

# Arden

THEATRE CO.

SUPPLEMENTARY STUDY GUIDE  
for

## Wittenberg

WORLD PREMIERE  
By DAVID DAVALOS  
Directed by J.R. SULLIVAN  
On the Arcadia Stage  
**January 17 – March 23, 2008**

*Additional copies of this study guide are available online at [www.ardentheatre.org](http://www.ardentheatre.org).*

# Wittenberg

By David Davalos  
Directed by J.R. Sullivan

## CAST

John Faustus, M.D., J.D., Ph.D., Th.D., a doctor.....Scott Greer  
Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, a senior, major undecided.....Shawn Fagan  
Rev. Fr. Martin Luther, D.D., a professor and a confessor.....Greg Wood  
The Eternal Feminine.....Kate Udall

## DIRECTION

Director.....J.R. Sullivan  
Stage Manager.....Patricia G. Sabato  
Assistant Director.....Matt Pfeiffer  
Assistant to the Stage Manager.....Carla Y. Emanuele

## DESIGNERS

Scenic Design.....Michael Philippi  
Costume Design.....Elizabeth Covey  
Lighting Design.....Michael Philippi  
Sound Design.....Jorge Cousineau



## The Story of Wittenberg ...

*Wittenberg* begins with Dr. John Faustus walking about the quad, when his favorite student Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, approaches. As they share a quick hello, Hamlet fesses up to feeling slightly out of joint with the world lately, relying on Dr. Faustus to aid him. Faustus prescribes Hamlet some leopard's bane for his "sprained brain" and they each go on their separate ways. We then meet Dr. Martin Luther, also a professor at Wittenberg University. He is beginning his first day lecture and we find out he is a monk very passionate about his faith.



In Dr. Faustus' lecture we see him committed to opening the minds of his young students to worlds beyond what they already know. He emphasizes specifically to Hamlet that anyone who has not decided on a major yet should strongly consider taking up a philosophy degree.

Following these introductions, we learn Dr. Faustus and Dr. Luther are actually good friends; so much so that Dr. Luther has Dr. Faustus as his own physician. Dr. Luther has had problems with his bowel movements for several days. After some friendly banter, Dr. Faustus decides upon his treatment. He prescribes Dr. Luther a bag of beans he calls "qhafe". He tells Luther to mix with water and boil to make "a kind of musclebound tea." He says this should help not only his bathroom troubles, but also liven up his spirits. For the second part of his treatment, he asks Dr. Luther to write a bit every single day. Dr. Luther protests initially until Dr. Faustus suggests writing about John Tetzl. Tetzl has recently been selling indulgences to church parishioners-slips of paper that claim they are saved from Purgatory upon death. Dr. Luther agrees and invites him to church that Sunday. Dr. Faustus declines; Helen, the love of his life will be visiting. As Dr. Luther lectures him on his sinning, Faustus tells him he wants to propose to her. Luther offers reluctant congratulations "with qualifications" and the two leave the office.

Hamlet enters the scene surrounded by an eerie fog and lightning. A big booming voice answers his beckons and claims that he has forsaken her as his mother. She reveals herself as Mother Earth, or Gaia, and loudly accuses Hamlet of a slew of things he cannot understand. When at last she leaves, angrily disowning him as her son, he is asleep and we understand that he has just had a dream. Seeking help he finds Dr. Faustus in his office. After confessing to a poor tennis game but before launching into his other troubles, Hamlet lets Faustus know he is seeking help with a priest as well to be able to have two solid opinions on his dilemma. He then tells him of one dream in particular that has disturbed his sleep far beyond anything else: one where he stands at the edge of the universe and comes face to face with a large, unmarked headstone, the blinding sun and the empty side of the moon all at once until he falls into an empty abyss, waking him up. As Faustus analyzes him, he asks what out of the ordinary he had done before the dream. Hamlet tells him the story of studying with the great astronomer Nikolai Copernik in Poland over the summer. They would go on a nightly watch of the stars to see what to make of them, but Hamlet noticed Copernik being fascinated with the sun more and more. When at last he confronted him about his curiosity, Copernik had him read a manuscript he named "The Commentariolus" illustrating math calculations and figures that he had drawn to prove the that the earth is actually not the center of the



