

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

How to Find a Play Review

Reference Department

Performances of plays are regularly reviewed in newspapers and magazines. These reviews are valuable sources of information about plays and their production. Criticism of plays as literature can also be of considerable value, but will not be included in this guide.

COLLECTIONS OF REVIEWS

New York Theatre Critics' Reviews. Vol. Began in May 1940; ceased with v. 55, no. 20 in 1994. New York: Critics' Theatre Reviews inc.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 792.05 N567

This publication contains the entire text of reviews of Broadway and off-Broadway plays, reprinted from the major newspapers and from magazines such as Time and Newsweek. An annual index by playwright, actor and producer is published. Continued by National Theatre Critics' Reviews, 1995-96. (No longer published).

Beckerman, Bernard, and Howard Siegman. *On Stage; Selected Theater Reviews from the New York Times, 1920-1970*. [New York]: Quadrangle, 1973.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 792.9 B396o

The reviews reprinted here can be located by a title and playwright index.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The texts of most reviews are not located in the Reference Room; often it will be necessary to consult a bibliography or index to find where a review is located in a particular magazine or newspaper. The bibliographies listed here provide extensive lists of reviews:

Salem, James M. *A Guide to Critical Reviews*. 3rd ed. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1984.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 016.8092 S163g 1984

Pt. I: American Drama, 1909-1982. Pt. II: The Musical, 1909-1989. Pt. III: British and Continental Drama, 1909-1977. This work indexes reviews in general periodicals and newspapers, during time periods indicated. Reviews are listed under the name of the playwright; there are indexes by play title and by co-author.

The New York Times Theater Reviews Index, 1870-1919. New York: New York Times and Arno Press 1975.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 792.9025 N5325

This book indexes play reviews from the New York Times published between 1920 and 1970. Both this and the previous volume have a personal name index (by playwright, producer and actor) and a title index.

Continued by:

The New York Times Directory of the Theater. [New York]: Arno Press, 1973.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 792.9025 N532

Samples, Gordon. *How to Locate Reviews of Plays and Films: A Bibliography of Criticism from the Beginnings to the Present*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1976.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 016.791 S192h

This is helpful in locating additional sources for play reviews. Since it was published in 1976, it does not list recently published books.

Brooklyn College. Theatre Research Data Center., et al. *International Bibliography of Theatre*. Vol. Ceased with 1999. [Brooklyn, N.Y.] Distributed by the Pub. Center for Cultural Resources, 1999.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 016.79205 I61

Substantial bibliography. Reviews are listed under "Drama-performance/productions" but need to be found by searching under the title of the play in the subject index.

INDEXES AND ABSTRACTS

[Academic OneFile](#)  Coverage: Varies by title

Change search from *Subject* to *Basic Search*. Type the name of the play and "theater reviews," e.g. wicked and "theater reviews" Type the title of the play in the search box.

Annual Magazine Subject-Index. Vol. 1908-1949. Boston: Boston Book Co., 1909.

MAIN Reference (Non-circulating) 050 M18

Each volume contains a separate section at the end, the "Dramatic Index," which was one of the best listings of play reviews in periodicals during the years when this was published.

[Academic Search Premier](#)  Coverage: Varies by title

Click on *Advanced Search* tab. In the *Refine Search* area, change *Publication Type* to *Entertainment Review*. Type the title of the play in the search box.

[International Bibliography of Theatre & Dance](#)  Coverage: Varies by title

Click on *Advanced Search* tab. In the *Refine Search* area, change *Publication Type* to *Entertainment Review*. Type the title of the play in the search box.

[International Index to the Performing Arts: IIPA](#)  Coverage: Varies by title

Click on *Search Articles*. Select *Theater Review* from the list under *Document Type*. Type in the title of the Play in the search box.

[Lexisnexis Academic](#)  Coverage: Varies by title

Click on *News* tab. From the *Select Sources* drop-down menu, choose *Book, movie, music, play and video reviews*. Type the title of the play in the search box and change it to search *In Headline*.

[Humanities Abstracts](#)  Coverage: Indexing 1983-Present, Abstracting 1984-Present

Change *Document Type* to *Theater Review*. Type the title of the play in the search box.

[Readers' Guide Abstracts](#)  Coverage: Indexing 1983-Present, Abstracting 1984-Present

Change *Document Type* to *Theater Review*. Type the title of the play search box.

[Readers' Guide Retrospective](#)  Coverage: 1890 – 1982

Change *Document Type* to *Theater Review*. Type the title of the play search box.

[The Times Digital Archive](#)  Coverage: *The Times [London]* 1785-1985

Click on *Advanced Search*. Under *Features* section, check the box for *Reviews*. Type in the title of the play in the search box.

[Web of Science](#)  (Includes *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*) Coverage: 1975-present

Click on *General Search*. Type the name of the play or playwright in the *Topic* line and select *Theater Review* from the list of document types at the bottom of the search screen.