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The Death of the Playwright?

Modern British Drama and Literary Theory

Edited by Adrian Page
*Principal Lecturer in English and
Communication Studies
Luton College of Higher Education*

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Preface

This volume contains nine essays which debate issues arising from contemporary literary theory in relation to drama of the modern period. The authors propose new theoretical approaches to recent drama which derive from post-structuralism, semiotics, feminism, Bakhtinian theory and psychoanalysis. The essays range over much of the 'canonical' drama which has been subjected to literary approaches and suggest ways of re-reading well-known texts. The introduction addresses the theoretical issues raised by Barthes' essay 'The Death of the Author' and surveys the writing which explores the relationship between theory and drama in the light of them. The collection as a whole both continues current debates and seeks to demonstrate where literary theory can draw attention to the particular qualities of modern drama. The collection covers aspects of the work of Ann Jellicoe, Alan Bleasdale, Jill Hyem and Anne Valery, Shelagh Delaney, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, Howard Brenton, Howard Barker, John McGrath, Joe Orton, Caryl Churchill, Trevor Griffiths and David Hare.

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Notes on the Contributors

Edward J. Esche is a lecturer at Anglia Higher Education College where he specialises mainly in Renaissance and twentieth-century writing, and critical theory. He is the author with Nigel Wheale of *Writing and Society 1570–1660* which aims to apply the recent developments of New Historicism to the writing of the period.

Peter Griffith studied English at King's College Cambridge, and Education at London University Institute of Education, before teaching in a wide variety of schools for ten years. He also worked for a while in the extra-mural department of Stockholm University. Since 1976 he has been employed by the Open University where he is currently Director of Professional Development in Education. He is the author of *Literary Theory and English Teaching*.

Trevor R. Griffiths lectures in the School of Literary and Media Studies and is currently Humanities Faculty Research Director at the Polytechnic of North London. He has research interests in contemporary theatre and performance analysis. His most recent book (with Carol Woddis) is *The Bloomsbury Theatre Guide*.

Audrey McMullan is the Beckett Research Fellow at the University of Reading, Department of French. She has published articles on Beckett in *Modern Drama*, *Journal of Beckett Studies* and *French Studies*.

Adrian Page is a Principal Lecturer in English at Luton College of Higher Education. He has also taught at the Bowen-West Community Theatre in Bedford. He has research interests in postmodernism and contemporary fiction, cultural theory and contemporary drama. He is co-editor of *Teaching the Text* with colleagues from Bedford.

Chris Pawling is Principal Lecturer in Communications at Sheffield City Polytechnic and course leader for the MA in Communication Studies. He has written articles on literary theory and the sociology of culture for a number of journals and has edited a collection of essays entitled *Popular Fiction and Social Change*. His most recent publication is *Christopher Caudwell: Towards a Dialectical Theory of Literature*.

Tessa Perkins has taught and researched Sociology, Women's Studies and Media Studies at various institutions. She is currently Senior Lecturer in Communication Studies at Sheffield City Polytechnic. She is co-author (with Veronica Beechey) of *A Matter of Hours*, a book about women's part-time employment and has also written articles on cultural theory. Her most recent article is 'The Politics of "Jane Fonda"' in a forthcoming publication edited by Christine Gledhill.

Rick Rylance is Senior Lecturer in English at Anglia Higher Education College. He is an editor of the journal *Ideas and Production* and has published *Debating Texts: a Reader in Twentieth-Century Literary Theory and Method* and articles on nineteenth- and twentieth-century literature and culture. He is presently writing a book on Roland Barthes.

Jane Thomas worked as Community Theatre and Education Officer for Hull Truck Theatre Company while completing a PhD on women in the novels of Thomas Hardy. Since then she has published a number of articles on contemporary women writers and has written entries on British, American and Russian novelists, poets and dramatists for the forthcoming *Yale Feminist Companion to Women Writers*. She is now employed as a part-time Lecturer in English at Hull University.

Judith Thompson is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at Hatfield Polytechnic. She has for a number of years been involved in devising and teaching courses on theatre, and on women's writing, and is currently writing a book on 'Women and Theatre'.

Wendy J. Wheeler lectures in the School of Literary and Media Studies at the Polytechnic of North London. She has research interests in psychoanalytic criticism, post-modernism, drama, and the novel.