universe as believed, but only one planet that revolves around the sun. Faustus is aghast at such a discovery: this does not only disprove scientific reasoning for hundreds of years, but also religious belief. He asks to read the manuscript, and Hamlet hands it over after Faustus envelops him in his clever reasoning. Then, being the true physician that he is, he prescribes “Moroccan delights”—some candy he picked up in Morocco that is supposed to sync Hamlet’s rotation with that of the earth’s. They say goodnight, and Hamlet goes on his way.



Faustus plays guitar several times a week at the Bunghole, the campus pub. He opens with a festive number after which his favorite waitress Gretchen greets him and offers to freshen up his drink. Luther arrives, looking much more relaxed and energized. The two men sit down to talk and Luther emphatically thanks Faustus for his qhafe recommendation. Faustus helped him to unlock not only his bowel movements but his mind. Luther describes a powerful revelation he had whilst sitting upon his privy. He proclaims he learned that the righteousness of God means “God makes us right with him.” Afterwards he tells Faustus that the devil himself appeared to him to debate upon his newfound truth. Faustus remains skeptical about the devil’s appearance and in the midst of this Gretchen appears carrying four beers for them. Luther calms down a bit as he downs one of the beers he is handed and tells Gretchen she was missed in confession. She laughs a little and whips out the indulgence she purchased from Father Tetzal earlier in the week. A little cringing from Luther and a smile from Faustus occur whilst Gretchen lets them know the drinks are on the house. Immediately then Faustus pulls out a newspaper he has been hiding in his bag to show to Luther. The issue of indulgences is actually one that is coming directly from the pope himself, apparently to be able to reconstruct St. Peter’s Basilica. After a mighty debate on the church’s fallacy, Faustus asks Luther the honest question “Do you believe it?” Luther then hesitantly tells him about a trip to Rome as a young man where he was told that for a small fee he could save someone in Purgatory. He proclaims simply “What if isn’t true?” showing Faustus that although he firmly believes in the word of God, he does sometimes doubt the institution. Following more debate, Faustus proposes a challenge. As Luther did acknowledge he has a “friendly collegial debate with the church” Faustus asks him to put these down onto paper. The bells of the night toll, and as they prepare to say goodnight, Luther reminds Faustus that the sins he commits with Helen will lead his soul directly to hell. Faustus shrugs it off, and prepares for his goodnight song at the Bunghole.

The next day, Faustus anxiously waits for Helen at the tennis match. She arrives and greets Faustus. The match begins and Hamlet runs out, looking confident. An angrier young man is across the court and we learn this gentleman from Paris University is Laertes Corambisborgensen. The fiery match begins, with both competitors fighting hard for the ball. The match goes on, Hamlet having the upper hand. Throughout the match, Faustus delivers loving words to Helen, but she does not seem much interested. Finally, through a few faults on Laertes’ side, Wittenberg wins the match. Hamlet quickly thanks Faustus for his medicinal aid, and leaves. Faustus takes the opportunity to propose to Helen and to his surprise, she says no. She claims he set her free to remain free. He finally understands and pulls out a purse of money to coax her into bed. After they sleep together, he begins to try again to convince her to marry him. She tells him she is leaving Germany for good and wanted to offer a farewell. She breaks his heart by handing the money back and walking out on him.

