

# am i blue beth henley

**\*\*Am I Blue Beth Henley: Exploring the Play's Depths and Impact\*\***

**am i blue beth henley** is more than just the title of a play; it represents a poignant exploration of identity, loneliness, and the human struggle for connection. Beth Henley, an acclaimed American playwright, has crafted a rich narrative that delves into the complexities of everyday life, blending humor and tragedy in a way that resonates deeply with audiences. If you're curious about what makes *\*Am I Blue\** stand out and why it continues to be studied and performed decades after its debut, this article will guide you through the heart of the play, its themes, and its significance in the landscape of contemporary theater.

## Understanding Am I Blue Beth Henley

Beth Henley emerged as a powerful voice in American theater during the late 20th century, known for her sharp wit and ability to portray Southern life with authenticity. *\*Am I Blue\**, first performed in 1972, is one of her earlier works and showcases the foundational elements of her style: richly drawn characters, regional dialects, and a deep emotional undercurrent.

Unlike traditional plays focused on grand narratives or sweeping historical moments, *\*Am I Blue\** zooms in on the intimate struggles of its characters. The play centers on the interactions between two strangers who meet in a bus station, each grappling with loneliness and personal turmoil. Henley's writing captures the fragility of human connection, making the audience reflect on their own experiences of isolation and hope.

## The Plot and Characters of Am I Blue

At its core, *\*Am I Blue\** is a character-driven story. The two main characters, John and Ashbe, find themselves in a city far from home, both feeling displaced and emotionally adrift. Their chance encounter sparks conversations that peel back layers of pain, humor, and longing.

John is a sensitive and somewhat lost young man, while Ashbe is more world-weary but equally vulnerable. Through their dialogue, Henley reveals their backstories and inner conflicts without resorting to melodrama. The subtle tension between them captures the essence of human connection—how strangers can briefly become confidants, offering solace in a cold world.

## Thematic Elements in Am I Blue Beth Henley

One of the reasons *\*Am I Blue\** continues to resonate is its exploration of universal themes. Henley's ability to weave these themes seamlessly into her dialogue and character development is a testament to her skill as a playwright.

## **Loneliness and Alienation**

Loneliness is at the heart of *\*Am I Blue\**. Both John and Ashbe embody different facets of alienation. The bus station setting—a transient place where people come and go—symbolizes the impermanence and disconnection that the characters feel. For many viewers and readers, this setting becomes a metaphor for life's fleeting moments of connection amidst a sea of isolation.

## **Search for Identity and Meaning**

The play's title itself poses a question of identity—"Am I Blue?"—which can be interpreted as an inquiry into one's emotional state or sense of self. Throughout the play, John and Ashbe wrestle with who they are and what they want from life. This search for meaning is a powerful theme that resonates with anyone who has ever felt lost or uncertain about their place in the world.

## **Southern Gothic Influences**

Beth Henley's Southern background colors her writing with Southern Gothic elements—quirky characters, dark humor, and an undercurrent of melancholy. These influences give *\*Am I Blue\** a distinctive flavor, contrasting the bleakness of the characters' situations with moments of levity and hope.

## **Why *Am I Blue* Beth Henley Matters in Modern Theater**

Understanding the significance of *\*Am I Blue\** within the broader context of theater can deepen appreciation for the play. Beth Henley's work helped to usher in a new era of American drama that focused on the nuanced portrayal of everyday people rather than grandiose narratives.

## **Henley's Impact on Female Playwrights**

Beth Henley is often celebrated as a pioneering female playwright who brought authentic female perspectives to the stage. With *\*Am I Blue\** and her later works such as *\*Crimes of the Heart\**, she challenged traditional gender roles and showcased complex women and men struggling with real issues. This has inspired countless playwrights to explore similar themes with honesty and creativity.

## **Timelessness of the Play's Themes**

The themes of loneliness, identity, and connection are timeless, making *\*Am I Blue\** a relevant work for contemporary audiences. In an era marked by social isolation and rapid change, Henley's portrayal of human vulnerability feels especially poignant. Theater companies continue to stage the play because it

speaks to the heart of the human experience in any era.

