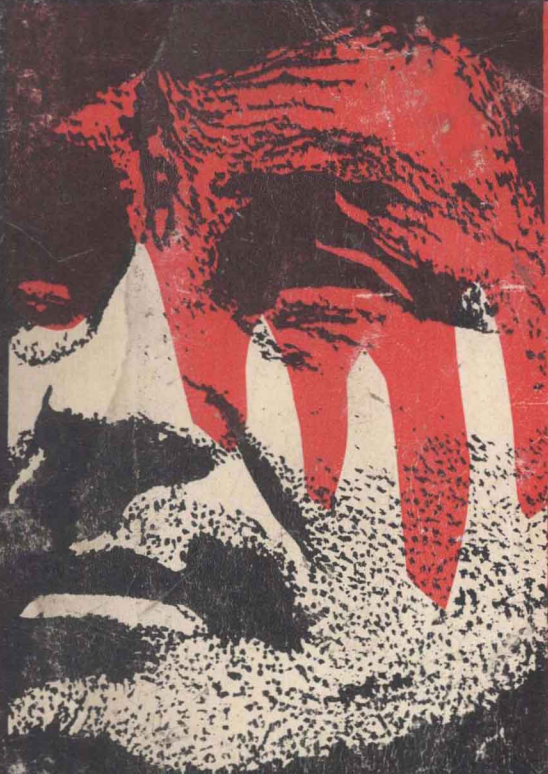


**A Critical Anthology of Drama edited by  
Robert W. Corrigan and James L. Rosenberg**



*the art  
of the  
theatre*

THE ART  
OF  
THE THEATRE

*A Critical Anthology of Drama*

---

Edited by ROBERT W. CORRIGAN

*New York University*

and JAMES L. ROSENBERG

*Carnegie Institute of Technology*



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## PREFACE

There are only two grounds on which an anthology can justify its existence—inclusiveness and novelty. Our format, limiting us to ten plays, tends to inhibit inclusiveness, and novelty—particularly in an anthology—can very quickly reach a point of diminishing returns (one can represent Shakespeare by *Timon of Athens* instead of *Hamlet*, but to what purpose?).

At best, we can only modestly claim to have combined these two elements to the best of our ability. Within a ten-play limit, we have tried to include the entire history of the dramatic form—an aim which is nothing if not inclusive. At the same time, and without sacrificing the representative values of the individual plays, we have sought to avoid a mere rehash of the inevitable eight or ten Masterpieces of World Drama. While none of the plays in this volume (with the possible exception of the last one) is exactly a stranger to anthologies, we have tried, where feasible, to sidestep some of the more obvious chestnuts. Sophocles, as a result, is represented here by *Antigone*, not *Oedipus Rex*; Chekhov, by *Uncle Vanya*, not *The Cherry Orchard*; Williams, by *The Rose Tattoo*, not *A Streetcar Named Desire*; Ionesco, by the little-known but delightful *The New Tenant*, rather than by one of his half-dozen or so more widely publicized pieces.

Mere avoidance of main-traveled roads, though, is not in itself a guarantee of quality, and we have sought further to add a dimension to the book by accompanying each play with a critical essay of some sort. These essays, and the relationship they bear to their accompanying plays, vary widely, and should, we believe, offer concomitantly wide possibilities of use to both teachers and students. Some, for example, bear a very obvious and close relationship to their play, as does Strindberg's famous Preface to *Miss Julie* or Tennessee Williams' introduction to *The Rose Tattoo*. Others, while not so immediate in reference, offer examples of objective criticism of a specific work by a major critic; note, for instance, Francis Fergusson's "*Macbeth* as the Imitation of an Action" or William Arrowsmith's study of Greek tragedy. A third group—and perhaps the most interesting of all—consists of essays which are not immediately directed toward the plays they accompany in this volume, but which, on closer examination, can be seen as commenting upon them obliquely, subtly, and often quite provocatively. Some readers, for example, may be a little surprised to see an essay by Christopher Fry on "Comedy" employed here to shed light