Hamlet meets Luther in Luther’s study to ask for his opinions on his tribulations. Trust in God is Luther’s final answer. He then asks Hamlet if he would proof-read the

manuscript he has created listing his debate points with the church. Hamlet agrees and immediately begins going through a few of them after Luther leaves. As he reads, he begins to hear a distant voice echoing words in the manuscript. All of a sudden, the Virgin Mary appears to him and Hamlet falls to his knees in prayer. She tells him to return to the Lord and repent his sins and exits, leaving Hamlet completely bewildered upon having a vision while wide awake. He then finds Dr. Faustus in his study to relay the events. Faustus is visibly depressed and shaken by Helen's refusal of marriage at first, and then slowly reigns in Hamlet by proclaiming that to live and never surrender is the only way to be. Later Faustus attempts to interpret Hamlet's dream for him, and in a rival vision, Luther also appears there to offer his interpretation. Such contrasting interpretations leave Hamlet even more confused by the end. Hamlet then lets it slip that Father Luther is the priest he has been seeing. Faustus then tells Hamlet he believes Luther should read Copernik's manuscript "to know the truth." Hamlet agrees, and again through clever manipulation, Faustus coaxes Hamlet to give him Luther's manuscript. His final prescription to Hamlet is a sleeping pill called Mandragorium... to be taken with red wine.

All Hallows's Eve finds Faustus at the gravesite of an uncle with a jug of wine. Luther finds him there to berate him on the manuscript he found in his office. Though Faustus understands that Luther believes him to be the author, he does not protest and simply tries to have Luther understand that blasphemy or not, the calculations are true. Luther remains firm in his conviction until Faustus asks to see it to prove his point. "I burned it" is Luther's answer. Faustus becomes enraged, and after calming down, he tells Luther how much he respected the manuscript he wrote. "95 links in a binding chain of reasoning" he calls them, much to Luther's surprise. Faustus tells Luther that the church will see his own document as blasphemy, to which Luther replies that the church won't see it. Faustus then lightheartedly tells Luther that he happened to pass out copies to several members of the religious hierarchy as well as nailed one to the door of his office. It is now Luther's turn to be enraged. Hamlet then appears at the site and marvels at Luther's posting his manuscript on the church door. Faustus chimes in telling Luther he is responsible for that one as well. Luther is bewildered and after a harsh goodbye, he leaves.

After some small talk between the two, Faustus learns that Hamlet has decided to give his life to the church and become a monk. Faustus fights to talk him out of it; however Hamlet remains strong in his decision, assuring Faustus that he has never felt more at peace. A messenger of his mother's arrives, Lady Voltemand, with a sealed letter for him. It contains the shocking news of his father's death and with this new revelation, Faustus asks Hamlet what he plans to do next. Hamlet knows now he is meant to be king and prepares to return home. They part ways with warnings to each other: Faustus asks Hamlet to be a strong and truthful monarch; Hamlet asks Faustus to live life intelligently.

The final moments have Faustus back at the Bunghole, singing his final song for the crowds before taking a long hiatus from teaching to do some personal research. As he sings "Che Sera, Sera" Hamlet and Luther appear on either side, each delivering lines from their most famous moments: Luther at the Diet of Worms and Hamlet in Act V, Scene i of his own tragedy. As their moments come to a close, Dr. Faustus leaves his audience with a serene, "What will be, will be."



## About the Playwright...David Davalos

David Davalos is not only a playwright, but is also a director and an actor. He is a graduate of both the University of Texas and Ohio University and currently resides outside Denver, Colorado with his wife Elaine and 20 month old daughter Delphi. Other works include *Daedalus: A Fantasia of Leonardo DaVinci*, which received its world premiere at the Arden during the 2002-2003 season; *Johnnius Caerson*, which is a comedy about the late night TV wars; and *Darkfall*, a modern sequel to *Paradise Lost*.



David has said in an interview with Amy Dugas Brown, our associate artistic director, that his inspiration for the play lies in Wittenberg itself, the university town and all of its rich history: "...the idea that Luther's history there influenced the Faust legend, which in turn influenced Marlowe's conception of his Doctor Faustus, which in turn influenced Shakespeare's conception of Hamlet and his intellectual and moral sense" is what had Davalos fascinated with the one place. He was excited to create the interactions between such varied people as Luther, Faustus and Hamlet. When asked about the Eternal Feminine, Davalos breaks down her many functions in the play and classifies them all as influences in other areas. For example, Helen comes on as a major player and impact on all of Faustus' choices; Gretchen serves as a nod to Goethe's heroine in *Faust* as well as a way to push forth the subject of indulgences; and both Gaia and the Virgin Mary serve as foils of each other and to foreshadow Hamlet's troubles later with the same parent. He wanted to make sure that the Eternal Feminine (which is actually a reference in the closing lines of Goethe's aforementioned piece) embodied all female archetypes, and provide a "dose of yin into such a yangy environment."

