

ART WORKS.

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At The Rep, we know that life moves fast okay, really fast. But we also know that some things are worth slowing down

for. We believe that live theatre is one of those pit stops worth making and are excited that you are going to stop by for a show. To help you get the most bang for your buck, we have put together **WU? @ THE REP**—an IM guide that will give you everything you need to know to get at the top of your theatergoing game—fast. You'll find character descriptions (A/S/L), a plot summary (FYI), biographical information (F2F), historical context (B4U), and other bits and pieces (HTH). Most importantly, we'll have some ideas about what this all means IRL, anyway.

CU@therep

The Teacher's Lounge

In an effort to make our educational materials accessible to students and easy for educators to incorporate into the classroom, our study

guide is written in a student-oriented format. We hope that you will circulate this guide among your students in the weeks preceding your visit to The Rep, encouraging them to browse it before and after class and as time allows, using it as a launch point for both pre- and postperformance discussions. You may also want to visit our website, **www.repstl.org**, for additional information including educational games, activity suggestions and behind-the-scenes information. Any materials, either from this guide or from our website may be reproduced for use in the classroom. As always, we appreciate



your making live theatre a part of your classroom experience and welcome your feedback and questions.

Show Me Standards: CA 2, 3, 5; FA 2, 4, 5; SS 2, 6 and Illinois Learning Standards: 1, 2, 5, 16, 18, 25, 27.

WELCOME!

The desire to learn, insatiable when awakened, can sometimes lie dormant until touched by the right teacher or the right experience. We at The Rep are grateful to have the opportunity to play a role supporting you as you awaken the desire for learning in your students.

This is one of Shakespeare's funniest comedies full of mistaken identity, confusion and hilarity. However, when all is played and done, it is also a heartfelt statement about family and the joy of finding those with whom you belong. As your students search for their own identities and place in the world, this play gives them an opportunity to watch safely as others enjoy the freedom to be someone else... and pay the consequences. Hopefully, they will come to the conclusion—to paraphrase Dorothy—there is no place like being yourself.

It would be a good idea to take a minute on the bus to give your students these quick theatre etiquette reminders:

- This show has an intermission; there will be time for bathroom breaks before the show and partway through.
- The actors can hear the audience and appreciate the laughter, gasps and quiet attention to action. However, talking, moving around and eating is very distracting to others and can dampen the energy of what is happening on stage.
- Pictures, phone calls and texting are not allowed at any time during the performance.

Live theatre won't allow your students to take a passive role—they must work with us to create the experience which takes the learning deeper. Our unique ability to fuse words and images onstage allows your students to explore new ideas as well as excites their imaginations. We will do our part so your students will be stirred to understandings and self-awareness while delving into new and familiar worlds. You are doing your part by using The Rep to extend your intellectual and aesthetic curriculum. Thank you!

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Marsha Coplon Director of Education

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DUKE SOLINUS, is the fair but stern ruler of Ephesus.

EGEON is a merchant from Syracuse on the search for his long-lost twin sons.

The OFFICER and JAILER aren't bad guys, they're just trying to do their jobs.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS and ANTIPHOLUS OF SYRACUSE look awfully similar...could they be the long-lost twins?

To further confuse the matter, DROMIO OF EPHESUS and DROMIO OF SYRACUSE look alike as well, but why would anyone name their twins the exact same name?

ADRIANA is the concerned and jealous wife of Antipholus of Ephesus. As strange as he's been acting, do you blame her? Adriana's sister, LUCIANA, notices something different about Antipholus too, but which Antipholus is he?

Poor ANGELO—what's a goldsmith to do in order to be paid for his bling?

The COURTESAN isn't really trying to cause trouble, but she gets involved in the action thanks to some misplaced jewelry.

In all of the confusion, the Abbess EMILIA is willing to lend safe haven to those in need.

REVELERS increase the confusion as they wind through the streets celebrating Mardi Gras.

IDENTITY

Without mistaken identity, *The Comedy of Errors* isn't really much of a play. Scenes in which someone isn't mistaken for somebody else are few and far between, with the action (and humor) of the play depending upon the confusion of the characters. Is this kind of story still funny today? Does this kind of thing happen in real life? How might mistaken identity relate to your own quest to learn more about yourself as you establish your own identity?