## How to Approach Reading or Watching *Am I Blue* Beth Henley

If you're new to *\*Am I Blue\** or Henley's work in general, here are some tips to enhance your engagement with the play:

- **Pay attention to dialogue:** Henley's strength lies in her naturalistic dialogue, which reveals character traits and emotional undercurrents. Listen closely to what is said—and what remains unsaid.
- **Consider the setting:** The bus station is more than a backdrop; it symbolizes transience and disconnection. Reflect on how this influences the characters' interactions.
- **Look for humor amidst tragedy:** Henley masterfully balances moments of levity with darker themes. This interplay makes the characters' struggles feel more real and multidimensional.
- **Explore character motivations:** Delve into what drives John and Ashbe, their fears, and hopes. Understanding their inner lives will deepen your appreciation of the play's emotional resonance.

## Studying *Am I Blue* Beth Henley for Academic Purposes

For students and scholars, *\*Am I Blue\** offers rich material for analysis. The play's concise structure and intense focus on character make it ideal for discussions about narrative technique and thematic development.

When studying the play, consider:

1. How Henley uses setting as a character in its own right.
2. The use of symbolism, especially colors and places.
3. The dynamic between the two protagonists and how it evolves.
4. Henley's commentary on societal expectations and personal freedom.

These points can lead to insightful essays or projects that explore the deeper meanings embedded in the text.

## Where to Find *Am I Blue* Beth Henley

For those interested in experiencing *\*Am I Blue\**, several options are

available. The play is often included in collections of Beth Henley's works and can be found in libraries, bookstores, and online retailers. Additionally, many university theater programs and regional theaters stage performances of Henley's plays periodically.

If you prefer a more interactive experience, consider attending a live production or watching recorded performances. This allows you to witness the nuances of the actors' interpretations and the play's emotional impact in real time.

## Other Works by Beth Henley to Explore

If *Am I Blue* captivates you, Henley's other plays are worth exploring as well. Some notable titles include:

- **Crimes of the Heart:** A Pulitzer Prize-winning play about three sisters coping with family turmoil.
- **Abundance:** A dark comedy exploring family secrets and social class.
- **The Miss Firecracker Contest:** A lighthearted yet insightful look at small-town life and personal aspirations.

These works share Henley's characteristic blend of humor, pathos, and insightful character studies, offering a broader view of her contribution to American theater.

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In the end, *Am I Blue* by Beth Henley remains a compelling exploration of the human condition, masterfully crafted by a playwright who knows how to capture life's bittersweet moments. Whether you're a theater enthusiast, a student, or simply curious, diving into this play can offer a meaningful glimpse into the complexity of identity and connection.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the play 'Am I Blue' by Beth Henley about?

'Am I Blue' is a one-act play by Beth Henley that explores themes of loneliness, human connection, and the complexities of relationships through a conversation between two characters in a café.

### Who are the main characters in 'Am I Blue' by Beth Henley?

The main characters in 'Am I Blue' are John and Ashbe, two strangers who meet in a café and engage in a deep and revealing conversation.

## What themes does Beth Henley explore in 'Am I Blue'?

Beth Henley explores themes such as isolation, the search for identity, the desire for connection, and the nuances of human interaction in 'Am I Blue.'

## When was 'Am I Blue' by Beth Henley first performed?

'Am I Blue' was first performed in 1974, early in Beth Henley's career, contributing to her reputation as a significant American playwright.

## How does 'Am I Blue' reflect Beth Henley's writing style?

'Am I Blue' reflects Beth Henley's style through its sharp, witty dialogue, focus on character psychology, and exploration of Southern Gothic elements and human vulnerability.

## Is 'Am I Blue' by Beth Henley often performed in theaters today?

While not as frequently performed as some of Henley's longer works, 'Am I Blue' remains popular in theater workshops and festivals due to its concise format and rich character development.

## Where can I find the script or text of 'Am I Blue' by Beth Henley?

The script for 'Am I Blue' can be found in published collections of Beth Henley's plays or through theatrical publishing companies; some university libraries and online academic resources may also have copies.

## Additional Resources

Am I Blue Beth Henley: A Deep Dive into the Playwright's Early Work

**am i blue beth henley** marks an important milestone in the career of acclaimed American playwright Beth Henley. Known for her distinctive voice in Southern Gothic drama, Henley's work often explores complex human emotions through subtle yet poignant storytelling. "Am I Blue," one of her earlier plays, offers a compelling glimpse into the themes and stylistic elements that would define her later successes, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning "Crimes of the Heart."