upon *Uncle Vanya*. But read the play and the essay side by side, and with care, and we suspect you will discover that they have more to say to and about one another than might appear at first glance. Similarly, Émile Faguet, writing on the nature of dramatic emotion, does little to analyze Molière's *Tartuffe* specifically, but says a great deal generally about the problems we encounter in trying to come to grips with such odd, ambiguous, and downright contradictory works. In short, we believe this combination of plays and essays is as interesting as it is flexible. Both of us have taught introductory courses in drama and theatre for a number of years now, and we have never found a text-anthology that has met the complex needs of such a course. There are undoubtedly many other teachers who feel the same way and we hope this volume begins to correct this state of affairs. It provides a chronological survey of the drama; it includes a sufficient variety of dramatic types to make it suitable for a genre approach to the teaching of drama; and the essays were chosen to serve the needs of those who believe the best way to teach the drama is to study its component elements, that is, language, character, plot, theme, and the like. The book, obviously, cannot be all things to all people; but that it may be is the foolhardy aspiration of every anthologist, including ourselves.

Finally, no anthology is complete as it stands when it comes off the presses. It requires, more than most books, the willing and active collaboration of every teacher and student who subsequently makes use of it. In a very real sense, each reader who uses, analyzes, and reshapes the following collection of plays and essays becomes our co-author, and it is to you, our unseen collaborators and colleagues in the world of drama, that we not only present but dedicate this volume.

Robert W. Corrigan  
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SOPHOCLES

*Antigone*

Translated by MICHAEL TOWNSEND

---

WILLIAM ARROWSMITH

*The Criticism of  
Greek Tragedy*

THE CHARACTERS IN *ANTIGONE*

ANTIGONE

ISMENE

CREON

GUARD

HAEMON

TEIRESIAS

BOY

MESSENGER

EURYDICE

SERVANT

CHORUS



# ANTIGONE

- ANTIGONE My darling sister Ismene, we have had  
A fine inheritance from Oedipus.  
God has gone through the whole range of sufferings  
And piled them all on us,—grief upon grief,  
Humiliation upon humiliation. 5  
And now this latest thing that our dictator  
Has just decreed . . . you heard of it? Or perhaps  
You haven't noticed our enemies at work.
- ISMENE No news, either good or bad, has come  
To me, Antigone: nothing since the day 10  
We were bereaved of our two brothers. No,  
Since the withdrawal of the Argive army  
Last night, I've heard nothing about our loved ones  
To make me glad or sad.
- ANTIGONE I thought as much.  
That's why I brought you out, outside the gate, 15  
So we could have a talk here undisturbed.
- ISMENE You've something on your mind. What is it then?
- ANTIGONE Only that our friend Creon has decided  
To discriminate between our brothers' corpses.  
Eteocles he buried with full honors 20  
To light his way to hell in a blaze of glory.  
But poor dear Polynices,—his remains  
Are not allowed a decent burial.  
He must be left unmourned, without a grave,  
A happy hunting ground for birds 25  
To peck for tidbits. This ukase applies  
To you,—and me of course. What's more, friend Creon  
Is on his way here now to supervise  
Its circulation in person. And don't imagine  
He isn't serious,—the penalty 30  
For disobedience is to be stoned to death.  
So, there you have it. You're of noble blood.  
Soon you must show your mettle,—if you've any.
- ISMENE Oh my fire-eating sister, what am I  
Supposed to do about it, if this is the case? 35
- ANTIGONE Just think it over—if you'll give a hand . . .
- ISMENE In doing what? What do you have in mind?

ANTIGONE Just helping me do something for the corpse.

ISMENE You don't intend to bury him? It's forbidden.

ANTIGONE He is my brother, and yours. My mind's made up.  
You please yourself.

ISMENE But Creon has forbidden. . . .

5 ANTIGONE What Creon says is quite irrelevant.

He is my brother. I will bury him.