FAMILY BONDS

While the hilarity of mistaken identity might be what drives the action of the play forward, what ties it all together is the notion of familial bonds. Though throughout the play everyone was trying to beat everyone else senseless, in the end, all is forgiven as everyone comes together as one big, happy family. What is the role of family in your life? Are there ever trying times between you and your family members? How do these moments help you and your family to grow and become stronger, together?

ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

The Comedy of Errors, though seemingly slight, actually hints at a more serious examination of social roles and relationships that would have been evolving between the Ancient Roman source material (remember that Shakespeare borrowed heavily from pieces like Plautus' Menaechmi, which serves as the foundation for the play) and Shakespeare's day. The notions of master and servant, for example, were rapidly changing throughout the Renaissance, slowly eroding into a more contemporary understanding of socio-economic roles (while the Ancient Romans had many slaves, how many of us have slaves today?). What do you think of the master-servant relationships in *The Comedy of Errors*? Do you see other relationships in the play that might be struggling through growing pains—stuck somewhere between an Ancient perception and modern understanding?



SPOILER ALERT!

HAVING A LITTLE TROUBLE sorting out *The Comedy of Errors?* Relax—here's a quick run through our story, which takes place in Ephesus (a small town just outside of New Orleans, Louisiana)...

AT THE TOP of the play, the traveler Egeon finds himself detained by Solinus, Duke of Ephesus. By law, Syracusian (Syracuse is another local town) merchants like Egeon aren't allowed in Ephesus, and Egeon's mere presence is punishable by death (or a hefty fine). Once the Duke hears Egeon's sad tale, however (Egeon is on a search for his longlost twin sons), Solinus decides to give Egeon an extra day to cough up some cash (thus saving him from execution today).

MEANWHILE, ANTIPHOLUS and Dromio of Syracuse land in Ephesus, on their own search for Antipholus' brother. Upon arrival, Antipholus sends Dromio to make a deposit at a local inn, which his servant happily does. Almost immediately as Dromio of Syracuse departs, however, Dromio of Ephesus (another character altogether, though with the same name and startlingly similar looks) appears to fetch his master, Antipholus of Ephesus (he mistakes Antipholus of Syracuse for Antipholus of Ephesus...they apparently are also identical!). Antipholus is also confused, thinking this is his Dromio, immediately returning to play a ruse. Dromio of Ephesus' strange talk of a wife and dinner earns him a beating from the disoriented Antipholus of Syracuse.

LET THE comedy and the errors begin!

AFTER ESCAPING his beating, Dromio of Ephesus returns home to Adriana (Antipholus of Ephesus' wife) and Luciana (Adriana's sister). He tells the women of his master's strange behavior (or the man he thought was his master), earning poor Dromio a threat of a beating from Adriana. She sends him out once again to fetch his master.

BACK ON THE mean streets of Ephesus, Antipholus of Syracuse meets up with Dromio of Syracuse. Antipholus beats Dromio when he denies the earlier ruse (which, of course, he really knows nothing about), but Dromio is saved by the bell when a jealous Adriana appears to drag her husband home. Though the Syracusians don't know what's going on, they play along.

AFTER ARRIVING at the house, Dromio of Syracuse stands guard at the gate while Antipholus heads in to eat. Just then, the real master of the house (Antipholus of Ephesus) shows up. Dromio of Syracuse denies him entrance into his own home, enraging him. Before he makes too terrible of a scene, he decides to dine with a Courtesan. Meanwhile, inside the house, Antipholus of Syracuse takes a liking to Luciana. He attempts to woo her, but she flees his advances.

THE SYRACUSIANS decide it's about time to leave, so Dromio escapes to make travel plans. Antipholus is accosted in the street by Angelo (a goldsmith) and ends up accepting a gold chain meant for Antipholus of Ephesus. Angelo promises to return for payment later.

AFTER DINNER, Antipholus of Ephesus is still angry over being locked out of his own house. He sends Dromio of Ephesus to fetch him a rope so he can beat his wife as punishment for locking him out.

THERE SURE IS a lot of beating going on in Ephesus, isn't there?