This article undertakes a comprehensive analysis of "Am I Blue" by Beth Henley, examining its narrative structure, thematic concerns, and its place within the playwright's oeuvre. Drawing on critical perspectives and contextual background, this review seeks to provide an informed understanding of why "Am I Blue" remains a significant piece in American theater studies.

## Understanding "Am I Blue" in the Context of

# Beth Henley's Career

Beth Henley emerged on the American theater scene during the late 1970s and early 1980s, a period marked by a surge in plays that focused on the intricacies of personal relationships and regional identity. "Am I Blue," written prior to her breakthrough, is often studied as a foundational text that reveals Henley's early experimentation with dialogue, character development, and mood.

Unlike some of her more famous works, "Am I Blue" is characterized by its minimalist approach to plot but rich exploration of emotional undercurrents. The play's title itself hints at themes of melancholy and introspection—hallmarks of Henley's style. Critics have noted that while the play lacks the dramatic complexity of her later works, it effectively captures the human vulnerability that Henley so deftly portrays.

## Thematic Exploration: Melancholy and Identity

At its core, "Am I Blue" grapples with themes of loneliness, identity, and the search for connection. The narrative centers around characters who are navigating their personal crises, often in the backdrop of Southern settings that evoke a sense of nostalgia and longing. This thematic focus resonates with the broader Southern Gothic tradition, which Henley both inherits and reinvents.

The play's exploration of emotional isolation is subtle but impactful. Henley's use of sparse dialogue and silent pauses invites the audience to engage actively with the characters' internal struggles. Through this, "Am I Blue" becomes more than a simple narrative; it transforms into an emotional landscape where vulnerability and resilience coexist.

## Characterization and Dialogue

Beth Henley's skillful character construction is evident in "Am I Blue." The characters, though few, are richly drawn and exhibit a believable complexity. Henley's dialogue, noted for its naturalism, captures the cadence and idiomatic expressions of Southern speech without resorting to caricature.

This authentic voice contributes to the play's immersive quality. The characters' interactions reveal layers of meaning beneath everyday conversations, highlighting Henley's talent for turning the mundane into moments of dramatic tension. Such techniques would be further refined in later works but are already present in "Am I Blue," making it a valuable study in Henley's development as a playwright.

## Comparative Analysis: "Am I Blue" and Henley's Later Works

When compared to Beth Henley's more celebrated plays like "Crimes of the Heart" and "The Miss Firecracker Contest," "Am I Blue" presents a simpler narrative framework but shares thematic and stylistic DNA with these works.

The sense of place, emotional complexity, and nuanced character relationships are consistent across her plays.

One key difference lies in the scale and dramatic tension. While "Am I Blue" often feels like a quiet meditation on personal pain, Henley's later plays incorporate broader social dynamics and sharper conflicts. This evolution reflects her growing confidence and mastery of theatrical storytelling.

Despite these differences, "Am I Blue" remains crucial for understanding Henley's artistic trajectory. It reveals the seeds of her signature approach—combining humor, pathos, and a keen observation of human nature within a Southern context.

## Critical Reception and Legacy

Although "Am I Blue" did not achieve the widespread acclaim of Henley's subsequent works, it has been appreciated by theater scholars and critics for its honest portrayal of emotional fragility. Reviews from smaller productions highlight the play's intimate atmosphere and the depth of its characters.

From an academic standpoint, "Am I Blue" is often included in anthologies and studies focusing on emerging voices in American theater. Its modest scale makes it a popular choice for regional theaters and drama students exploring Henley's style.

In terms of legacy, "Am I Blue" contributes to the broader recognition of Beth Henley as a pivotal figure in late 20th-century American drama. The play underscores the importance of early works in shaping a playwright's voice and thematic concerns.

## Key Features and Elements of "Am I Blue"

- **Atmospheric Setting:** The play's Southern environment is rendered with subtle details that enhance the mood without overwhelming the narrative.
- **Minimalist Plot:** Rather than relying on complex storylines, the play focuses on character interactions and emotional depth.
- **Naturalistic Dialogue:** The conversations are crafted to mirror real-life speech patterns, adding authenticity.
- **Thematic Focus:** Central themes include loneliness, identity, and the human need for connection.
- **Emotional Ambiguity:** The play leaves much unsaid, inviting audience interpretation and reflection.

