

# Lonely People are gathered together by Drama Drama versus the net and social media

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## Abstract

Life can be described as a big theater where we all play a certain role for a certain time and then leave the stage for other people to play their parts. Within this role we play, we may be audience when we go to the theater to watch a play .Before the invention of the Internet and social media , people used to go the theater and enjoy being in direct contact with the actors and actress . The plays were serious and purposeful and provoked a discussion of the spirit of the group among the onlookers Now a days , a dangerous thing is happening when a large portion of people got used to have their phones to watch alone certain scenes being broadcast on the World Wide Web alone without sharing others their experiences or feelings .This isolation and exposure to the uncensored stuff being broadcasted are the negative side effects of the electronic development which is trying to take even the space that is already occupied by the theater .This study is an attempt to defend drama and its high value in the time of the Net and Social media , and an invitation to young people to go to the theater , not for amusement only but for learning from other people's experiences. Drama and theater are still alive and it is not possible to be replaced by electronic scenes that may lack vividness and magic which the theater still has.

## المستخلص

يمكن وصف الحياة بأنها مسرح كبير حيث نلعب جميعًا دورًا معينًا لفترة معينة ثم نترك المسرح لأشخاص آخرين ليقوموا بأدوارهم. ضمن هذا الدور الذي نلعبه ، قد نصبح جمهورًا عندما نذهب إلى المسرح لمشاهدة مسرحية ما . قبل اختراع الإنترنت ووسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ، اعتاد الناس الذهاب إلى المسرح والاستمتاع بالتواصل المباشر مع الممثلين والممثلات وكانت المسرحيات جادة وهادفة وتبعث على احياء روح الجماعة بين المشاهدين . في هذه الأيام ، يحدث شيء خطير حيث اعتاد عدد كبير من الناس على استخدام هواتفهم الشخصية لمشاهدة مشاهد معينة يتم بثها على الشبكة العنكبوتية العالمية لوحدهم دون مشاركة تجاربهم أو مشاعرهم مع الآخرين. ان هذه العزلة والتعرض للأمور التي تبث وهي غير خاضعة للرقابة هي من الآثار الجانبية السلبية للتطور الإلكتروني الذي يحاول أن يحتل المساحة التي يشغلها المسرح بالفعل ، وهذه الدراسة هس محاولة للدفاع عن الدراما وقيمتها العالية في زمن الإنترنت ووسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ، و دعوة للشباب للذهاب إلى المسرح ، ليس للمتعة فحسب بل للتعلم من تجارب الآخرين. لا تزال الدراما والمسرح على قيد الحياة ولا يمكن استبدالهما بمشاهد إلكترونية قد تفنقر إلى الحيوية والسحر الذي لا يزال المسرح يتمتع بها.

**0.Introduction**

Drama is not just a literary genre as it recently received a sense of a cinematic meaning. When we hear something about theater, it jumps into our mind that it means people going to the theater, not to read a book. In every play, there are certain aspects that a playwright needs to consider when sitting to write his play. The plot, for instance, must have a well-established structure. Without such structure, it is mere chaos and turns to

be no more than meaningless words that are uttered by the characters and then the audience gets nothing out of it. The structure of a play is to match the structure of people's lives in the sense that both need to be organized and well set. The playwright is usually keen to construct his ideas in framed view; therefore, he exerts the best of his efforts to present a well-net structure hoping that the outcome is a play with goals and sometimes lessons to deliver to the audience and readers as not all plays are written to give lessons but for entertainment. The playwright keeps in mind that he writes to his community which he is part of, and this adds more responsibility to him when his writing has its influence on his readers and audience. A well-organized play means a well received and conceived play which may have its drastic impact on people's lives when ,the theme(s) being discussed in it, touches people feelings and perception as it is the case with the everlasting plays of the most distinguished playwright (Shakespeare) whose plays are still remembered and

performed in almost all over the world . The question remains: do people still like drama in modern time where the social media and Internet prevail? Yes, they do .The internet gives people the wide space to interact among themselves and the freedom to write whatever comes into their minds and others read and interact positively or negatively. It is a fact that not everything written in this means of communication can stand long like a great play written by great playwrights like Ben Jonson, Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, and others. Drama struggles to survive in the time of development and technology.