When asked what other stories he is formulating in his head right now, Davalos answers "the Apollo program, Gustav Klimt, Ambrose Bierce, an American *Divine Comedy*, Thomas Paine, Barbary pirates, Stanley Kubrick, and the city politics of Mesopotamian Ur. Ask me again tomorrow."

From the playwright:

"Out of love for the truth and the desire to bring it to light, the following propositions will be discussed at **Wittenberg**, under the presidency of the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Monk of the Order of Saint Augustine, Master of the Arts and of Sacred Theology, and Lecturer in Ordinary on the same at that place."

*-Disputation of Doctor Martin Luther on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgences*

"Then, gentle friends, aid me in this attempt;  
And I, that have subtle syllogisms  
Gravell'd the pastors of the German church,  
And made the flowering pride of **Wittenberg**  
Swarm to my problems as th'infernal spirits  
On sweet Musaeus when he came to hell,  
Will be as cunning as Agrippa was,  
Whose shadows made all Europe honour him."

*-The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*

"You are the most immediate to our throne;  
And with no less nobility of love  
Than that which dearest father bears his son,  
Do I impart toward you. For your intent,  
In going back to school in **Wittenberg**,  
It is most retrograde to our desire;  
And we beseech you, bend you to remain  
Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,  
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son."

*-The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*

## People, Places and Terms to Know in Wittenberg

**Dr. Faustus:** the legend of Dr. Faustus is one created about an intelligent philosopher, desperately wishing for more who makes a pact with the devil. His tale has been told many a time over, turned into operas, epic poems, plays, etc. Two of the most famous versions, telling the tales of him and Mephistopheles (the Devil) are by Christopher Marlowe (*The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus*) and Goethe (*Dr. Faust*). The person of Dr. Faustus is said to be based upon a Dr. Johann Georg Faust, an alchemist who was also said to be a magician of some type.



**Martin Luther:** a German monk and church reformer. He contributed to the faith by translating the Bible into German to make it more accessible; preaching that the Bible is the only infallible source of the Christian faith; and in his rebellion, helped to inspire the Protestant Reformation. He wrote his 95 Theses, essentially pointing out in elegant language all he believed to be wrong with the Church at this time. His faith lay solely in the word of God, and as he began to become disillusioned with the practice of the faith in all its political turmoil, he became part of a movement to change the face of God his people saw.

**Hamlet, Prince of Denmark:** is a fictional character immortalized by William Shakespeare with his play of the same name. It has influenced the telling of tragedies since its birth, inspiring story tellers from Goethe to Dickens with its incredibly complex psychological layers, prompting an endless waterfall of differing interpretations. The play itself was said to have been written for Richard Burbage, the leading tragedian of the Chamberlain's Men for many, many years and since then, countless of the world's most gifted actors (and actresses) have added their own names to the list of the lucky to play Hamlet, Prince of Denmark.



The graveyard scene by Eugene Delacroix.

**Nikolai Copernik:** is more commonly known as Nicholas Copernicus, the Polish astronomer whose research literally “revolutionized” the earth by presenting it as a planet who actually orbited around the sun, whilst orbiting itself, when up to this time it was believed by all-including the dominant Catholic faith-that the earth was the center of the universe. Copernicus was many, many things: a mathematician, astronomer, physician, classical scholar, translator, Catholic cleric, jurist, governor, military leader, diplomat and economist. The *Commentariolus* was only a small part of his theorizing book called *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* that eventually became what sparked the Copernican Revolution.



