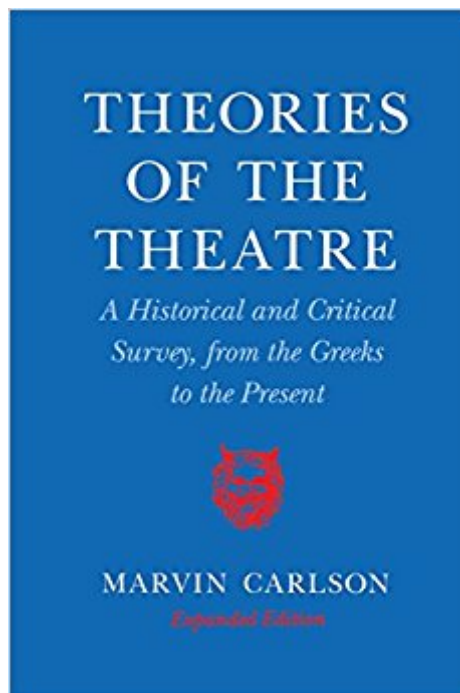




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# Theories Of The Theatre: A Historical And Critical Survey, From The Greeks To The Present



## Synopsis

Beginning with Aristotle and the Greeks and ending with semiotics and post-structuralism, *Theories of the Theatre* is the first comprehensive survey of Western dramatic theory. In this expanded edition the author has updated the book and added a new concluding chapter that focuses on theoretical developments since 1980, emphasizing the impact of feminist theory.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A comprehensive and readable guide that will be the standard work for many years to come." •*Times Literary Supplement* "Carlson has taken on the monumental task of abstracting the major theoretical statements on the theater from the Greeks to the present. He cogently summarizes the texts, drawing comparisons freely while avoiding evaluation. The book's organization is historical, with national divisions until the 20th century, at which time all countries are considered together within much more finely defined time limits. This is a much needed book." •*Choice* "The coverage in *Theories of the Theatre* is remarkable. It is already difficult to imagine seriously undertaking theatre studies without this volume in a prominent place on one's shelf." •*Theatre Survey*

Carlson starts with the Greeks in his historical review of the theatre. Aristotle kicks the time line off with his *Poetics*, then Carlson introduces other Greek authors who addressed and responded to Aristotle's philosophy. Carlson then moves forward chronologically through the centuries, focusing

on key people who contributed thought and new works in the realm of Theatre Theory. This work is dense material, and best meant for upper division college students and graduate students. I know it has been a staple text for many Theatre Theory professors and their pupils (from undergrad to PhD). I find that it is helpful to know the basic histories of the periods which Carlson addresses. Knowing the context in which the art was created helps put things into a greater context and organization. Carlson does explain a bit about the culture of the times in which each theory was developed, however since this text is a text on theory and not history in general, he does not go into great detail about the history of the period, but rather the history of the theory itself. Carlson is clearly well researched, and therefore makes an excellent secondary and tertiary source for matters related to theory and the theorists.

Perfect gift for an aspiring actress.

There are a number of reviews listed here that praise the work of Marvin Carlson. I feel that all I can do is reiterate the strongest of reviews and praises for Carlson and his work. This book is not only essential for graduate students, but for all scholars of theatre. Carlson has undertaken a tremendous task, and completed it with skill, ingenuity, and a level of understanding -- not only of the theories included in this volume, but the historiography involved in collecting these theories --- which all scholars should strive for.

Dr. Carlson does the remarkable by condensing the dominant Western theatre ideals and theories into a series of chapters. Major names and works are cited along with the theories. While a work of this sort cannot go into great detail, this book is a must have for anyone interested in theatre history and theory.

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