ISMENE Oh God.

Have you forgotten how our father died,  
Despised and hated? How he turned  
10 Detective to discover his own crimes,  
Then stabbed his own eyes out with his own hands?  
And then Jocasta, who was both together  
His mother and his wife,  
Hanged herself with a rope? Next, our two brothers  
15 Became each other's murderers. We are left,  
We two. How terrible if we as well  
Are executed for disobeying  
The lawful orders of the head of state.  
Oh please remember,—we are women, aren't we?  
20 We shouldn't take on men. In times of crisis  
It is the strongest men who take control.  
We must obey their orders, however harsh.  
So, while apologizing to the dead,  
Regretting that I act under constraint,  
25 I will comply with my superior's orders.  
Sticking one's neck out would be merely foolish.

ANTIGONE Don't think I'm forcing you. In fact, I wouldn't  
Have your assistance if you offered it.

You've made your bed; lie on it. I intend  
30 To give my brother burial. I'll be glad  
To die in the attempt,—if it's a crime,  
Then it's a crime that God commands. I then  
Could face my brother as a friend and look  
Him in the eyes. Why shouldn't I make sure  
35 I get on with the dead rather than with  
The living? There is all eternity  
To while away below. And as for you,  
By all means be an atheist if you wish.

ISMENE I'm not. I'm simply powerless to act  
Against this city's laws.

40 ANTIGONE That's your excuse.  
Good-bye. I'm going now to make a grave  
For our brother, whom I love.



And clash of gold advancing,  
 He singled out one man all set  
 To shout the victory cry upon the parapet,  
 And flung at him a lightning bolt, to curtail his prancing.

5 Covered in flame he dropped  
 Down like an empty balance and drummed the earth;  
 He who before had breathed  
 The winds of hate against us. In many a foray and rout,  
 War, a runaway horse, was hitting out.

10 Seven enemy kings at seven gates,  
 Fighting at equal odds,  
 Left their arms as trophies to Theban gods.

Elsewhere, the hated pair,  
 Sons of the same mother,  
 15 Crossed their swords in combat and killed each other.

But now that Victory has smiled on us,  
 Let us forget the war, and dance  
 At every temple all night long. And let  
 Bacchus be king in Thebes, until the strong earth reels.

20 Ah, here comes Creon, our ruler,—in haste.  
 Something new has developed.  
 He has something afoot . . .  
 Else why has he summoned us to council?

CREON Well, friends, our city has passed through stormy weather.  
 25 But now God has restored an even keel.  
 Why have I summoned you? Because I know  
 That you were at all times loyal to Laius.  
 And afterwards, when Oedipus put things right,  
 Then ruined them again, you showed  
 30 Your steadiness throughout his sons' dispute.  
 Well, now they're dead; and so, by due succession,  
 The power of the crown passes to me.  
 You cannot possibly judge a ruler's worth  
 Until he exercises the power he's got.  
 35 I've no time for the man who has full powers  
 Yet doesn't use them to enact good measures,  
 But adopts a timid policy of "do nothing."  
 Those aren't my principles. I'm not the man  
 To sit quietly by and watch my country