**Johann Tetzel:** German Dominican who sold indulgences to help the church rebuild St. Peter's Basilica. He went so far as to designate a price for each type of sin committed, promising parishioners that if they had the money to buy an indulgence for their sins, their souls could be saved from the ever-feared purgatory-a place for souls to suffer in the afterlife.

**Gaia:** actually means many things, mostly translating down to the "foundation of the earth." Her legend is so great and at this point so very differently interpreted by people, her name is used in fiction, music, and even astronomy-the Gaia mission is actually due for launch in 2011 by the European Space Agency. One of her most prominent legends is her as a Greek Goddess, born of Chaos who was the empty void of earth before anything existed. With her was born Eros, and from thence she birthed everything that came to be, without male intervention. In Roman legend her name is Tellus, or Terra which means earth.

**Virgin Mary:** is in Catholic belief, the mother of Jesus Christ. She was a young girl when the Angel Gabriel came to her and told her she would be the blessed mother of Jesus Christ.

**Laertes:** a character in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. He is son to Polonius and brother to Ophelia and eventually slays Hamlet at the end of the play.

**Wittenberg:** is officially called Lutherstadt Wittenberg and is a small town in Germany, Bundesland Saxony-Anhalt, at the Elbe River. It has a population of about 50,000. It was the birthplace of the Protestant reformation, as rallied by Martin Luther. Part of the Augustinian monastery (which still survives in the town) in which Luther dwelt, first as a monk and later as owner with his wife and family, is preserved and considered to be the world's premier museum dedicated to Luther.



The town's very first coat of arms.



The town's current coat of arms.



Statue of Martin Luther in Wittenberg

**Wittenberg University:** was founded in 1502 by Frederick the Wise, Prince-Elector of Saxony, and closed in 1813 by Napoleon. The present-day university is a merge of the newly named Martin Luther University and University of Halle (founded in 1694 by Frederick I, King of Prussia) and is now called the Martin Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg. It currently has 18,960 students and about 5,017 professors (of which, 335 are actually tenured.) The school boasts 42 university partners in 22 countries including four in the United States.



The university logo.

**Brau** = brew, or beer.

**Apothecary** = pharmacist or druggist

**Heresy** = the opinion or doctrine at variance with the orthodox or accepted doctrine, especially of a church or religious system

**'in vino veritas'** = "in wine, truth" in latin

**Diet of Worms** = a general assembly of the estates, presided by Emperor Charles V. It occurred from January 28-May 25, 1521. Many issues were dealt with at this time, but the most memorable remains the addressing of Dr. Martin Luther's 95 Grievances with the church. They asked him to retract 45 of his statements and while he apologized mostly for their tones of voice, he made no promise of retracting anything. He left before a decision on his fate could be reached and before reaching Wittenberg, he disappeared.



'Luther before the Diet of Worms' by Anton von Werner

## A Little History...The Protestant Reformation

The Protestant Reformation was a movement furthered by the controversial theses drawn up by Martin Luther. It was a religious outburst against the institution of the Catholic Church, resulting in the distinction of Christian denominations, each one delineating a different set of beliefs.

The Protestant Reformation has roots tracing as far back as the fourteenth century. Dissatisfaction arose at the running of the states; claims of corruption within the monastic system and wars and uprisings of all kinds began spreading. The first men who volunteered their vastly different set of beliefs were John Wycliffe at Oxford University and the Jan Hus at the University of Prague. While they both stirred incredible debates against the rule of religion, neither went very far. The Conclave of Constance managed to silence their disputes: both men were sentenced to burning. While the Conclave managed to strengthen the original conception of Church and Empire, it did not at all address any of the theological or national tensions that were boiling and could not in fact stop other wars and revolts from happening elsewhere.

In 16<sup>th</sup> Century Germany, the Reformation was propelled forward by one Dr. Martin Luther and his debate points against the church. His 95 Theses detailed his arguments against many of the facets of the institution of the Roman Catholic Church, but mainly argued the idea of Purgatory and indulgences. His resolve to share these convictions with the masses spurred a slew of discontentment that was temporarily silenced but never resolved. With the help of the technology of that age, the printing press, ideas were now being distributed at remarkable speed and also being shared throughout at remarkable length. From manuscripts to wood-cuttings, the reformation was started and ensured that everyone in society was involved and informed.

What followed was a rush of reformists born in countries across Europe. After the excommunication of Luther in Germany, the writings of John Calvin prompted a united front among many groups stretching to Switzerland, Scotland, Hungary, Germany and elsewhere. Many, many points of debate against the church were brought up including but not limited to Purgatory, particular judgment, devotion to Mary, the intercession of and devotion to the saints, most of the sacraments, the mandatory celibacy requirement of its clergy (including monasticism), and the authority of the Pope.

In 1529, under Henry VIII the separation of church and state occurred, leaving England to side with the Protestant reformers. From this today, what we have is a collection of denominations of Christianity, each with their sets of belief varying from one to the next: Lutheranism, Reformed/Calvinists/Presbyterians and Anabaptists. The Protestant Reformation is also referred to as The German Reformation, The Protestant Revolution, Protestant Revolt, and in Germany, the Lutheran Reformation.



The Reformation Wall in Geneva. From left: William Farel, John Calvin, Theodore Beza, and John Knox.

**A Brief Glance...**  
**Christopher Marlowe's *The Tragical History of Dr. Faustus***

The story of Dr. Faustus is one of a poor man, born to common parents. As he grows older, he becomes a scholar, rich in knowledge of all of the world's greatest intellectual areas: theology, medicine, law and philosophy. He quickly tires of these, however and begins to wonder what else is out there. He claims that all of these intellectual pursuits tire him, since he believes he has achieved all there is to achieve in each one. He calls upon his friends Valdes and Cornelius, two practitioners of Magic. However, before these two arrive, two invisible angels, one good and one bad arrive. The good angel tries to dissuade him of his forthcoming actions; the bad angel encourages him to go forward. Finally, his two friends arrive and teach him the bases of magic.

Using this newfound knowledge, Faustus conjures up a devil, Mephistopheles. Because Faustus has already blasphemed against his theological knowledge, Mephistopheles comes to see if he can claim Faustus' soul. After conversation, and the illusions of grandeur that dance around his head, Faustus agrees to a 24 year contract with this devil. He promises his soul in servitude to the devil for all eternity if he can have 24 years with Mephistopheles as his own servant on earth. Mephistopheles goes to Lucifer, the prince of devils to ask if this contract would suffice; Lucifer demands it be written in Faustus' blood. As Faustus is drawing up the contract, a warning ("Homo, fuge!" which means "Man, fly!" in Latin) appears on his arm. Before Faustus can distinguish this as a warning from God, Mephistopheles entrances him with visions of riches and the contract is done.

The first things Faustus asks for the knowledge of hell, a wife, and books on astronomy and the stars. Mephistopheles tells him of hell and Faustus decides it doesn't sound particularly terrible. He is granted books on astronomy and the like and then slowly finds himself wanting to repent. As he calls on the name of Christ, Lucifer himself appears to him and again, entertaining him with spectacle, deters his mind from wishing to withdraw from his agreement.

Faustus travels the world now and his fame is begins to precede him. He goes to Rome and plays a practical joke on the Pope; he travels to Germany and makes Alexander the Great and his Paramour appear; he spites a nay-saying knight by giving him horns on his head; he produces grapes in the winter in front of the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt; and makes the beautiful Helen of Troy appear before a group of scholars. Faustus knows his time grows nearer and wants a last-minute attempt at redemption. Mephistopheles reminds him of the pact he made, and Faustus can do nothing. His last request is to have Helen of Troy as his lover. His scholar friends all try to persuade him that he still has a chance at redemption with God, but by then it is too late. Midnight comes and devils come to take Faustus away.

It has been said that no Elizabethan play outside of Shakespeare's work has ever caused more controversy as this telling of the legend of Dr. Faustus. It was performed 25 times between the years 1594 and 1597 by the Admiral's Men. The intensity of the play accrued many legends. One such legend states that actual devils appeared during a performance and caused hysteria among the crowd watching. Allegedly, some spectators were even driven mad, and Edward Alleyn, lead actor of the Admiral's Men devoted his years to charitable works in response to this occurrence.

## A Brief Glance...Goethe's *Faust*

In Goethe's version of the Faust legend, it is broken up into two parts. The first is many layered and complicated, taking place in various settings. It begins in Heaven where Mephistopheles makes a bet with God that he can get his favorite human, Dr. Faust to walk away from religious pursuits. Meanwhile, in his study, Faust contemplates what else there is to learn. He wonders about magic and turns to it for the ultimate bout of knowledge. However, he does not seem successful with this attempt and contemplates suicide as the last option. He decides against this and then goes for a walk. A stray poodle follows him home and once back in his study the poodle transforms into Mephistopheles.

Mephistopheles presents an enticing contract to Faust: if he will promise his servitude to the devil in hell, the devil will promise his to Faust while he is here on earth. He is also told that if Faust encounters anything along the way that was given to him that makes him want to stay in that moment forever, he will die in that instant. Faust is asked to sign the contract in blood, but before doing so, Faust tells Mephistopheles he does not trust this contract. The devil cleverly argues him back around, and the contract is sealed.

In his adventures, Faust meets Margarete (or Gretchen) and falls in love. With jewelry and help from a neighbor, Mephistopheles is able to get Gretchen into Faust's arms. He seduces her and they sleep together. Gretchen then poisons her own mother, so overcome with Faust, so that he can visit her in privacy. She discovers she is pregnant with his child, but because she is not a married woman, she drowns the illegitimate child and is convicted with the murder. Faust tries to free her from prison, but she is enraged, remorseful at her sin and refuses to leave with him. He flees from the dungeon and voices from the heavens let him know that Gretchen will be saved.

In part II, Faust continues to strive for the ultimate luxuries in life. He is then faced with four elderly women, Want, Care, Need and Debt. Their brother Death was nearby, as it was nearing the end of Faust's life. Care asks if genuine affection is something he had never experienced and though he tries to argue that he has had everything he was ever wanted, some emptiness still looms inside of him that he could not explain. Care tells him that humans live their lives blind, and this is a revelation to Faust. As he becomes blind, he is joyful and admits his sins and repents for them all. He dies and Mephistopheles comes to claim his soul. Angels pour forth from the heavens to distract him, and allow Faust's soul to be saved and rise to the heavens, alluding to the notion that true repentance can indeed save one so damned.

This version of the Faustus tale was meant to be a closet drama, meaning a play only to be read and never performed. Goethe completed the second part in 1832 shortly before his death. The complete version created by Goethe was printed posthumously.



## A Brief Glance...*Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*

The king of Denmark has been dead for two months; his widow has married his brother; and sudden speak of foul play is where we meet Hamlet, the young prince angered by his mother's betrayal. His father's ghost appears telling him that Claudius, the king's brother and new king, is responsible for his death. Claudius poured poison in his brother's ear. Hamlet is outraged and immediately begins plotting his father's revenge which is complicated by the new marriage between his father's murderer and his mother.

Hamlet begins acting mad, confusing the rest of the kingdom. At the prompting of Polonius, his trusted advisor, Claudius sends Rosencrantz and Guildenstern (old friends of Hamlet's) to spy on him to see if any cause can be found. Hamlet takes his act of madness as far as abusing Ophelia, his once love and daughter of Polonius driving her mad. Polonius orders Ophelia not to associate with Hamlet any longer.

Claudius begins to fear his well-being and decides to send Hamlet to England. Before his departure, Hamlet organizes a performance by an acting troupe to essentially act out his father's murder, in the hopes that this would drive Claudius to a confession. The king is outraged, but confesses nothing. The queen tries to reason with Hamlet after the play, begging him to calm down as Polonius eavesdrops from behind a curtain. Hamlet convinced that it is Claudius spying sends a sword through Polonius's heart. Upon realizing he has murdered Polonius, he is regretful and sent to England, with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern by his side. The English have orders from Claudius to kill Hamlet upon arrival. Laertes, Polonius' son returns from France, enraged over his father's death. Ophelia is further driven mad, and drowns herself, sending Laertes into his own tailspin over the death of his two closest family members.

Hamlet manages to have the orders switched and instead has Rosencrantz and Guildenstern killed in England. He is then captured by pirates and brought back to Denmark on ransom. Claudius is furious that Hamlet has found his way back and arranges a duel between him and Laertes. Claudius takes measures to ensure Hamlet's death: he drops poison on the tip of Laertes' sword and he poisons the victory cup, in case Hamlet wins. During the match, the queen drinks of the poisoned cup. Laertes then loses the match to Hamlet and illegally scratches him with the poisoned sword. Hamlet not knowing his sword is poisoned manages to switch weapons with Laertes. Now with the poisoned sword in hand he cuts Laertes, fatally wounding him. The dying queen screams out that her cup was poisoned. Laertes, also dying, proclaims Claudius' treachery. With a weak hand but firm resolve, Hamlet stabs Claudius with the poisoned sword. Horatio, a confidant of Hamlet wants to commit suicide out of sorrow, but Hamlet entreats him to live and tell the tale of this fallen family. Fortinbras, the prince of Norway arrives after conquest of England to become the new King of Denmark.

*Hamlet* is Shakespeare's longest tragedy, and arguably one of the most performed to this day. The play's many psychological layers allow for every interpretation of the play to be wildly different and still be true to the text. The play includes some of the most-renowned speeches known to man such as "What a piece of work is man", "Speak the speech", and perhaps the most famous of all, "To be or not to be."

THE  
Tragical Historie of  
HAMLET,  
Prince of Denmarke.  
By William Shakespeare.

Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much  
again as it was, according to the true and perfect  
Copie.



AT LONDON,  
Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be sold at his  
shoppe vnder Saint Dunstons Church in  
Fleetstreet. 1616.

## Questions to Consider...

1. List the major differences in character between Dr. Faustus and Dr. Luther-not just as people, but as professors. What are some subtle hints in the play that point to their differences?
2. What do you think the visions of Gaia and the Virgin Mary (two very different mothers) represent to Hamlet?
3. Dr. Faustus sings three songs during his appearances at the Bunghole. Why do you think the playwright chose these particular songs?
4. What were the negative implications of discovering that the earth revolved around the sun? What kind of discovery would have to be made today to carry the same weight as that of Copernik's?
5. Why do you think the playwright chose specifically to group all the females under the label "Eternal Feminine"? Who was the most prominent of all the female characters? Why? How can her influence be seen on all of the characters?
6. If you could ask David Davalos (the playwright) any single question about the play, what would it be and why?
8. What do you think the design scheme in the play is? What purpose does it serve the play? Name some examples.
9. What are major weaknesses of the three men in the story?
10. Which character do you most relate to? Why?

## For Future Reading

If you liked *Wittenberg* you might enjoy these plays as well:

*Picasso at the Lapine Agile* by Steve Martin  
*Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)* by Ann Marie MacDonald  
*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* by Tom Stoppard  
*Desdemona, a Play About a Handkerchief* by Paula Vogel

## Where We Got our Information:

[www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)

<http://www.awerty.com/faust.html>

[www.sparknotes.com](http://www.sparknotes.com)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Texts/faustus.html>

<http://www.csuchico.edu/~cgoulding/faust/faustlinks.htm>

<http://www.csuchico.edu/~cgoulding/faust/faustlinks.htm>

<http://www.about-shakespeare.com/hamlet.php>

<http://awerty.com/hamlet2.html>

<http://history.hanover.edu/early/prot.html>

<http://www.schoolshistory.org.uk/protestantreformation.htm>

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12700b.htm>