

## Finding a Play

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### Key Contact

Reference Department

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### Finding Collections of Plays

If you don't need a particular play, try a **subject search** in the library catalog. Some examples:

Drama- - collected works

English drama

American drama- -collected works

Drama- -collections

Drama- -20<sup>th</sup> century

American drama—collections

Childrens plays

One act plays

American drama- -african american authors

### Finding a Particular Play

Because plays can be published in collections, there are several steps to making sure the library has a copy of a particular play. It is helpful to know the name of the playwright as well as the play's title. Some of the sources listed below can help you identify the playwright.

#### Step 1

Search the library catalog. If you don't at first succeed, try more than one search.

**Title search** on the name of the play (but this won't find collections which could include the play).

*Example moon for the misbegotten*

**Keyword search** using the playwright's last name and at least some of the significant words from the play's title.

*Example oneill and misbegotten*

**Author search** Do you find the complete works of the playwright?

*Example oneill eugene*

Didn't find the play? Don't give up, we may still have it. The problem is that the catalog doesn't always, especially for older materials, list individual plays within collections.

#### Step 2

*Inter-Play* <http://www.lib.pdx.edu/systems/interplay/>

Online index to plays in collections, anthologies and periodicals created by librarians at Portland State University.

If you find your play in *Inter-Play* you'll need to go back to our library catalog and see if we have the collection, anthology or periodical that contains the play.

*Inter-Play* is based on the library collection at Portland State University, so if you don't find your play listed it doesn't mean your play hasn't been published.

### Next Steps

*Ottomiller's index to plays in collections: an author and title index to plays appearing in collections published between 1900 and 1985* Ready Reference Z5781 .O8 1988

The information will be listed under the playwright's name. The source name will be abbreviated and the key is in the front of the book.

*Play Index* Reference Z5781 .P53 (1949-1997)

Multiple volumes. Look up the playwright's name and underneath it, scan for the title of the play.

*The drama scholars' index to plays and filmscripts* Reference Z5781 .S17

Especially helpful if your play is in a language other than English. Also indexes foreign plays in translation.

### Additional Steps

Haven't found your play yet? Could your play fit into any of the categories below?

#### Recent Plays

Search an index to see if the play has been published in a periodical. Try a keyword search in *Expanded Academic* (you might even find the fulltext), *Reader's Guide*, and *Humanities Abstracts*.

Two major publishers of plays are Samuel French <http://www.samuel french.com/> and the Dramatists Play Service <http://www.dramatists.com/index.asp>. Perhaps you can get a copy through Interlibrary Loan or you might want to purchase your own copy.

#### Older Plays

*English drama of the nineteenth century: an index and finding guide.* Microforms Z2014.D7 E5 1985

*Nineteenth-century American drama: a finding guide.* Reference PS632 .H57

Both are indexes (lists) of the full text of plays in *Nineteenth century English and American drama* Microforms, microfiche

*Index to Plays, 1800-1926* Reference Z5781 .F57

## Children's Plays

*Index to Children's Plays in Collections* Reference PN1627 .K7 1977 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed)

*Index to children's plays in collections, 1975-1984* Reference PN1627 .T73 1986

*Chicorel theater index to plays for young people in periodicals, anthologies, and collections*  
Reference Z5784.C5 C55 1974

## One-Act Plays

*Index to One-Act Plays. (and supplements: 1924-1931, 1932-1940, 1941-1948, 1948-1957, 1956-1964).* Reference Z5781 .L83

*1/2/3/4 for the show: a guide to small-cast one-act plays* Reference Z5781 .H46 1995

## Plays Published in Periodicals

*Index to plays in periodicals* Reference Z5781 .K43 1979

*Index to plays in periodicals, 1977-1987* Reference Z5781 .K43 1990

Plays published in periodicals are also included in many general play indexes.

*Drama Scholars' Index* Reference Z5781 .S17

*Index to Plays, 1800-1926* Reference Z5781 .F57

*Cumulated Dramatic index, 1909-1949* Reference Z5781 .C8

## Categories of Playwrights

These are a few examples of "categories" of playwrights and sources for each type.

### **American drama- -African American authors- -bibliography**

*Afro-American poetry and drama, 1760-1975: a guide to information sources* Reference Z1229.N39 A37

*Black image on the American stage; a bibliography of plays and musicals, 1770-1970*  
Reference Z5784.N4 H35

### **American drama- -women authors- -bibliography**

*Drama by women to 1900: a bibliography of American and British writers*  
Reference Z5781 .D37 1992