



Book, Music
& Lyrics by
Andrew Lippa
& Tom Greenwald


JOHN & JEN




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**CORNERSTONE
MUSICAL**

Directed by
Dawne Meeks

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John & Jen Study Guide

2018 Cornerstone Musical

By: Kasey Birchfield

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Synopsis

John & Jen is a truly original musical that honors brothers and sisters, as well as parents and children. Set against the background of a changing America between 1950 and 1990, *John & Jen* is a gem of a show, brimming with intelligence, wit and beautiful melodies.

This is the story of Jen and her relationships with the two Johns of her life: her younger brother, who was killed in Vietnam, and his namesake, her son who is trying to find his way in a confusing world. Jen and her younger brother, John, are growing up in the ever-changing world of mid-century America. As the country becomes divided over the war in Vietnam, so does the family, and eventually battle lines are drawn between the once-close siblings. When John gets killed in Vietnam, Jen is left to reconcile her memory of their fractured relationship as she raises her son, John, her brother's namesake.

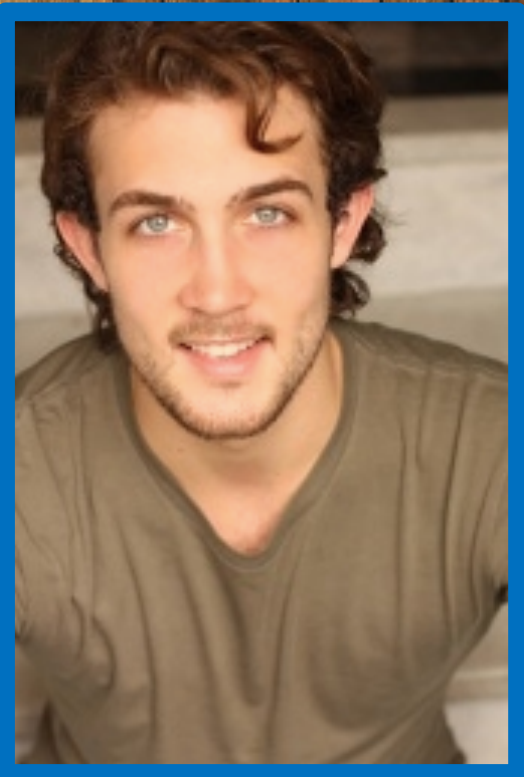
With a cast of only two people, *John & Jen* takes actors from childhood, through adolescence, and beyond. A chamber musical, beautifully scored for piano, cello and percussion, *John & Jen* is a musical about connections, commitments and the healing of the human heart.

Cast & Characters from 2015 Revival of Show



Jen Tracy:

Played by Kate Baldwin, is a young women born in 1950. She is smart, determined, future oriented, a dreamer, an achiever, and cares deeply for her younger brother, John.



John Tracy (brother) / John Tracy (son)

Played by Conor Ryan, John Tracy, the brother, is a young man born in 1956, and subsequently killed in the Vietnam war. John Tracy, the son, is trying to find his way in the ever changing world around him.

Cast of ACU's 2018 Production

Madison Massey: Jen Tracy

Madison Massey is a senior Musical Theatre major here at ACU. She has been seen in previous ACU productions such as *Wonderful Town*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *CATS* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.




Carl David Kimbrough: John Tracy
(brother) / John Tracy (son)

Carl Kimbrough is a senior Musical Theatre major here at ACU. He has been seen in previous ACU productions such as *Wonderful Town*, James in *James and the Giant Peach*, and *Man of La Mancha*.



Production History



The inspiration for *John & Jen* came about from two actor friends of writers Andrew Lippa and Tom Greenwald. Their friends were performing a one-act musical that some other friends of the actors had written. The actors approached Lippa and Greenwald to pitch an idea they had for a musical involving a brother and sister. Their original script took place in South Africa, but both writers were completely unhappy with the storyline. A couple of months later, Greenwald would come to Lippa with a whole new outline of lyrics and stage direction in what would eventually develop into the show we now know as *John & Jen*. The two writers continued to develop the musical into a show that would premiere in 1993.

John & Jen originally premiered at the Goodspeed Opera House, in East Haddam, Connecticut in 1993. In this performance, John was performed by James Ludwig, and Jen was performed by Carolee Carmello. Later, in 1995, the musical would be moved to the Off-Broadway Lamb's Theatre. Twenty years later, on February 10th, 2015, a *John & Jen* 20th anniversary revival opened in previews at the Clurman Theatre on Theatre Row in Midtown Manhattan. This revival, starring Kate Baldwin as Jen, and Conor Ryan as John, closed on April 4th, 2015.