ANGELO, MAKING GOOD on his promise, returns to collect payment from Antipholus. The only problem—he has "returned" to the wrong Antipholus (of Ephesus), who hasn't even seen the chain, much less received it.

ANTIPHOLUS OF EPHESUS refuses to pay Angelo, and is promptly arrested. As the authorities drag Antipholus away, Dromio of Syracuse arrives (who is, of course, confused for Dromio of Ephesus by Antipholus). Antipholus sends him to get money to bail him out from Adriana.

THIS JUST IN from surprise plot twists— Dromio of Syracuse mistakenly delivers the money to Antipholus of Syracuse while Dromio of Ephesus returns to Antipholus of Ephesus with the rope. In all of the confusion, Adriana, Luciana and the Courtesan (who was promised the gold chain by one of the Antipholuses...who can keep it all straight?) enlist the help of conjurer Dr. Pinch, who will free the Ephesian Antipholus and Dromio of the demons causing all of this "strange behavior."

BEFORE THE EXORCISM can occur, however, the Syracusians ride in with swords, causing everyone else to flee in fear (have the Ephesians escaped from the conjurer, now seeking vengeance?). Adriana returns with reinforcements, and the Syracusians flee to a nearby priory under the refuge of Abbess Emilia.

STILL WITH ME? Good, we're just about to make a real comedy of all the errors!

THE DUKE AND Egeon (remember, they were in the beginning of the story) enter, the Duke leading Egeon to his execution. Adriana pleads with the Duke, asking him to force Emilia to turn over her husband. Just then, the Ephesians enter, having escaped Pinch. Egeon seems to know Antipholus...is this one of his sons?

THOUGH THE Ephesians deny ever seeing Egeon before, when Emilia enters with the Syracusians, everything suddenly becomes very clear. The two sets of twins are reunited, and as a bonus it turns out that Emilia is Egeon's long-lost wife. The Duke pardons Egeon, and everyone exits to celebrate!









THE BARD: WHO IS THIS GUY?

Just who is William Shakespeare? Such a simple question seems to deserve a simple answer, but just like the play *The Comedy of Errors*, sometimes things aren't always as they seem, or are they?

First of all, when you ask the question, "Who is this guy?" you need to be clear on who you're looking for. After all, you may seek the famous football player William Shakespeare who was a halfback and punter for Notre Dame. Or maybe you're looking for the man who mapped the uncharted areas of Northern Arabia for England around the turn of the 20th century, William Shakespeare. Still yet you might be looking for William Shakespeare the inventor, who you can thank for the level-winding fishing reel.

And while each of these fellow has a fame of his own right, none can stack up to the legend known simply as "The Bard," or William Shakespeare—perhaps the greatest playwright to ever live (his work has been translated into nearly every language and is performed more than any other playwright).

While you might assume that since he was a playwright rockstar god, we'd know everything about The Bard, including his favorite value meal at McDonald's and all the scandals he was involved in. Unfortunately, however, if we rewind to Elizabethan England (that is, England from around 1558 to 1603), there was no TMZ, internet or paparazzi, so information about Shakespeare's life is actually pretty limited. In fact, there's even debate as to whether or not he was really the great author of 38 plays, 154 sonnets, two long narrative poems and several other poems! What little we know about him comes from public record—registrar records, court records, wills, marriage certificates and his tombstone.

BIRTH

While we know that William Shakespeare was baptized on April 26, 1564, no one really knows for sure when he was actually born. Historians speculate he was born three days earlier (coincidentally St. George's Day), though no hard evidence exists one way or the other.

GROWING UP

Shakespeare was born and grew up in Stratford-upon-Avon, a market town and civil parish in south Warwickshire, England. He was the third of eight children for John and Mary Shakespeare, and one of only five that survived to adulthood. Shakespeare's siblings (in order of birth) were Joan, Margaret, Gilbert, Joan, Anne, Richard and Edmund.

William's father was both a savvy and industrious man, keen as a businessman and good with tanning, leatherwork and whittawering (using white leather to make items like gloves and purses). John was also prominent in politics, being one of 14 town council burgesses (member of governing body). Later in life, however, John got mixed up in some shady dealings with wool on the black market, causing him to lose some standing and his position in the town council.

