



Staging Masculinity: Male Identity in Contemporary American Drama

Carla J. McDonough

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The men in plays such as Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman" or Sam Shepard's "True West" are often presented as universal; little attention is given to the gender dynamics involved in the characters. This work looks at how contemporary playwrights, including Miller, Shepard, Eugene O'Neill, David Mamet, and August Wilson, stage masculinity in their works. It becomes apparent that male playwrights return often to the issues of troubled manhood, usually masked in other issues such as war, business or family. The plays indicate both the attractiveness of the model of traditional masculinity and the illusive nature of this image, which all too often fractures and fails the characters who pursue it. O'Neill's play "The Hairy Ape" and the character Yank receive much attention.

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