Troop Strength

South Vietnam: 850,000

United States: 540,000

South Korea: 50,000

Others: 80,000 plus

Casualties

South Vietnam: 200,000 – 400,000 civilians

170,000-220,000 military

Over 1 million wounded

United States:

58,200 dead

300,000 wounded

Vietnam War 1954-1975

The Vietnam War is the commonly used name for the Second Indochina War, 1954–1975. Usually it refers to the period when the United States and other members of the SEATO (Southeast Asia Treaty Organization) joined the forces with the Republic of South Vietnam to contest communist forces, comprised of South Vietnamese guerrillas and regular-force units, generally known as Viet Cong (VC), and the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). The U.S., possessing the largest foreign military presence, essentially directed the war from 1965 to 1968. For this reason, in Vietnam today it is known as the American War. It was a direct result of the First Indochina War (1946–1954) between France, which claimed Vietnam as a colony, and the communist forces, then known as Viet Minh. In 1973 a “third” Vietnam war began—a continuation, actually—between North and South Vietnam but without significant U.S. involvement. It ended with communist victory in April 1975.

The Vietnam War was the longest war in U.S. history, until the Afghanistan War (2002-2014). The Vietnam War was extremely divisive in the U.S., Europe, Australia, and elsewhere. Because the U.S. failed to achieve a military victory and the Republic of South Vietnam was ultimately taken over by North Vietnam, the Vietnam experience became known as “the only war America ever lost.” It remains a very controversial topic that continues to affect political and military decisions today.



History Through the Years



• **March 1947:** In an address to Congress, President Harry Truman states that the foreign policy of the United States is to assist any country whose stability is threatened by communism. The policy becomes known as the Truman Doctrine.

• **August 1949:** The Soviet Union explodes its first atom bomb in a remote area of Kazakhstan, marking a tense turning point in the Cold War with the United States.

• **June 1950:** The United States, identifying the Viet Minh as a Communist threat, steps up military assistance to France for their operations against the Viet Minh.

• **April 1954:** In a speech, U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower says the fall of French Indochina to communists could create a “domino” effect in southeast Asia. This so-called domino theory guides U.S. thinking on Vietnam for the next decade.



• **July 1959:** The first U.S. soldiers are killed in South Vietnam when guerrillas raid their living quarters near Saigon.



May 1961: President John F. Kennedy sends helicopters and 400 Green Berets to South Vietnam and authorizes secret operations against the Viet Cong.

• **June 1963:** A 73-year-old monk immolates himself while sitting at a major city intersection in protest, leading other Buddhists to follow suit in coming weeks. The United States' already declining confidence in Diem's leadership continues to slide.

November 1963: President Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Lyndon B. Johnson becomes president.

• **November 1963:** The United States backs a South Vietnam military coup against the unpopular Diem, which ends in the brutal killing of Diem and his brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu. Between 1963 and 1965, 12 different governments take the lead in South Vietnam as military coups replace one government after another.

• **August 1964:** *USS Maddox* is allegedly attacked by North Vietnamese patrol torpedo boats in the Gulf of Tonkin (the attack is later disputed), leading President Johnson to call for air strikes on North Vietnamese patrol boat bases. Two U.S. aircraft are shot down and one U.S. pilot, Everett Alvarez, Jr., becomes the first U.S. airman to be taken prisoner by North Vietnam.

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PRESIDENT IS SLAIN

Suspect Held

DALLAS, Nov. 22 — (UPI) — President Kennedy was assassinated Friday. A sniper's shot mortally wounded the 35th President of the United States as he made his way out through a crowd of a quarter million in downtown Dallas.

The assassin, Lee Harvey Oswald, was arrested by police here today. He was charged with the killing of President Kennedy. Oswald was seen on the streets of Dallas, Texas, on Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, at 2:30 p.m. He was seen at the scene of the assassination and was seen in the streets of Dallas, Texas, on Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, at 2:30 p.m. He was seen at the scene of the assassination and was seen in the streets of Dallas, Texas, on Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, at 2:30 p.m.

LBJ Is Sworn In

John Fitzgerald Kennedy
 Nov. 22, 1917 - Nov. 22, 1963



August 1964: The attacks in the Gulf of Tonkin spur Congress to pass the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, which authorizes the president to “take all necessary measures, including the use of armed force” against any aggressor in the conflict.