## Pros and Cons of "Am I Blue" as a Theatrical Piece

## 1. Pros:

- Offers an intimate portrayal of human emotion.
- Showcases early development of Henley's distinctive voice.
- Suitable for small theater productions due to limited cast and setting.
- Engages audiences through subtlety rather than overt drama.

## 2. Cons:

- Minimal plot may feel slow or uneventful to some viewers.
- Less dramatic tension compared to Henley's later, more acclaimed works.
- Emotional subtlety might not resonate with all audiences expecting clear resolution.

Exploring "Am I Blue" within Beth Henley's portfolio provides valuable insights into the evolution of a playwright who has significantly influenced American drama. The play's understated approach and focus on emotional authenticity laid the groundwork for Henley's later successes, making it a noteworthy piece for theater enthusiasts, scholars, and practitioners alike. Whether studied academically or experienced in performance, "Am I Blue" invites a thoughtful engagement with the nuances of human experience, a hallmark of Beth Henley's enduring legacy.

## Am I Blue Beth Henley

**am i blue beth henley:** **Am I Blue** Beth Henley, 1982

**am i blue beth henley:** The Plays of Beth Henley Gene A. Plunka, 2014-11-18 Beth Henley's twelve complete plays (three of which have been turned into films) have achieved worldwide production. At age 29, she produced her first full-length drama, *Crimes of the Heart*, which won a Pulitzer Prize and garnered three Academy Award nominations as a film. Her Mississippi upbringing and her penchant for the eccentricities of southern culture, however, have caused critics to categorize her writing as a kind of southern gothic folklore inspired by feminist ideology. This book, the first critical study of Henley's complete plays, attempts to dispel the common stereotypes that associate Henley's work with regional drama and sociological treatises. It argues instead that Henley can best be perceived as a dramatist who delineates an existential despair manifested in various forms of what Freud calls the modern neurosis. The book maintains that Henley's plays must be understood as universal statements about the angst of modern civilization, and Henley's characters are assessed in light of Freud's proposition that cultural restrictions create neurotic individuals. The introduction provides a brief account of Henley's childhood and career. Early chapters summarize the theory of the modern anguise espoused in Freud's *Civilization and Its*

Discontents, while later chapters relate this theory to thematic and stylistic elements of Henley's most popular play, *Crimes of the Heart*, as well as *Am I Blue*, *The Wake of Jamie Foster*, *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, *The Debutante Ball*, *The Lucky Spot*, *Abundance*, *Signature*, *Control Freaks*, *Revelers*, *L-Play*, and *Impossible Marriage*.

**am i blue beth henley:** *Beth Henley* Julia A. Fesmire, 2014-01-21 Beth Henley was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Drama and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best American Play for her first full-length play, *Crimes of the Heart*, yet there has been no book-length consideration of her body of work until now. This volume includes original essays that contextualize and analyze her works from a variety of perspectives, focusing on her vexed status as a southern writer, her use of the comic grotesque, and her alleged feminist critiques of modern society. Receiving special attention are lesser-known plays which are crucial to understanding Henley's development as a playwright and postmodern thinker.

**am i blue beth henley:** *Understanding Beth Henley* Robert J. Andreach, 2006 Beth Henley remains best known for '*Crimes of the Heart*', a play that won the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award and later was made into a major motion picture. This introduction to the Mississippi-born playwright and her body of work presents Henley's plays as a unified whole.

**am i blue beth henley:** *Conversations with Beth Henley* Jackson R. Bryer, Mary C. Hartig, 2023-03-24 With roots in the American South, Beth Henley (b. 1952) has for four decades been a working playwright and screenwriter. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1981 at the age of twenty-eight, Henley so far has written twenty-five produced plays that are always original, usually darkly comic, and often experimental. In these interviews, Henley speaks of the plays, from her early crowd-pleasers, *Crimes of the Heart* and *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, to her more experimental plays, including *The Debutante Ball* and *Control Freaks*, to her brilliant and time-bending play, *The Jacksonian*. Henley is a master at writing about the duality of human experience—the beautiful and the grotesque, the cruel and the loving. This duality provokes in Henley both amazement and compassion. She discusses here not only her admiration for Chekhov and other influences, but also her process of bringing a play from notebooks of images and bits of dialogues through rumination, writing, and rewriting to rehearsals and previews. The interviews range from 1981, just before she won the Pulitzer Prize, to 2020 and cover nearly forty years of a creative life, which, as Henley remarks in the most recent interview, is “such a life worth living: to be in tune with the creative process.”