- Sliding towards the precipice of ruin.  
 Nor can I be a friend to my country's foes.  
 This I believe—and God may witness it—  
 Our safety is bound up with that of our country. Therefore  
 All other loyalties are subject to 5  
 Our country's interests.  
 By such measures I'll make this city great;—  
 Measures like those that I have just enacted  
 Concerning Oedipus' sons. That Eteocles  
 Who died while fighting in his country's service, 10  
 Is to be buried with ceremonial honors.  
 But Polynices,—whose intention was  
 To fight his way back from exile, burn to the ground  
 His mother city and the temples of  
 His family's gods, to slaughter out of hand 15  
 And to enslave his fellow citizens—  
 He's not to have a grave or any mourning.  
 His corpse is to be left, a grim warning,  
 Pecked at by birds and worried by the dogs.  
 That is my policy. A malefactor mustn't 20  
 Have the same treatment as the loyal man.  
 I intend to see our country's friends rewarded  
 When they are dead, as well as while they live.
- CHORUS We understand the attitude you take  
 Towards these men. It's true your word is law, 25  
 And you can legislate for living and dead. . . .
- CREON What do you think then of this new enactment?
- CHORUS If I were younger, I might criticize . . . .
- CREON No turning back. The guard is set on the corpse.
- CHORUS What are the penalties for disobeying? 30
- CREON The penalty is death. As simple as that.
- CHORUS That ought to stop them. Who'd be such a fool?
- CREON You'd be surprised. Men led astray by hopes  
 Of gain will risk even their lives for money.
- GUARD Sir, here I am. I can't pretend I'm puffed 35  
 From running here with all possible speed.  
 I kept changing my mind on the way.  
 One moment I was thinking, "What's the hurry?  
 You're bound to catch it when you get there." Then:  
 "What are you dithering for? You'll get it hot 40  
 And strong if Creon finds out from someone else."

Torn by these doubts I seem to have taken my time.  
 So what should be a short journey has become  
 A long one. Anyway I have arrived.  
 And now I'm going to tell you what I came  
 5 To tell you, even if you've heard it. See,  
 I've made up my mind to expect the worst.  
 We can't avoid what's coming to us, can we?

CREON Well then, what puts you in such deep despair?

GUARD First I must make a statement—about myself.  
 10 I didn't do it, and didn't see who did it.  
 So I'm quite in the clear, you understand.

CREON For God's sake tell me what it is, and then  
 Get out.

GUARD All right, all right. It amounts to this.  
 Somebody's buried the body, thrown earth on-it,  
 15 And done the necessary purifications.

CREON Someone has been a damn fool. Who was it?

GUARD Dunno. There were no spade-marks in the earth.  
 The ground was hard and dry, and so there was  
 No sign of the intruder.  
 20 See, when the man who had the first day watch  
 Told us about it, we had the shock of our lives.  
 The corpse had not been buried in a grave,  
 But enough dust was thrown on to avoid  
 The curse unburied bodies suffer from.  
 25 There wasn't even a sign of any dog  
 That might have come and scuffed the dust upon him.  
 Then everyone started shouting. Each man blamed  
 His mate. We very nearly came to blows.  
 Everyone claimed that one of the others had done it,  
 30 And tried to prove that he himself was blameless.  
 To prove their innocence, some said they were  
 Prepared to pick up red-hot coals or walk  
 Through fire. While others swore on oath,  
 By a catalog of gods, they didn't do it  
 35 And weren't accomplices in any form.  
 When our investigations made no progress,  
 In the end one man came out with a sobering speech.  
 We couldn't answer him, though what he said  
 Was none too pleasant.  
 40 He said we mustn't try to hush it up,  
 But tell you everything. His view prevailed.  
 Who was to bring the news? We tossed for it.

I was the lucky person. I can tell you,  
I don't like being the bearer of bad news.

CHORUS I think I see the hand of God in this,  
Bringing about the body's burial.

CREON Shut up, before I lose my temper. 5  
You may be old, try not to be foolish as well.  
How can you say God cares about this corpse?  
Do you suppose God feels obliged to him  
For coming to burn down his temples and  
His statues, in defiance of his laws? 10  
Ever noticed God being kind to evildoers?  
No. Certain hostile elements in the city  
Who don't like discipline and resent my rule,  
Are in on this. They've worked upon the guards  
By bribes. There is no human institution 15  
As evil as money. Money ruins nations,  
And makes men refugees. Money corrupts  
The best of men into depravity.  
The people who have done this thing for money  
Will get what's coming to them. Listen here, 20  
I swear to you by God who is my judge,  
That if you and your friends do not divulge  
The name of him who did the burying  
One hell won't be enough for you. You'll all  
Be hanged up and flogged until you tell. 25  
That ought to teach you to be more selective  
About what you get your money from.