- **February 1965:** President Johnson orders the bombing of targets in North Vietnam in Operation Flaming Dart in retaliation for a Viet Cong raid at the U.S. base in the city of Pleiku and at a nearby helicopter base at Camp Holloway.

March 1965: President Johnson launches a three-year campaign of sustained bombing of targets in North Vietnam and the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Operation Rolling Thunder. The same month, U.S. Marines land on beaches near Da Nang, South Vietnam as the first American combat troops to enter Vietnam

- **July 1965:** President Johnson calls for 50,000 more ground troops to be sent to Vietnam, increasing the draft to 35,000 each month.

- **1966:** U.S. troop numbers in Vietnam rise to 400,000.

- **1967:** U.S. troop numbers stationed in Vietnam increase to 500,000.

- **February 11-17, 1968:** This week records the highest number of U.S. soldier deaths during the war, with 543 American deaths.

- **March 1968:** President Johnson halts bombing in Vietnam north of the 20th parallel. Facing backlash about the war, Johnson announces he will not run for reelection.

November 1968: Republican Richard M. Nixon wins the U.S. presidential elections on the campaign promises to restore “law and order” and to end the draft.





- **September 1969:** Ho Chi Minh dies of a heart attack in Hanoi.

- **December 1969:** The U.S. government institutes the first draft lottery since World War II, prompting ever more young American men—later disparaged as “draft dodgers”—to flee to Canada.

- **December 1972:** President Nixon orders the launch of the most intense air offense of the war in Operation Linebacker. The attacks, concentrated between Hanoi and Haiphong, drop roughly 20,000 tons of bombs over densely populated regions.

- **January 22, 1973:** Former President Johnson dies in Texas at age 64.

January 27, 1973: President Nixon signs the Paris Peace Accords, ending direct U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. The North Vietnamese accept a cease fire. But as U.S troops depart Vietnam, North Vietnamese Military officials continue plotting to overtake South Vietnam



- **August 1974:** President Nixon resigns in the face of likely impeachment after the Watergate Scandal is revealed. Gerald R. Ford becomes president.

- **January 1975:** President Ford rules out any further U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.

- **The War Dead:** By the end of the war, more than 58,000 Americans lose their lives. Vietnam would later release estimates that 1.1 million North Vietnamese and Viet Cong fighters were killed, up to 250,000 South Vietnamese soldiers died and more than 2 million civilians were killed on both sides of the war.

Abusive Relationship Psychology



Children depend on parental "mirroring", that is, feedback from others, to develop a self-image of who they are. Verbally abusive parents convey that the child is bad, stupid, and worse. Looking one's child in the eyes and explaining to them that they are seen as good, smart and loved etc., can make a huge difference to the child's self-image.

Children who receive continued verbal abuse tend to believe that they are receiving this berating because they have done something wrong. Parents should work to "disabuse" their child of this notion, so they will understand over time that rage is a result of a parent's own emotional dysfunction, and not because the child themselves is bad. A child's parent's anger is not their fault.

Abusive parents are triggered by normal childhood actions. When an abusive parent's anger "button" is pressed and ready to go off, even the mere presence of the targeted child can be enough to release the trigger.

EFFECTS THAT CAN CARRY INTO ADULTHOOD

- Diminished self worth
 - Fragmentation
 - Isolation
- Retreat into ego attachments that disconnect one from themselves, within; and from others.

7 Mental Health Challenges Single Moms Face

1. Sleep Deprivation
2. Inadequate Self-Care
3. Financial Insecurity
4. Ongoing Conflicts with an Ex
5. Weak Support Networks
6. History of Abuse
7. Stigma and Judgment



Single Mother Dynamics

Single Mothers: Problems for Children?

Source: Agastecheg/Freemages.com

Researchers studied solo mothers and two-parent families when the babies were infants. They revisited the question two years later and published their findings in the study, "Solo mothers and their donor insemination infants: follow-up at age 2 years." Again they compared solo mothers and married women who became pregnant via donor insemination (DI).