**am i blue beth henley:** *New York Magazine* , 1982-01-25 New York magazine was born in 1968 after a run as an insert of the New York Herald Tribune and quickly made a place for itself as the trusted resource for readers across the country. With award-winning writing and photography covering everything from politics and food to theater and fashion, the magazine's consistent mission has been to reflect back to its audience the energy and excitement of the city itself, while celebrating New York as both a place and an idea.

**am i blue beth henley:** *The History of Southern Women's Literature* Carolyn Perry, Mary Weeks-Baxter, 2002-03-01 Many of America's foremost, and most beloved, authors are also southern and female: Mary Chesnut, Kate Chopin, Ellen Glasgow, Zora Neale Hurston, Eudora Welty, Harper Lee, Maya Angelou, Anne Tyler, Alice Walker, and Lee Smith, to name several. Designating a writer as “southern” if her work reflects the region's grip on her life, Carolyn Perry and Mary Louise Weeks have produced an invaluable guide to the richly diverse and enduring tradition of southern women's literature. Their comprehensive history—the first of its kind in a relatively young field—extends from the pioneer woman to the career woman, embracing black and white, poor and privileged, urban and Appalachian perspectives and experiences. *The History of Southern Women's Literature* allows readers both to explore individual authors and to follow the developing arc of various genres across time. Conduct books and slave narratives; Civil War diaries and letters; the antebellum, postbellum, and modern novel; autobiography and memoirs; poetry; magazine and newspaper writing—these and more receive close attention. Over seventy contributors are represented here, and their essays discuss a wealth of women's issues from four centuries: race, urbanization, and feminism; the myth

of southern womanhood; preset images and assigned social roles—from the belle to the mammy—and real life behind the facade of meeting others' expectations; poverty and the labor movement; responses to Uncle Tom's Cabin and the influence of *Gone with the Wind*. The history of southern women's literature tells, ultimately, the story of the search for freedom within an "insidious tradition," to quote Ellen Glasgow. This teeming volume validates the deep contributions and pleasures of an impressive body of writing and marks a major achievement in women's and literary studies.

**am i blue beth henley: States of Rage** Renee R. Curry, 1996-01-01 States of Rage permeate our culture and our daily lives. From the anti-Catholic protests of ACT-UP to the political posturing of Al Sharpton, from the LA Riots to anti-abortion gunmen murdering clinic personnel, the unleashing of rage, marginalized or institutional, has translated into dead bodies on our campuses and city streets, in our public buildings and in our homes. Rage seems to have gained a currency in the past decade which it previously did not possess. Suddenly we appear willing to employ it more often to describe our own or others' mental states or actions. Rage succinctly describes an ongoing emotional state for many residents and citizens of the United States and elsewhere. States of Rage gathers for the first time a critical mass of writing about rage--its function, expression, and utilities. It examines rage as a cultural phenomenon, delineating its use and explaining why this emotional state increasingly intrudes into our social, artistic, and academic existences. What is the relationship between rage and power(lessness)? How does rage relate to personal or social injustice? Can we ritualize rage or is it always spontaneous? Finally, what provokes rage and what is provocative about it? Essays shed light on the psychological and social origins of rage, its relationship to the self, its connection to culture, and its possible triggers. The volume includes chapters on violence in the workplace, the Montreal massacre, female murderers, the rage of African- American filmmakers, rage as a reaction to persecution, the rage of AIDS activists, class rage, and rage in the academy.