Less is known about Shakespeare's mother, Mary Arden. She married John in 1557 and was the youngest daughter of a prominent Warwickshire family. Other than her inheritance (which was much of her fathers estate), marriage and children, little else is known about Mary Arden.

John Shakespeare's home, located on Henley Street about 100 miles northwest of London, is believed to be the birthplace and childhood home of The Bard. The home still stands today and serves as a museum and popular visitor attraction.



SCHOOLING

Don't tell your parents (or your teacher!), but we really don't have any proof that Shakespeare ever went to school. It's often presumed and widely accepted that he attended King's New Grammar School (where all boys in Stratford-upon-Avon went), though we have no conclusive evidence either way. If he did go, his education would have been intensely focused on Latin grammar and the classics, which would explain his deep knowledge of literature and ability to wield words so well. Don't tell your parents this either—but we have no evidence that William ever went to college.

MARRIAGE

Because of a bond certificate (posted by two neighbors of the bride—Fulk Sandalls and John Richardson—noting there were no impediments to the marriage) we know that Shakespeare was married to Anne Hathaway on November 28, 1582. William was only 18 years old while Anne was 26.

Six months later (May of 1583), Hathaway gave birth to their first child, Susanna. Twin children Hamnet and Judith were born in February 1585, though Hamnet died when he was just 11 years old.

THE LOST YEARS

After his children were born, there is little record of what happened in Shakespeare's life before his theatrical success. It is believed he left his family in Stratford to find work in London, returning little until 1609. While he was in London, legend has it that Shakespeare was a schoolmaster and/or that he minded the horses of theatre patrons in London. Only stories after the fact support either claim, no real evidence exists.

THE PLAYWRIGHT ARRIVES

It appears that by 1592, Shakespeare had arrived on the theatrical scene as a playwright in London. He apparently had earned enough notoriety to be called "an upstart crow" by fellow (jealous?) writer Robert Greene. By 1594, the "upstart crow" was a part owner of the playing company Lord Chamberlain's men. The company became the King's Men after King James I adopted them in 1603. Shakespeare was also known to be an actor in the company, with many of his works including special direction for actors when such a thing typically did not exist in scripts.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT

Public records indicate that The Bard died on April 23rd, 1616 (which, ironically, eerily coincides with his suspected date of birth— April 23rd, 1564). He left his second-best bed to his wife Anne Hathaway while giving most of his estate to his daughter Susanna. This isn't actually as bad as it seems, as the best bed was always reserved for guests, while the second-best bed was the marriage bed. William Shakespeare's last words can be found on his tombstone—

Good friend, for Jesus' sake, forbear To dig the dust enclosed here; Blest be the man that spares these stones And curst he that moves my bones.

AM I A SHAKESPEARE?

While there are those who may have the same name and claim some ancestral relation, William's family line ended when his granddaughter Elizabeth died in 1670.



MARDI GRAS MAYHEM

SO WHY ARE all of these random people (listed on page 12, HTH) running around behind the scenes, partying like it's 1999? Would you believe they're reveling for religion? That's exactly what they're doing! It's all a part of a carnival celebration with religious roots in Catholicism called Mardi Gras.

MARDI GRAS (French for "Fat Tuesday") typically refers to the celebratory period beginning on or after Epiphany (a Catholic feast day) and ending with Ash Wednesday (the first day of Lent, a period of penance, prayer, sacrifice and repentance).

WAIT—penance, prayer, repentance, but what about the party?!

TAKING THE religious roots into consideration, Mardi Gras is the last big hurrah of feasting and partying before the more somber period of sacrifice in Lent. Though the time frame of the carnival varies from city to city, Mardi Gras in St. Louis tends to kick off in the few days leading up to Fat Tuesday (the final day to eat, drink and be merry!). The celebration includes masks, beads, costumes, dancing, reveling, various rituals and parades.

THE MOTHER of all Mardi Gras celebrations is in New Orleans, where as many as half a million revelers may take part at any given point in the carnival. While many cities across the nation celebrate Mardi Gras, St. Louis is widely known as the second largest Mardi Gras celebration in America, drawing thousands of party goers over the course of Mardi Gras weekend.

SOUND LIKE FUN? Of course it does! But before you can join the party, check out the facts on some of the rituals and traditions of the festival.



