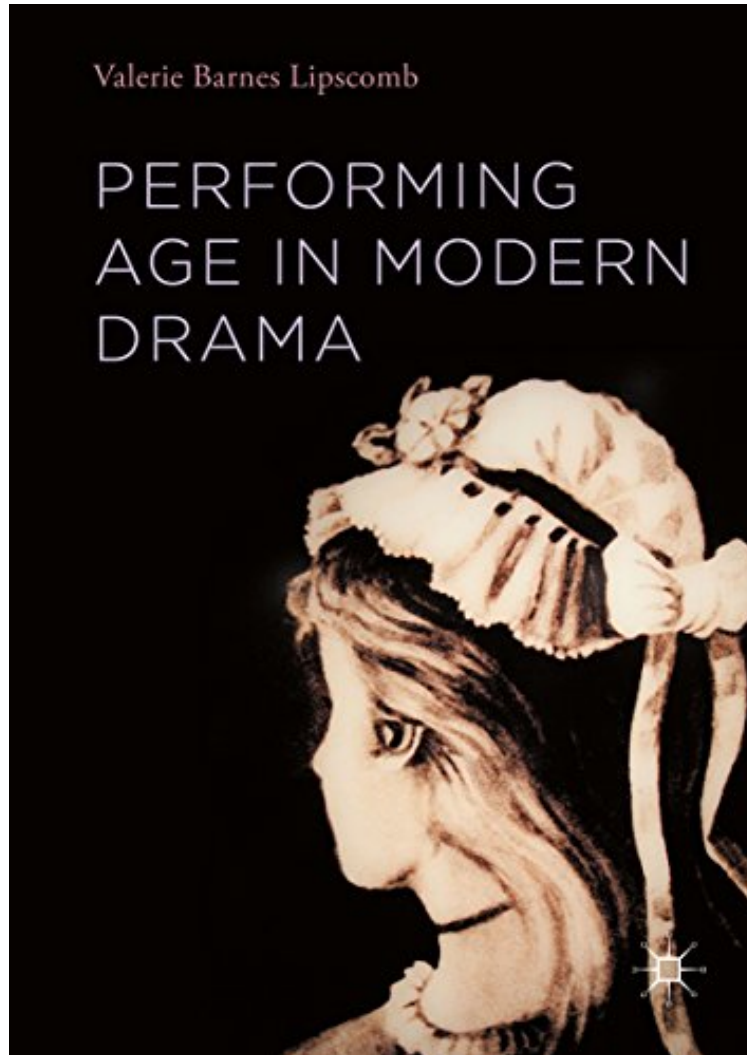


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Performing Age in Modern Drama

Valerie Barnes Lipscomb

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Valerie Barnes Lipscomb : Performing Age in Modern Drama before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Performing Age in Modern Drama:

This book is the first to examine age across the modern and contemporary dramatic canon, from Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams to Paula Vogel and Doug Wright. All ages across the life course are interpreted as performance and performative both on page and on stage, including professional productions and senior-theatre groups. The common admonition "act your age" provides the springboard for this study, which rests on the premise that age is performative in nature, and that issues of age and performance crystallize in the theatre. Dramatic conventions include

characters who change ages from one moment to the next, overtly demonstrating on stage the reiterated actions that create a performative illusion of stable age. Moreover, directors regularly cast actors in these plays against their chronological ages. Lipscomb contends that while the plays reflect varying attitudes toward performing age, as a whole they reveal a longing for an ageless self, a desire to present a consistent, unified identity. The works mirror prevailing social perceptions of the aging process as well as the tension between chronological age, physiological age, and cultural constructions of age.

“Just when you thought that some of the best-known 20th century plays had been thoroughly explored, Valerie Lipscomb brings long overdue attention to the presentation of age and aging in modern drama and theater. Her discussion shows that no analysis of theatrical text and performance can be complete without consideration of this fundamental human marker.” (Elinor Fuchs, Professor Emerita of Dramaturgy and Dramatic Criticism, Yale School of Drama, USA) From the Back Cover This book is the first to examine age across the modern and contemporary dramatic canon, from Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams to Paula Vogel and Doug Wright. All ages across the life course are interpreted as performance and performative both on page and on stage, including professional productions and senior-theatre groups. Act your age. This common admonition provides the springboard for this study, which rests on the premise that age is performative in nature, and that issues of age and performance crystallize in the theatre. Dramatic conventions include characters who change ages from one moment to the next, overtly demonstrating on stage the reiterated actions that create a performative illusion of stable age. Moreover, directors regularly cast actors in these plays against their chronological ages. Lipscomb contends that while the plays reflect varying attitudes toward performing age, as a whole they reveal a longing for an ageless self, a desire to present a consistent, unified identity. The works mirror prevailing social perceptions of the aging process as well as the tension between chronological age, physiological age, and cultural constructions of age.