

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73085-3 - Exits and Entrances: A Drama Collection from Stage and Screen

Edited by John O'Connor

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



Exits and entrances

a drama collection from stage
and screen

Edited by John O'Connor

Series editor: Michael Marland



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73085-3 - Exits and Entrances: A Drama Collection from Stage and Screen

Edited by John O'Connor

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521730853

© Cambridge University Press 2008

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2008

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-521-73085-3 paperback

Cover image: Adrian Lester as Hamlet © Pascal Victor / ArtComArt

Cover design by Smith

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet websites referred
to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on
such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information
regarding prices, travel timetables and other factual information given
in this work are correct at the time of first printing but Cambridge
University Press does not guarantee the accuracy of such information
thereafter.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73085-3 - Exits and Entrances: A Drama Collection from Stage and Screen

Edited by John O'Connor

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

General introduction	v
1 Identity	1
<i>Doctor Who: Human Nature</i>	2
Paul Cornell	
<i>The Elephant Man</i>	15
Christopher De Vore, Eric Bergren and David Lynch	
<i>A Raisin in the Sun</i>	27
Lorraine Hansberry	
<i>Death and the King's Horseman</i>	37
Wole Soyinka	
Activities	56
2 Turning points	61
<i>The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby</i>	62
David Edgar, from the novel by Charles Dickens	
<i>Treasure Island</i>	86
David Calcutt, from the novel by Robert Louis Stevenson	
<i>Trifles</i>	106
Susan Glaspell	
<i>Saint Joan</i>	119
George Bernard Shaw	
<i>King Henry V</i>	132
William Shakespeare	
Activities	142

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73085-3 - Exits and Entrances: A Drama Collection from Stage and Screen

Edited by John O'Connor

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

iv Contents

3 Deception	149
<i>Lad Carl</i>	150
John O'Connor	
<i>The Wind in the Willows</i>	164
Alan Bennett, from the novel by Kenneth Grahame	
<i>Blackadder: Potato</i>	184
Richard Curtis and Ben Elton	
<i>The Foreigner</i>	190
Larry Shue	
Activities	207
4 Laughter	215
<i>Wyrd Sisters</i>	217
Terry Pratchett, adapted for the stage by Stephen Briggs	
<i>Fawlty Towers: a Touch of Class</i>	230
John Cleese and Connie Booth	
<i>Lord Arthur Savile's Crime</i>	247
Constance Cox, from a story by Oscar Wilde	
<i>The Alchemist</i>	261
Ben Jonson	
Activities	272
Notes on authors	277
Acknowledgements	281

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73085-3 - Exits and Entrances: A Drama Collection from Stage and Screen

Edited by John O'Connor

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

General introduction

Acting is something most of us do even before we can properly read or write. We chat with imaginary friends, play games in role with real friends and fill the playground with a thousand mini-plays about true and fictitious events that excite, frighten or amuse us. It seems that drama is in our genes. Perhaps it all started in prehistoric times when our cave ancestors acted out 'the kill' before embarking on a day's hunting. It was certainly extremely important to earlier civilisations such as the Ancient Greeks and Romans, who built imposing theatres and held their dramatists in great respect.

Today drama is to be found everywhere we look: not just on stages of various kinds, but also on cinema, television and computer screens. It can take the form of a play, a sketch or an improvisation, and is a central part of many popular musicals and of opera. It is even essential to many television advertisements, where families discuss cornflakes over the breakfast table and ever-friendly bank managers offer generous loans.

The extracts in this book have been taken from a variety of periods, and are written by authors from a number of different countries and cultures. They include a range of genres, from the lightest comedy to the most serious drama; and feature material from the stage, the cinema and television.

The book is divided into four sections:

- *Identity* contains extracts from plays in which people are forced to think about their position in the world, asking who they are and what they want out of life; while those around them have to learn to accept each individual for what he or she is.
- *Turning points* is about those moments in our lives when we have to make a really important decision, one that will affect our future.
- *Deception* features examples of the numerous plays through the ages in which one character deceives another, whether for fun or with some more serious motive.
- *Laughter* is just that: a collection of comic extracts designed to make you laugh and to appreciate that comedy comes in many forms and has different purposes.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-73085-3 - Exits and Entrances: A Drama Collection from Stage and Screen

Edited by John O'Connor

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi General introduction

In each section the more challenging extracts come towards the end.

To help you, less familiar words and phrases have been explained at the foot of the pages where they occur. There are suggestions for further reading after each text, and you can find out more about the authors at the end of the book.

You will also find activities throughout the collection, all designed to get you thinking both before and after reading.

Whatever else you do as you read each extract, remember that plays are written in order to be performed. We can learn something from reading a play and talking about it; but we will never fully understand it until we have acted it ourselves, or seen it acted by others – and that is true whether we are talking about *Doctor Who* or Shakespeare.

I hope you enjoy these extracts and that they inspire you to write your own plays, watch other people's and take part yourself in as many as you can.

John O'Connor