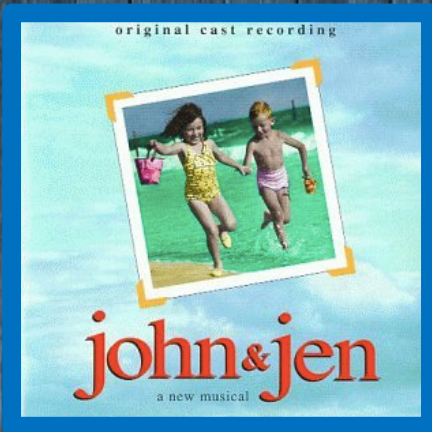
They reported: "This route to parenthood (via DI for solo mothers) does not necessarily seem to have an adverse effect on mothers' parenting ability or the psychological adjustment of the child." In fact, "The solo DI mothers showed greater pleasure in their child and lower levels of anger accompanied by a perception of their child as less 'clingy'. Fewer emotional and behavioural difficulties were shown by children of solo than married DI mothers." The results during those typically more trying "terrible twos" were similar when studies examined the quality of parenting and children's psychological adjustment at ages 3, 7, and 10, again with DI solo mothers and DI married parents.



War & the Effect on Relationships

The family system, like any other system either adapts or falls apart when a vital part of the system, like a spouse or parent, is absent for a prolonged period of time. Generally, military families do not fall apart when a member is deployed. They adapt with the assistance of officers' wives, formal and informal military support systems, extended families, and the broader community. The family's success at coping often reflects the emotional strength of the parent left stateside and the preexisting mental health of the family, i.e., how successfully the family contributes to the emotional wellbeing of each member.

Many young adults who enlist in the United States military have siblings who are of similar age and developmental phase, although these siblings' pursuits of individuation may not involve military service. Although researchers and clinicians are paying increased attention to the toll of military service on families, discussions of the effects of such stress on family systems have not included siblings. In general, little is known about how siblings respond to normal but challenging family transitions, such as when a brother or sister departs from the family for college, employment opportunities, or other independent pursuits. Such transitions require adjustments and realignments in family roles, responsibilities, and relationships. Having a sibling enter the military, however, likely brings about unique challenges due to the dangers and hardships of war, and possible uncertainties about the servicemember's whereabouts. How can mental health professionals meet the needs of siblings of servicemembers? How do families of origin typically respond to a young adult's military service? This exploratory study investigates how young adults react to and experience having a sibling in the military as well as how they perceive reactions of other family members to provide guidance to practitioners who may be called upon to provide services to "newly military" families and siblings of servicemembers.



Theatre Etiquette

ACU Theatre is thrilled to have you as guests in our Theatre. For those who have never been to a live performance such as a play, Here is a reminder of some rules of thumb when going to the theatre.



ACU Theatre puts on an average of 5 productions a year. Please remember that you are always invited to come enjoy the experience of going to the theatre. Bring along your friends! We would love to have you.

Going to see a live performance on a stage is not like going to see a film at a movie theater. Of course, there are certain do's and don'ts for movie goers as well, but going to see a play requires even more mindfulness of your fellow theater-goers and actors on the stage to ensure that the experience is an enjoyable and memorable one for all.

1. **Dress for the occasion.** Think of going to the theater as a special occasion, because it is a special occasion. Casual attire is perfectly acceptable now, but casual attire does not mean sloppy attire. Be comfortable, but polished.
2. **Be on time.** It shows respect for the actors on the stage and your fellow theater-goers.
3. **Go to the restroom before you sit down, or at the intermission, not during the performance.** It will not only be disruptive to persons seated in your row and the rows around you, but also to the actors on the stage.
4. **Do not fidget.** It can be very distracting to persons sitting around you.
5. **Keep your shoes on.** Wherever you are in public, unless you are in the park perhaps, your shoes should be kept on.
6. **Do not eat potato chips, pretzels, or any other crunchy snack during a live performance.**
7. **Do not talk during a live performance once it has begun.**
8. **Take your hat off if you are wearing one that might block another person's view**
9. **Avoid wearing too much perfume, aftershave, or deodorant.** Additionally, it is courteous to use breath mints when sitting close to others.
10. **Stay awake.** Snoring, or leaning your head on a neighbor's shoulder when you fall asleep is absolutely unacceptable.
11. **Turn off your cell phone.** As soon as you sit down, turn off your cell phone and put it away. Cell phone usage is extremely distracting to others.
12. **Do not sing along.** Unless asked to sing along by the actors on the stage, refrain from singing, humming, or whistling the tunes you hear.
13. **Be appreciative.** Do show your appreciation by clapping at the appropriate times; and standing at the end of the show when all others around you are standing. Unlike movies, live performances use real people who are highly motivated by the applause and encouragement of their audiences.

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