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**am i blue beth henley: Women Pulitzer Playwrights** Carolyn Casey Craig, 2004-11-05 In the first century of the coveted Pulitzer Prizes, only 11 women have won the prize for drama: Zona Gale (1921), Susan Glaspell (1931), Zoe Akins (1935), Mary Coyle Chase (1945), Ketti Frings (1958), Beth Henley (1981), Marsha Norma (1983), Wendy Wasserstein (1989), Paula Vogel (1998), Margaret Edson (1999), and Suzan-Lori Parks (2002). This book is about them and their landmark plays, beginning with Gale's *Miss Lulu Bett*, which championed the unmarried woman forced to work in the home of a married relative, and closing with Parks' controversial *Topdog/Underdog*, which made her the first black woman to win the prize. Drawn from personal interviews with the playwrights and research from archives and unpublished material, this work shows how the stage art of women has reflected life in the American family and traces a strong thread of feminist history in our culture. Overview chapters set the stage for each playwright and play with sketches of the time period, highlighting the major points of women's experiences in culture, society and the family. Other chapters analyze each play in detail and discuss the playwright's life and opinions. The book also includes a quick history of the Pulitzer Prize and a chapter honoring black female playwrights.

**am i blue beth henley: The Actor as Storyteller** Bruce Miller, 2012-01-01 (Book). The Actor as Storyteller is intended for serious beginning actors. It opens with an overview, explaining the differences between theater and its hybrid mediums, the part an actor plays in each of those mediums. It moves on to the acting craft itself, with a special emphasis on analysis and choice-making, introducing the concept of the actor as storyteller, then presents the specific tools an actor works with. Next, it details the process an actor can use to prepare for scene work and

rehearsals, complete with a working plan for using the tools discussed. The book concludes with a discussion of mental preparation, suggestions for auditioning, a process for rehearsing a play, and an overview of the realities of show business. Included in this updated edition are: A detailed examination of script analysis of the overall play and of individual scenes; A sample of an actor's script, filled with useful script notations; Two new short plays, one written especially for this text; Updated references, lists of plays, and recommended further reading

**am i blue beth henley: A Study Guide for Beth Henley's "Crimes of the Heart"** Gale, Cengage Learning, A Study Guide for Beth Henley's Crimes of the Heart, excerpted from Gale's acclaimed Drama For Students. This concise study guide includes plot summary; character analysis; author biography; study questions; historical context; suggestions for further reading; and much more. For any literature project, trust Drama For Students for all of your research needs.

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**am i blue beth henley: The One-Act Play Companion** Colin Dolley, Rex Walford, 2015-01-05 The one-act play stands apart as a distinct art form with some well known writers providing specialist material, among them Bernard Shaw, Tom Stoppard, Harold Pinter, Caryl Churchill. Alan Ayckbourn, Edward Albee and Tennessee Williams. There are also lesser-known writers with plenty of material to offer, yet sourcing one-act plays to perform is notoriously hard. This companion is the first book to survey the work of over 250 playwrights in an illuminating A-Z guide. Multiple styles, nationalities and periods are covered, offering a treasure trove of compelling moments of theatre waiting to be discovered. Guidance on performing and staging one-act plays is also covered as well as essential contact information and where to apply for performance rights. A chapter introducing the history of the one-act play rounds off the title as a definitive guide.

**am i blue beth henley: The Critics' Canon** Richard Hudson Palmer, 1988-10-19 Palmer clearly states that his purpose is to explain the ways of critics to theatre practitioners, the ways of theatre to inexperienced reviewers, and the dynamic convergence of theatre and critic to anyone interested in theatre. . . . The work is a well-written 'primer' for writers and it will be useful primarily to performers who object to unfavorable 'criticism' without understanding the nature and purpose of reviewing. Accessible to general readers and undergraduates. Choice Palmer begins with an

examination of the theatrical review as a medium for informing and entertaining theatregoers, documenting events of artistic of community importance, and supporting theatre through critical evaluation and publicity. He next comments on how journalistic pressures affect reviewers. Citing brief examples from hundreds of reviews, the author devotes a chapter to each of the elements that needs to be covered in a review, including performers, script, direction, music, and choreography, together with stage and lighting design and other physical aspects of the production. The final chapter develops criteria for assessing the strengths and weaknesses of a theatrical review, based on aesthetic standards, the cultural tastes of theatregoers, and the interests of the community. Palmer's experience as both a theatre professional and a journalist gives him an intimate understanding of the antagonism that often develops between reviewers and those who feel themselves to be the target of irresponsible criticism. His book provides a clear perspective on theatrical matters and guidelines that will help to improve standards of reviewing and create an appreciation of the essential relationship between the theatre and its critics.

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