KREWES

A Krewe (pronounced "crew") is an organization that puts on a parade or a ball for Mardi Gras. These organizations have their roots in mystic societies, and tend to keep their activities under wraps. Throughout the year, a Krewe builds floats and holds meetings in secret, and on the day of their parade (each Krewe holds its own parade leading up to Mardi Gras) members appear as masked riders. Two large Krewes in New Orleans, named Zulu and Rex, ride on the actual day of Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday itself.

COLORS

Thanks to Rex, the official colors of Mardi Gras are purple, green and gold. Inspired by a visit from the Russian Grand Duke Alexis Romanoff, the New Orleans Krewe chose the colors with deeper symbolic meaning in mind—purple stands for justice, green for faith and gold for power. Today, the Mardi Gras colors are seen on everything from costumes to beads and other throws.

THROWS

While typically it's not a good idea to throw things at people you don't know (or folks you do know, for that matter!), the tradition of throwing small trinkets into crowds during Mardi Gras parades is an important (and very much expected!) part of the carnival. Have your hands (and head!) ready—stuffed animals, plastic cups, small toys and even bags to hold all of your goodies might be hurled at you!

BEADS

Throughout the year, wearing plastic beads means you're too cheap to buy real pearls. However, during Mardi Gras, the more plastic beads, the better! Plastic beads are one of the most popular throws and one of the most well-known emblems of Mardi Gras.

DOUBLOONS

Though most of the ceremonies have a decidedly French influence, one traditional aspect of Mardi Gras has a bit of a Spanish touch. Doubloons (or Spanish gold coins) are often thrown during a parade. Don't get too excited, though—the doubloons thrown by Krewes aren't really money, rather they are medallions with the Krewe's name and emblem on one side along with the current year and theme of the parade on the other.

MASKS

No good party is complete without masks just ask Romeo or Juliet. While today they're worn more for fun than anything else, historically, masks allowed people of lower classes to mix undetected with aristocrats, men to dress as women, and humans to look like animals (none of which, of course, was

allowed outside of Mardi Gras season). This sort of fun seems right at home in Shakespeare's world of *The Comedy of Errors*, doesn't it?



BORROWED BRILLIANCE

While The Bard's theatrical brilliance spans 38 plays including tragedies, histories and comedies, many of his most revered works aren't entirely original. *The Comedy of Errors*, for example, borrows heavily from the great Ancient Roman comic playwright Plautus, refashioning key plot elements and characters to create a new take on the same old stories.

It seems fitting then, that much of William Shakespeare's work lives on today through similar means—modern adaptations that attempt to put a new spin on The Bard's brilliance. Can you identify which plays these clever plotlines and unforgettable characters come from?

1. 10 THINGS I HATE ABOUT YOU

Pretty and popular Bianca Stratford wishes she could date, but her grouchy older sister Kat is determined to alienate any quy who might come their way. Unfortunately, strict rules in the Stratford household forbid Bianca from having a boyfriend until her sister has one of her own—a situation that seems highly improbable considering Kat is a social disaster. Bianca's desperation for romance turns into a scheme to match Kat with her male equivalent. Mayhem ensues when Patrick Verona is bribed by Bianca's wannabe boyfriend to woo and win Kat, in order to clear the way for Bianca to begin dating. But what happens when Kat finds out her unexpected Prince Charming is being paid to date her?

2. THE BOYS FROM SYRACUSE

In ancient Asia Minor, two boys from Syracuse, Anthipholus and his servant Dromio, search for their long-lost twins who also happen to be named Anthipholus and Dromio. Complications arise when one's wife, Adriana, mistakes one of the strangers for her husband, though the couples eventually get sorted out after Adriana's sister, Luciana, and the Syracuse Antipholus admit their love.

3. SHE'S THE MAN

When a teenage girl, Viola, discovers that her soccer team has been cut from her school, she disguises herself as her twin brother and takes his place at his new boarding school so she can still play the sport she loves. But things start getting nutty when she falls in love with her new roommate, Duke, and finds herself the object of affection of the beautiful Olivia, the girl whom Duke loves. Things get even more complicated when her twin brother, Sebastian, finally turns up.