### **1. Drama is needed in the time of the internet and social media**

Back to ancient Greece when theatrical pieces and epilogue were only occur on the big holidays, it became a fixed reality that every community is proud of its writers and playwrights who represent it in the best way. In the writings of these men of literature like Sophocles and Euripides, the characters are the

most important part of the drama they write .The language being used is taken great care of because it is the means of expression and reflection to people's thoughts and feelings. The performance gives people information about time and place and the music –if any- that elevates and supports the impression of the visual image that is created and seen by the audience in this genre of literature. The huge impact of drama on society ,through its deductive and amusing roles , kept ongoing after the Greeks till reaches modern time .The charm of a great play like A lie of the Mind (1985) written by Sam Shapard still hovers around and reflects the benefits of drama and its functions in society(Sturgis:24). People around the world treat the theater as an entertainment and enjoy it mainly to pass the time and even connoisseurs of high art.

Scholars (Larson:18) have conducted many social researches in an attempt to find the roots of people's problems and ways of making their decision. This also happened with the

theater, which is a true means of entertainment and has a fundamental value in its essence. When television and the Internet rapidly developed, many critics had a different view of the performing arts, including drama, and stated (Mordin:26) that the arts in the twenty-first century would become unpopular and people forgot these arts as television and the Internet are supposed to replace all arts. Yet, the situation has not worsened. Communities still like drama. People attend shows and colleges are once again teaching and graduating new talented actors and actresses. Hence, it is understood that the importance of theater in a society is still high. Theatrical colleges and clubs appear regularly to illustrate this importance, as drama is one of the means of enjoyment for the societies as this is its first and main function in addition to the didactic role it plays. Theater do develops people's minds and tastes, no matter what nationality the actors are as drama can be global as easy as possible. Whether readers or the show on lookers people are, our sense

of beauty and ability to understand people and life situations are improved when reading or watching a magnificent play written by George Bernard Shaw. In *Pygmalion* (1912), Shaw reflects the human desire for being a better person through teaching and love. Moreover, one of the basic functions of drama is unification of the people of the community. Different people read and watch drama and the theater brings them together. This is a crucial aspect of this century society which in fact full of lonely people( Larson:22). A large crowd gathers in one theater to watch and discuss a masterpiece like *Waiting for Godot* (1953) written by Samuel Beckett who could even by silence express deep human feelings of his characters who suffered the agonies of the World War II even when they are not recognized in their communities. Watching or reading Eugene O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms* (1924) is much better than a young man staring at a phone screen while trying to keep away from people. The scene where People catching a train or a bus

to go to London to watch a play is more effective than people looking at their phone screens feeling separated and detached from the rest of the world.

Drama cares for the idea that is to be conveying to the reader and audience, not just the words. It is the writer's theme that links the parts of the play and gives it the most important thing in art as a whole which is the unity of the impression and the content it reflects. The playwright often has a serious idea behind providing enjoyment and entertainment, and contains food for thought in issues of interest to the individual and society, but this does not mean that the play should be a tool for preaching and guidance, as the audience does not accept from dramatic work this idea without the pleasure and beauty, a dramatic work rarely get appreciation from them if it does not perform this double task. Again, this cannot be easily achieved in a three minute shot on the Internet. Drama expresses the reality of living literature ( Kupper :146).



There is a certain life situation in the text of play, and we may compare our own life situations to the ones presented in that play and put ourselves in the characters' places and think what people will do and how to behave and then they shall get the lesson after enjoying it. This cannot happen with the case of the internet and social media. Due to the direct contact between the audience and the characters on the stage, drama affects life in general and the way each person thinks about a certain matter or situation and it encourages each person to learn from experiences and principles being presented on the stage. Positive drama broadcast the spirit of life, and fills people with optimism that they need in everyday life. Drama is based on broadcasting a dose of values, whether appropriate for our society or not. Well written drama provides a good role model for young people, especially since they represent the largest segment of viewers and followers who watch plays. Many young people are fascinated by these models presented through

the drama, as they consider the characters to be real dazzling heroes whom they would like to imitate and live their life style and be just like them in everything they eat ,drink , say and act. This interaction can be missed out from a quickly shot scene just to be broadcasted on a certain application in the social media.

