

# Postcards from the Edge: Reference & Instruction for Theatre Studies

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# Workshop Agenda

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 1:00 – 1:15 | Introductions  |
| 1:15 – 1:45 | What Art Librarians need to know about Theatre Studies |
| 1:45 – 2:45 | Reference Materials                                    |
| 2:45 – 3:15 | Coffee Break   |
| 3:15 – 4:00 | Books, Journals & Collection Development               |
| 4:00 – 5:00 | Databases & Indexes                                    |

# What Art Librarians need to know about Theatre Studies

## Who are we talking to???

- Theatre Scholars/Historians
- Practitioners:
  - Actors
  - Directors
  - Costume Designers
  - Set & Lighting Designers
- Dramaturgs/Literary Managers
- Playwrights

**What are their goals for research & writing?**

**What are their research needs?**

# What Art Librarians need to know about Theatre Studies

**DRAMA = the work of a playwright**

**THEATRE = a performed play**

## **5 Types of Writing:**

1. performance reviews/dramatic criticism
2. text analysis
3. theatre history
4. dramatic theory
5. theatrical essay

*Taken from:*

Thaiss, Christopher and Rick Davis. Writing About Theatre.  
Needham Heights: Allyn & Bacon, 1999.

# Performance Reviews & Dramatic Criticism

## Comprised of 3 elements:

1. Reportage
2. Analysis
3. Judgment

## 2 types of Authors:

1. Theatre Reviewer
  - Publishes in newspapers/magazines
  - Heavy on reportage w/ some opinion
2. Scholar of Dramatic Literature
  - Publishes in journals
  - Heavy on analysis & judgment

# Text Analysis

## 2 forms:

### 1. Literary Analysis

- Formally constructed
- Author/audience is academic/scholarly
- Examines themes, images, language, context, or other defining characteristics

### 2. Functional Analysis

- Informally constructed (note-like)
- Author/audience is artists & practitioners
- Communicates one's understanding of a play to those involved in the production

# Theatre History

**Type of writing MOST dependent on research...**

## **RESEARCH SOURCES:**

- Recordings (modern)
- Reviews (since 18th century, mainly)
- Diaries
- Paintings/engravings
- References in literature

## **3 Types:**

1. Physical Theatre
2. Social Theatre
3. Performing Theatre

# Dramatic Theory & the Theatrical Essay

## Theory:

- Rigorous, scholarly
- Written for people in the field
- Focused on single issue

## Essay:

- "leisurely stroll through a garden of ideas"
- Non-specialized audience
- Synthesizes musings/observations

## Framing Questions:

1. Why do we make theatre?
2. What constitutes a "good" play or performance (or "bad")?
3. What is the value of drama?
4. How do plays & performances communicate meaning?
5. How are plays & performances organized?
6. What is the nature of representation?
7. What is the relationship between text & performance?
8. How does drama interact with society?

## Reference Materials

# Types of Theatre Reference

1. General
2. People
3. Genre
4. Cultural Groups & Women in Theatre
5. Costume Design
6. Stage Craft
7. Play Indexes

# Reference Materials

## Hands-on Time

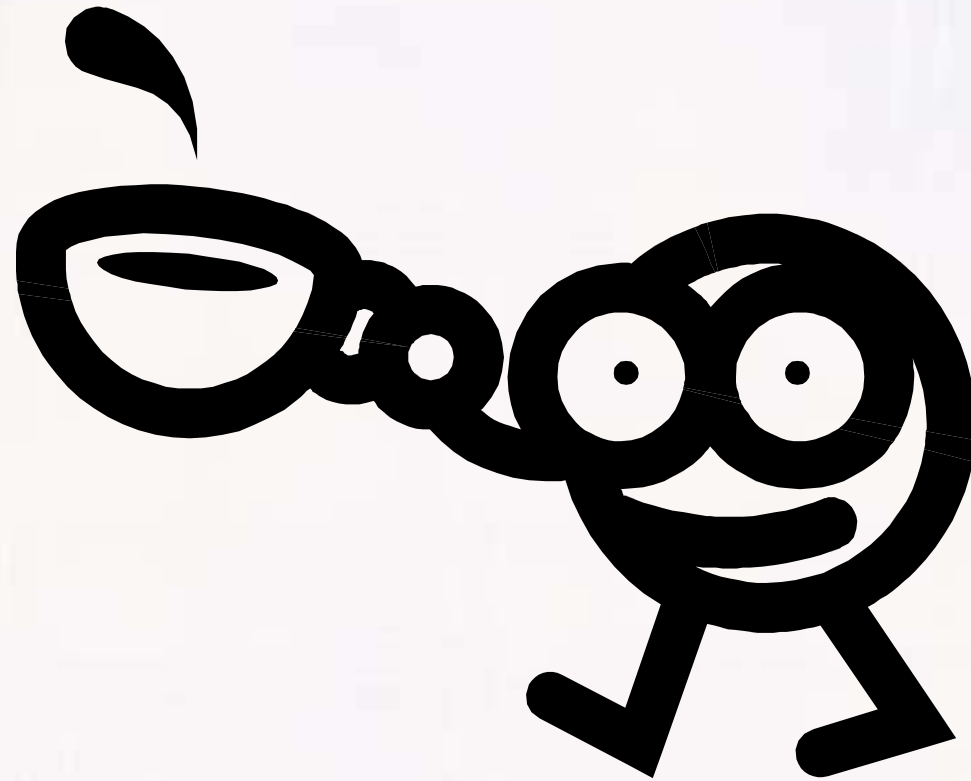
### Questions to consider:

- Why would a student need a resource like this?
- What type of user would need this resource?
- How “far” does this resource go?
- Does this resource give options for further investigation?
- What are the limitations of this resource?
- How can this resource help me:
  - At the reference desk
  - With collection development
  - In an instruction session
- In a class setting, how would I explain the use of this resource?

## Reference Materials

# Online Hands-on Time

- **Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre & Performance**
  - User name: nedda ahmed
  - Password: 25108001016858
- **Play Index**
  - H.W. Wilson
  - [www.hwwilson.com/arlisna.htm](http://www.hwwilson.com/arlisna.htm)
- **Inter-Play** (free)
  - [www.lib.pdx.edu/systems/interplay](http://www.lib.pdx.edu/systems/interplay)
- **Morton Grove Public Library Play Index** (free)
  - [www.webrary.org/ref/searchplays.html](http://www.webrary.org/ref/searchplays.html)



**TAKE 5!**

# Books

## 6 Major Types of Books:

1. Scripts\* & Prompt Books\*
2. Biographies, Memoirs\*, Interviews\*
3. History & Analysis
4. Design: Costume, Scenery, Lighting
5. Acting (“How To”)

Check out the  
catalogs!

*\* Indicates primary source material*

# Full Text Plays: Licensed Content

- **ProQuest**

<http://trials.proquest.com/ptc?userid=2210298>

Password: easteregg

- Twentieth-Century Drama
- American Drama
- Editions and Adaptations of Shakespeare
- English Prose Drama/English Verse Drama

- **Alexander Street Press**

North American Theatre Online

<http://atho.alexanderstreet.com/>

Login: reviewer Password: 5flamboyant37

- Asian American Drama
- Black Drama - 1850 to Present
- Latino Drama
- Twentieth Century North American Drama
- North American Women's Drama

# Full Text Plays: FREE Content

- **Project Gutenberg**  
<http://www.gutenberg.org>
- **Complete Works of Shakespeare**  
<http://the-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/works.html>
- **Alex Catalogue**  
<http://www.infomotions.com/alex>
- **Electronic Text Center**  
<http://etext.lib.Virginia.edu>
- **Online Books Page**  
<http://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/subjects.html>

# Periodicals

## 5 Major Types of Periodicals:

1. Scholarly Journals
  - Cover all types of theatre writing
2. Stagecraft
  - Useful for theatre history researchers & practitioners; sometimes contain interviews w/ directors & actors
3. Trade publications
  - Public reception facts & figures
4. Newspapers
  - Reviews, reviews, reviews!
  - NY Times, LA Times, The Times (London)
5. Popular magazines
  - Document intersection society + theatre

# Indexes

- Gale Literary Criticism Series
  - Literature criticism from 1400 to 1800
  - Shakespearean criticism
  - Drama criticism
  - Nineteenth-century literature criticism
- National Theatre Critics' Reviews (formerly New York Theatre Critics' Reviews)
  - Full-text reviews of New York and regional productions culled from U.S. newspapers.
  - Coverage: 1940-1996.
- A Guide to Critical Reviews
  - Index to reviews of New York City productions published in U.S. and Canadian periodicals.

Not an index, but a good bibliography...

*How to Locate Reviews of Plays and Films: A Bibliography of Criticism from the Beginnings to the Present* by Gordon Samples

## Databases:

# Theatre-specific

- **International Bibliography of Theatre & Dance:**

<http://search.ebscohost.com>

Login: theatre Password: workshop

- From EBSCO
- 1984-present
- Available with or without full text

- **International Index to the Performing Arts:**

<http://trials.proquest.com/ptc?userid=2210298>

Password: easteregg

- From Chadwyck-Healey
- 1864-present
- Available with or without full text

## Databases: Theatre-related

- ARTstor
- Avery Architectural Index
- Jstor
- Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature
- Literature Resource Center\*
- MLA International Bibliography\*
- Shakespeare Collection\*
- Historical newspaper collections (such as America's Historical Newspapers)
- History databases (such as Hist. Abstracts or America: History & Life)

\* Trial Access:

<http://trials.galegroup.com/pubacd/>

Login: discovering

Password: authors

# **SCENE!**

Questions?

Comments?

Other ideas to share?

*Powerpoint slides & handouts will be posted to the ARLIS/NA  
Web site, under "Conference Proceedings"*