4. THE LION KING

A young lion prince is born in Africa, taking the place of his Uncle Scar as second in line to the throne. To regain his position, Scar plots to kill King Mufasa and the new prince, Simba, thus making himself King. The King is killed, but when Simba escapes, Scar leads his young nephew to believe the King's death was his fault. When Simba flees the kingdom in shame, Scar takes the position of King ruling over all the lionesses, even Simba's mother, Queen Sarabi. After years of exile, a childhood friend, Nala, persuades Simba to return home to do battle with the usurper and claim the kingdom as his own.

 The Taming of the Shrew 2. The Comedy of Errors 3. Twelfth Wight 4. Hamlet 5. Kling Lear 6. Macbeth 7. Othello

5. A THOUSAND ACRES

Aging Larry Cook announces his intention to turn over his 1,000-acre farm—one of the largest in Zebulon County, Iowa—to his three daughters, Caroline, Ginny and Rose. A man of harsh sensibilities, he carves Caroline out of the deal because she has the nerve to be less than enthusiastic about her father's generosity. While Larry Cook deteriorates into a pathetic drunk, his daughters are left to cope with the often grim realities of life on a family farm and the haunting memories of their past.



6. MEN OF RESPECT

Mike Battaglia is a made man who's won the respect of the New York mob, but when he receives a spiritualist's prophesies that he will rise to the head of his family, his ambitious wife encourages him to grab the proverbial crown by killing the godfather. He starts his ascension by executing the heads of the family and casting the blame on others. However, with his new power comes consequences that are also predicted by the seer, and his act of treason just may lead to his own undoing.

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Odin James is the black star of the basketball team at an otherwise white boarding school. He is headed for the big time with his sport and is in love with Desi, the most popular girl in school. Meanwhile, Hugo, the coach's son, is outdone by Odin both on and off the court; his father even says he thinks of Odin as a son. Hugo's feelings of envy lead him to construct a plot to make Odin doubt Desi's love for him, a plot which Hugo is willing to take to its most extreme consequences.



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INFRINGE—actively break the terms of a law, agreement, etc

ENMITY—the state or feeling of being actively opposed or hostile to someone or something

RANCOROUS—characterized by bitterness or resentment

SEDITIOUS—inciting or causing people to rebel against the authority of a state or monarch

SYNODS—an assembly of the clergy and sometimes also the laity in a diocese or other division of a particular church

REFT—robbed of something by force

BTW

IMPORTUNED—pestered or asked pressingly or persistently for something

CHOLERIC—bad-tempered or irritable

PERIWIG—a highly styled wig worn formerly as a fashionable headdress by both women and men

MOUNTEBANKS—a person who deceives others, especially in order to trick them out of their money

COXCOMB—a vain and conceited man

DALLIANCE—a brief or casual involvement with something

Been wondering who all these random characters are running around in the background?

PAULA DEEN—TV personality and chef, specializing in Southern home cookin'. Paula Deen is known for her larger-than-life personality and the larger-than-healthy amounts of fat and calories in her dishes.

LESTAT DE LIONCOURT—fictional character originally found in Anne Rice's series of novels *The Vampire Chronicles*, also in various subsequent film and television adaptations. Lestat is a bold, enthusiastic and often defiant vampire with a love for fashion, literature and, of course, sucking human blood (though he's often very conflicted about it).

BLANCHE DUBOIS—fictional character also from Tennesse Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire*. DuBois is a fading Southern belle struggling with alcoholism and delusions of grandeur.

STANLEY KOWALSKI—fictional character in Tennesse Williams' play (and later film) *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Kowalski is a working class, blue-collar type who lives in New Orleans with his wife Stella.

EMERIL LAGASSE—celebrity chef and TV personality. Emeril is as famous for his delicious meals as for his catch phrases like "Kick it up a notch!" and "Bam!"

SCARLETT O'HARA—fictional character originally found in Margaret Mitchell's novel *Gone with the Wind*, also in various subsequent film, television and stage adaptations. A strong and defiant character, O'Hara is a feisty Southern belle.

ELVIS PRESLEY—U.S. singer, known as the King of Rock and Roll. He was the dominant personality of early rock and roll (living from 1935-77) with songs such as "Heartbreak Hotel," "Don't be Cruel" and "Hound Dog."