Drama shows a real link between what that dramas carries and presents and what is actually happening in terms of societal issues and concerns. Among the significant goals of drama is to shed light on the issues of society and the problems that need to be studied and to raise awareness to them , because revealing their secrets, identifying the prominent results, and avoiding them in a higher societal interest do form the core of drama. The power of drama lies in the important, strong and convincing messages that have a great impact on public opinion, and by the way, it is more influential, faster and deeper than any article, book or speech given by specialized orators and speakers on the

social media(Larson : 27) . Drama has more power to discuss issues of dishonesty and cheating to polygamy and marriage to foreigners and issues of crime, drugs and others, and the audience leaves the theater and feels himself to be a better person. Dramas, along with other community institutions that are interested in spreading awareness, focus on these issues, and aim at publicizing them and warn of their harms in order to avoid them. Since the visual media, in particular, is an influential factor in influencing and raising public opinion and directing its course. Playwrights believe that it is their mission to amuse people on one side and teach them, on the other .With entrainment, people's awareness development can come. It can be an important awareness tool that interacts with other important community institutions and thus contribute to shaping the awareness of young people and directing their path to the right direction. It can also be a passive tool that exercises absolute power in directing public opinion to a destination that

is totally undesirable. Therefore, checking the submitted works is the best way to spare ourselves and our youth from doing the taboo.

Children, being a significant portion of people in any community, need a special attention to be given by the playwrights who understand that such young people can be a constructive or a destructive power in their communities. Drama builds confidence in children that even the shyest children take only a few weeks to build his self-esteem and self-confidence and so become confident and fully active and thus can participate and play with other children when reading or watching a fully effective texts written by an aware playwright .Drama takes less time to heal a shy boy than the long therapy sessions he/she may take just to get out of his/her “psychological shell while keeping himself /herself isolated from others just to watch a program on his /her phone which isolates him /her more and more and then leaves him / her with

a complex of isolation that cannot be solved even by the most professional psychiatrists.

Drama helps a child to focus in his /her way of thinking because it focuses on his /her mind and thus helps him/her to develop positive ideas .This positivity enables him /her to be active and social when he /she is with his/ her friends .He/She can listen to other's ideas and gets to know the value of focus and acquires a vital skill in the world outside his home. Andy Howes (2015:184) wrote “When I started thinking about this –education work with young people on mental health and illness-my mind sprung immediately to drama. I have had a range of positive experiences with drama and feel that it has the capacity to bring about understanding in a magical way.” The role of drama is not limited to enjoyment of a child it also develops his social and communicative skill.

Drama helps develop language and communication skills(Sturgis:70) .Learning new songs, playing new games and

participating in imaginative play (when children must take on the language of the role they are playing) all contribute to the development of the child's vocabulary and they are encouraged to express themselves verbally and through facial expressions and language . It is a key to make them better at communicating. Drama encourages children to cooperate playing dramatic games to improvising and singing which requires cooperation as children quickly realize that the best results of cooperation is a much needed skill.

Drama develops creative people who can see things in new ways and from different points of view and can think in different ways and generate new ideas. This encourages children to improvise and widens their imagination to develop creativity as they lead themselves and come up with solutions to problems in the role they are doing and respond imaginatively to a range of imaginative situations. As a side effect, drama develops friendships by its very nature, as it can create strong bonds

between children as they laugh, learn and grow together week after week.

Drama also helps children to understand the world around them when they explore a range of different topics and a variety of real and imaginary situations every day which sparks their interest in the world in which they live and makes them more curious and therefore more interesting. It develops emotional intelligence by ways of encouraging children to represent a range of feelings in a safe and supportive environment, and thus children are better able to understand their feelings and develop empathy for others and this creates healthy thinking children who are able to play simple percussion instruments, nurturing simple sequences of movement .

