

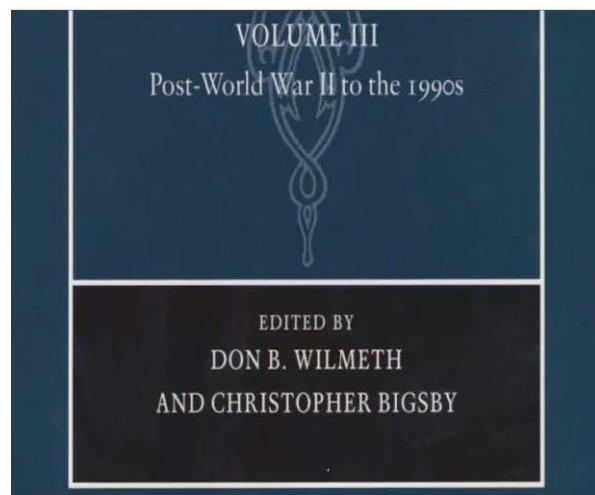
Twentieth Century American Drama
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Lecture - 45
Post World War II American Theatre: A Historical Perspective

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We have been looking at a number of plays which are representative of Twentieth Century American Drama. We will spend some time looking at the historical background.

It is to see how these plays have been framed historiographically, how they have been seen together as a body of writing just as the title of this course suggests ‘Twentieth Century American Drama’. We are looking at the Cambridge history of American theatre, Volume 3, and it looks at the plays and major trends the movements which defined American theatre in the Post-World War period.

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Introduction

Christopher Bigsby

The previous volume of this History told the story of the growth of Broadway theatre, the emergence of major playwrights, the shift from melodrama to a new realism and from that realism to a self-conscious experimentalism. It identified the extent to which the theatre reflected social change, as America moved from a rural to an urban economy, engaged a modernity which both delighted and appalled, and found in social inequity the source of dramatic energy. It charted the continuing influence, on actor training and design no less than dramaturgy, of the European theatre but also identified the extent to which America now exercised a powerful role. Through boom and Depression, the theatre in all its guises – from the Little Theatre movement, to the Federal Theatre, Broadway comedies and musicals, to powerful dramas of social and psychological experience – proved a public art with public appeal.

Yet already that role was threatened by the emergence of Hollywood.



We will look at this introduction by Christopher Bigsby which gives us the sense of what had been happening with American drama since the Second World War.

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Depression, the theatre in all its guises – from the Little Theatre movement, to the Federal Theatre, Broadway comedies and musicals, to powerful dramas of social and psychological experience – proved a public art with public appeal.

Yet already that role was threatened by the emergence of Hollywood. Ahead lay television. By the turn of the twenty-first century hundreds of channels would be available while cyberspace would exert its own seductive allure. Meanwhile, the economics of an art which required the collaborative efforts of a large number of people, used its plant inefficiently, and was often inconveniently situated, made it potentially less attractive than other arts or forms of entertainment.

This volume, though, is not an account of decline. Indeed, in some respects it covers a period in which the achievements of the American theatre were acknowledged worldwide as never before. For much of the second half of the century its playwrights were dominant, its musicals defined the genre, its actors, directors, and designers proved uniquely talented and internationally influential. But it did change in radical ways, which, unsurprisingly, mirrored transformations in society.

After a decade or so Broadway declined, a decline balanced by the emergence, in New York, of Off- and Off-Off Broadway. A similar development was to occur in Chicago and elsewhere. Indeed, the dominance of New York itself



This gives us a sense of continuity and it also identifies the major departures which define American drama particularly from the Second World War period onwards. And this incidentally we also in course of the discussion of the place that we have already looked at we too realized that there has been a shift there has been a shift in certain trends.

There is an overarching theme of the American dream which is presented in various ways and we find the way in which the each character responds to this notion of American dream is very different depending on their social setting, depending on their gender location, depending on their racial location.

This introduction gives us a sense of a complete sense of these shifts by not just looking at the American drama, but also how the changing shifts in American society in American polity has also been getting reflected in 'Twentieth Century American drama'.

It tells us about how these previous volumes have been telling us the story of the emergence of Broadway theatre, the emergence of major playwrights, the shift from melodrama to new realism and from that realism to a self-conscious experimentalism.

We saw from the first play that we looked at the emperor Jones, we find that there is a shift from towards realism is the departure from realism and this is all set in the in a very realist setting so, to speak the setting of contemporary America.