GUARD Am I dismissed?  
Or may I speak?

CREON I thought I made it plain  
I couldn't stand your talk.

GUARD Where does it hurt you,—  
Your ears, or in your mind?

CREON What do you mean? 30  
What does it matter where you give me pain?

GUARD The guilty party bothers you deep down.  
But my offense is only at ear level.

CREON My dear good man, you're much too talkative.

GUARD I may be that, but I am not your culprit. 35

CREON I think you are, and that you did it for money.

GUARD Oh God! I tell you your suspicions are wrong.

CREON Suspicion he calls it! Look here, if you  
 Don't tell me who the culprits are, you'll find  
 That ill-gotten gains are not without their drawbacks.

5 GUARD Good luck to you, I hope you find the man.  
 In any case I won't be in a hurry  
 To come back here again. I thank my stars  
 That I have saved my skin. I didn't expect to.

10 CHORUS Many amazing things exist, and the most amazing is man.  
 He's the one, when the gale-force winds  
 Blow and the big waves  
 Tower and topple on every side,  
 Cruises over the deep on the gray tide.

15 He's the one that to and fro  
 Over the clods year after year  
 Wends with his horses and ploughing gear,  
 Works to his will the untiring Earth, the greatest of gods.

He traps the nitwit birds, and the wild  
 Beasts in their lairs. The ocean's myriad clan  
 In woven nets he catches,—ingenious man.

20 He has devised himself shelter against  
 The rigors of frost and the pelting weather.  
 Speech and science he's taught himself,  
 And the city's political arts for living together.

25 For incurable diseases he has found a cure;  
 By his inventiveness defying  
 Every eventuality there can be,—except dying.

30 But the most brilliant gifts  
 Can be misapplied.  
 On his moral road  
 Man swerves from side to side.

God and the government ordain  
 Just laws; the citizen  
 Who rules his life by them  
 Is worthy of acclaim.

35 But he that presumes  
 To set the law at naught  
 Is like a stateless person,  
 Outlawed, beyond the pale.



- With such a man I'd have  
 No dealings whatsoever.  
 In public and in private  
 He'd get the cold shoulder.
- What's this? What on earth? 5  
 My God. Can it be? Yes, Antigone.  
 Your father before, now you!  
 Is it so, you were caught disobeying the law?  
 How could you have been so stupid?
- GUARD Here she is. She is the one,—the one that did it. 10  
 We caught her in the act. Where's Creon gone?
- CHORUS There, by good luck he's coming out right now.
- CREON Soon as I leave the house, some trouble starts.  
 What's happening?
- GUARD Well, well, I never thought 15  
 That I'd be coming back here again so soon,  
 Considering how you swore at me just now.  
 But here I am, in spite of what I said.  
 I'm bringing in this girl. I caught her tending  
 The grave. I caught her, no one else. And so  
 I hand her over to you to stand her trial. 20  
 And now I reckon I'm entitled to beat it.
- CREON Give me full details, with the circumstances.
- GUARD This girl was burying him. As simple as that.
- CREON I trust you understand what you are saying.
- GUARD I saw her burying the corpse you said 25  
 Was not permitted to be buried. Clear enough?
- CREON Tell me precisely how you saw and caught her.
- GUARD It was like this. When we got back,  
 With your threats still smarting in our ears,  
 We swept all the dust from off the corpse, 30  
 And laid the moldering thing completely bare.  
 Then we went and sat on the high ground to windward,  
 To avoid the smell. And everyone gave hell  
 To the man who was on duty, to keep him up  
 To scratch. We watched till midday, when the sun 35  
 Is hottest. Suddenly a squall came on,—  
 A whirlwind with a thunderstorm; it ripped  
 The leaves from every tree in all the plain.  
 The air was full of it; we had to keep  
 Our eyes tight shut against the wrath of heaven. 40