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Bridging the Gap: Physics in the Plays of Tom Stoppard

BRADLEY CARROLL, Weber State University — The idea of a communication gap between the sciences and the arts is persistent in academia. To help bridge this gap, I created an Honors course that attempts to make connections between physics and drama: Physics in the Plays of Tom Stoppard. Three of Stoppard's plays explicitly incorporate physics into their plots. The topics included in the plays span the syllabus of a typical conceptual physics course, from Galileo's experiments with freely falling balls to quantum indeterminacy. A descriptive physics text is used along with the plays to supply the necessary background and continuity. The structure of the course, and student reactions, are described.

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