It identified the extent to which theatre reflected social change, and this is also something that we continue to notice even in the latest play that we looked at Lorraine Hansberry's play *A Raisin in the Sun*, the contemporary changes in the social demographics, the changes in the social hierarchy all these things or at least the initiatives towards that they all get reflected in the theatre.

We find America moving from a rural economy towards an urban economy. It is engaging in a modernity with which both delighted and appalled and found in social inequity, this becomes a source of dramatic energy as well. These are the things that we had been witnessing in the number of plays that we engaged with. We also find that in

some form or the other, we all will be able to identify particular instances that would fit these descriptions.

Through boom and depression, the theatre in all its guises from the little theatre movement to the federal theatre Broadway comedies and musicals to powerful dramas or social of social and psychological experience prove to public art with public appeal. So, we do find that it is not just an art for art's sake sort of continuity that we find in American theatre.

As as we also noticed earlier it is also there is a sense of art for truths sake and we find that it continues to respond to the theatre movements the changing trends in the themes, they all in some sense or the other they continue to reflect what is happening in the public sphere. Yet already that role was threatened by the emergence of Hollywood ahead lay television by the turn of the twenty-first century hundreds of channels would be available where cyberspace would exert its own seductive allure.

Meanwhile, the economics of an art which require the collaborative efforts of a large number of people, used its plant inefficiently, and was often inconveniently situated, made it potentially less attractive than other arts or forms of entertainment. It also gives us a sense of how this form of performance how this genre began to decline with the onslaught of other modes of entertainment it is not something that we will be looking at in detail at the moment.

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came to an end as regional theatres spread throughout the country, generating plays that then fed back to Broadway, reversing the flow of the prewar world. And if audiences diversified on a regional basis, so they did on that of race, gender, national origin, and sexual preference. In other words, as the ruling metaphor of American society changed, from melting pot to rainbow, the theatre acknowledged this. The presumed homogeneity of the audience no longer prevailed. Just as television and publishing began to adopt a strategy of niche marketing, the theatre sought out a variety of different audiences, though often the concerns of such groups proved paradigmatic.

There were parallels with previous periods. The annual accounts of New York theatre offered by Otis L. Guernsey, Jr. itemized the continuing impact of British theatre, a thread which runs through all three of these volumes. It was responsible for just under half the Tony Awards for Best Play between 1964 and 1989 and rather more than half of the New York Drama Critics' Circle Best Play awards for the same period. By the 1970s, indeed, the British, previously believed to be genetically incapable of writing musicals, began to displace the homegrown product, until that time rightly regarded as one of the major accomplishments of the American theatre. Indeed in June 1997, *Cats*, by the ubiquitous Andrew Lloyd Webber, became the longest running musical in American theatrical history, displacing *A Chorus Line* (1975). Meanwhile, the



We find that around this period in the post war period we find the decline of Broadway. Broadway declined a balance by the emergence in New York off and off Broadway. So, a similar development was to occur in Chicago and elsewhere indeed the dominance of New York itself came to an end as regional theatres spread throughout the country, generating plays that then fed back to Broadway, reversing the flow of pre-war world.

This is quite similar to what happened in England too there was a point when London used to be the center of all forms of entertainment all it is kinds of cultural and political activities, but here we here also we find a similar trend that the there is a reversal of the flow of a place that it begins to expand it, begins to spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. The presumed homogeneity of the audience no longer prevails. It is as this genre is on expanding we find that its breadth is also growing in some sense an increasing awareness of what it entails to perform.

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The war marked another kind of divide. Some of those who had helped define the 1920s and 1930s did not survive to do the same for the postwar world. In the novel, Theodore Dreiser, Sherwood Anderson, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Nathanael West, and Gertrude Stein died between 1940 and 1946, while Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, and John Steinbeck no longer seemed to have a purchase on their society, despite their international recognition in the form of the Nobel Prize. In the theatre, likewise, Susan Glaspell, Sidney Howard, Jerome Kern, Lorenz Hart, and, within a few years, Philip Barry and Robert Sherwood were dead, while Maxwell Anderson and Lillian Hellman produced little to rival their earlier work.

Eugene O'Neill, meanwhile, had succumbed to a Parkinson-like disease which frustrated his efforts to write. He had, however, stored up works of great accomplishment, which, for over a decade after the war, would light up a Broadway season, works which plundered his life for the raw materials of plays that confronted his characters with their failure to realize the hopes that had once energized and now ironized them, plays whose very bleakness he had judged too great for wartime audiences.

A further irony awaited, however, in that the two not so very young men who appeared on the scene in the mid-1940s – