whatever means to get their hands on it (and marriage seems to be the main way that some of them will go about it). Okay, while it is a bit off putting that the scandalous people are all female, and the rather innocent (and stupid) characters are men, due to its age I am willing to put that aside. Anyway, it still works well since the scheming women do tend to be a stereotypical type of character from plays of the period. Anyway, most of the men are stupid so I guess that balances it out somewhat.

In a way it is a bit like Merchant of Venice, though it is somewhat grittier, to an extent. The male characters do tend to be of aristocratic origin, which is probably why they are stupid – well, not all of them because the men that have money have the money because they are smart. However, one of them seems to be continually in debt, but that probably has a lot to do with him being aristocratic – a lot of them paid for a lifestyle that they simply could not afford, and basically didn't have an income that justified such extravagant living.

Okay, while they did manage to get money, that money rarely went to paying off debts, but rather continuing the extravagant lifestyle and putting them further into debt. Oh, there is even a Jew moneylender, but once again he's pretty smart in that he refuses to lend money to somebody who simply cannot pay for it.

I guess it is why images of the early modern period creates images of dirty cities and horrid infrastructure – the rulers were more interesting in waging wars and maintaining their lifestyle as opposed to actually developing the economy of their countries. Note that when the countries began to transition to democracies the infrastructure became much better. On the eve of the revolution, the infrastructure of France was dreadful, and was getting worse, simply because the people who could do something about it were too busy building palaces and having parties, and everybody else was basically paying taxes to support that lifestyle.

I guess I'll finish this review off with saying something about debt – it is insidious. I am quite fortunate that I never got caught up in the debt trap, though I came pretty close. Actually, I am still quite surprised that I was able to live the lifestyle that I did when I was a student on government handouts. However, that probably has a lot to do with things being much cheaper back then, and also that my bank let me overdraw my account to ridiculous levels because they kept on hitting me with overdraft fees everytime I did so. However, the funny thing with debt is that people have this habit of preferring to spend money than pay down debt, so when they get money they spend it on things as opposed to paying off their debt. Okay, I'm hardly one to criticise people on that because I still have a student debt that I have managed to get out of paying off, but then again I'm hardly the only one that has managed to wiggle their way out of it. I guess that in the end we just don't like going without.

Marina says

I often find myself idealizing 18th century Britain as a place where every single person was erudite, witty, and genteel all the time. That'll happen to you if you sit around languishing over Pope, Swift, Gay, Johnson, and others of their ilk all day, as I do (As Horace said, "Oh, if only the earth in its earlier years had given me birth to live among those heroes!"... or something like that). I need books like this to remind me that the majority of people, particularly in high society, have always been just as petty, conceited, hypocritical, and downright ignorant as they can be now.

This is basically the 18th century British version of the Real Housewives, except a hell of a lot more fun. I love anything that evokes a soap opera, and this play *certainly* fulfills that.

My favorite aspect of this play was the host of swears Sheridan used. Off the top of my head:

-Odd's life! (rather than God's life)

-Odd's death!

-Odd's heart!

-'Sdeath! (God's death)

-'Slife!

-Zounds!

-Egad!

-Plague on you/ plague on't! (I gotta start using that more often)

&ct. &ct. &ct.

Radwa says

Malin (JustMalin's) says

meh.

Husain BuSafwan says

Ioan Prydderch says

I saw no academic advantage in studying this play whatsoever.

classic reverie says

I had Richard Brinsley Sheridan on my list to read; an every growing list "to read".? I always find it interesting how we readers come to our next book and why "The School for Scandal" came ahead of all others and I chose it now? It had to do with Ouida's Puck and the discussion of plays and that play being mentioned; look below for those quotes if interested. Having Shakespeare on my list and will read this year or next; why I put him off? Intimidation, I guess? I read "Romeo and Juliet" in High School, hmm some 35 years ago, egads that is long ago!!?

It seems this Irish playwright was a bit of a poor speller and his use of punctuation was quite off, I did not read this version but in my Delphi Collection of his works, where I have notes and highlights for those interested- look on my Richard Brinsley Sheridan shelf-which mentions this fact. I feel akin to a past fellow Irishman for it is unknown if my Irish part is the culprit to my errors.

Well I can just imagine being at the Drury Lane Theatre in May of 1777; watching this production but I doubt my ancestors would have had boxed seats; unawares of my ancestry past, I would love to travel back in time to taste all that surrounds and is that play. I found it brilliant in humor, satire and everything so to its era. I have read classic books which brings out hypocrisy and gossiping to do another harm, many times undeserved. That is this play in it so beautifully portrayed. The characters' names are quite funny and to the point; Mrs. Candour, Mr. Surface, Snake and Lady Sneerwell are some.

The play in brief- two brothers are quite different; one is the rake and other other is a man of sentiment. The older guardians want to test these young men to find them out but one older gentleman is prejudiced one way and the other lies in the other direction. It is humorous throughout.

A Goodreads friend, Radwa linked an audio version; I will listen to this week and report back how close that

plays out.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=EmqWX0j...>

****Having finished listening to the play my thoughts; it was enjoyable but somethings were different and they also departed from the lines at some points. Several more gossip items not in the actual. My version had prose at the beginning and end. Snake's part in the beginning was taken by a cousin of Lady Sneerwell and he does not show up till the last act. It was enjoyable since I read this but my mind takes things in better when read so I can go slow when need be and get the whole of the play. The actors did a fine job! ?***

" First staged at the Drury Lane Theatre on 8 May 1777, The School for Scandal received an enthusiastic welcome from audiences, though it only initially ran for twenty performances in its first season. However, it returned the following season for more than forty performances and by the end of the eighteenth century it had been staged more than two hundred times. The play was well received by critics, as they celebrated the wit and morals of the work. The essayist and critic, William Hazlitt, was effusive in his praise, describing it 'the most finished and faultless comedy we have' and stating that, 'It professes a faith in the natural goodness as well as habitual depravity of human nature'. Similarly impressed was the late nineteenth century poet and critic, Edmund Gosse, who commented in A History of Eighteenth Century Literature that it was 'perhaps the best existing English comedy of intrigue'."

Below some comments made by characters in Ouida's Puck; The School for Scandal is mentioned as well as Shakespeare in regards to comparing Sheridan in brief. The errors in quotes below belong to my ebook version, sorry for that.

"At that moment she was called, and passed on to the stage. The piece played that night was the perennial "School for Scandal." In such pure comedy and elegant art she was supreme, they said; though her still greater triumphs were in parts of pathos and of power. Lady Teazle is a riddle which any actress who is graceful and a gentlewoman can play with ease. There are but little light and shade in it; and there is not any kind of passion. But even here there was so much grace in her; all conventional readings were so utterly discarded; there were such charming alternations of playful piquance and of scornful dignity; whilst over the whole was cast the ineffable charm of a youth so seductive, that I no longer wondered at the celebrity with which the town had crowned her."

"Why do people only tolerate Sheridan, and go into ecstasies over burlesques ?" said Beltran. "Because we want to laugh and not to think," said Denzil. "Now, to laugh at Sheridan you must first think with him."

"She answered you as to Shakspeare," replied Beltran. "As for Sheridan—he amuses us because his satires suit us so well still, and his characters are our own people disguised in wig and powder. Our society is artificial, passionless, insincere. So is his. He is a mirror in which we see our own faces; it is the costume only that differs."

Looking forward to reading him again at some point!?