## **2. Negativity in Drama**

Life cannot be always positive and optimistic .When there is optimism, there is pessimism. Therefore, people need also to consider the negative impact of drama on its readers and

audience. People can get under the negative influence of negative drama. If a certain play broadcasts negative topics most of the time, it becomes almost impossible to avoid bad drama and its negative impact on our lives such as terrorist attacks, school shootings, plane crashes as well as the constant attack of violence from all forms of media due to long psychological repercussions. It is frightening to notice that a large part of dramas contain some form of physical violence. A person's mind is designed to focus on horrific trauma just like the obsession with ambulance chases and traffic accidents (Sturgis:75). Negativity in drama is hard to ignore and can greatly affect the way we see our lives and the world around us. It can lead to negative thoughts, leading us to view our lives as more distressing than it can be. Watching painful scenes repeatedly in a drama can cause symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Interestingly, the degree of our fears is directly related to the amount of time we spend watching drama. Psychologists



have also observed that exposure to graphic violence and negative media can either cause an increase in sensitivity as we become more sensitive and pessimistic or it can lead to desensitization which actually makes us numb to the effects of violence. This has also been observed in those who have been repeatedly exposed to violent scenes. Unfortunately, this pessimism can lead us to ignore the many positive things in drama, the media, and in the world, or the news story about a hero pulling a young woman out of a burning car, or about a new corona disease treatment . We just have to look at the many delightful dramas written by pessimistic playwrights who view life as a path to happiness and joy and avoid negativity that a pessimist playwright presents to us. This Negativity in drama can be equal to the uncontrolled materials being posted in the uncontrolled and uncensored sites in the internet and social media under the name of “man’s right of free expression.”

### 3. The theater is still there

Let people go to the theater. People feel the ecstasy to leave home and comfortable room, free and direct TV broadcasting services, YouTube and the Net, and enjoy viewing the cultural scene in the theater .Let them enjoy the magic of theater . It is time for people to ask themselves the serious question: Is going to the theater worth it? Yes, all magical things happen in the theatre. All they need is their senses and there they shall meet the actors and events directly. They may read a novel or a play several times, but it is different according to the interpretation and vision of the inferno, as there, the events live in blood and flesh without a camera, filter, printing, or a montage. In the theater amazing things happen that may enter into a dialogue and discussion between the audience and the stage. It is surprising that people still go to the theater where young and old people whose motto art is to search for a graceful moment, and live with great themes and death stories , betrayal, love,

suffering and the game of life. It is not possible to change the world through theater, but it is possible to create beautiful ideas and energize the person with a good mood and make him more active and energetic. People are invited to leave their comfortable seats and go to places where real people tell big stories. There is a real answer to the question why is it still worth going to the theater. People look for the theater of excitement, political debate, fun and intellectual value, to end the tedium and monotony of subversive and racist ideas. The theater helps people find amusement, and choose the appropriate play they feel like to watch by their own choice and freedom. people need not to be under the suffering of some kind of unfathomable magic if they weren't there in the theater.

## **Conclusion**

In modern time, the theater is facing the increasing wide spread of the Internet and Social media Application with their wide freedom of expression that may lead to the posting of mind

threatening ideas .Serious drama with all its magic, the feeling of seeing something alive is absolutely unbelievable, is faced by the Internet that presents its material without putting the person who looks at his mobile screen in direct contact with the experience being presented. Drama is still liked and people do go to the theater and buy tickets to enjoy having a very special feeling when they are there and can't miss any little detail of a word being said, unlike the case when a person is watching TV or a post in an application because the actors are not in front of them with a live scene. In the theater, things become completely different and livelier. An audience or a reader of a play lives in the theater in a different way from that when he watches the same scene being broadcasted on TV or the net. The theater can make the audience think well. The audience could start figuring out how to end everything or maybe it could wake up a really old memory in him. The play becomes like a little workout for the brain. The audience might learn about another

culture or a different way of life and then start thinking about it. It can be purely emotional, creative or instinctive. The place where people are –the theatre -enables them to keep up with the play, it takes the brain to be fully functional and keep up with everything that goes on out there on the stage. One more last special thing about theater is that it can bring people together.

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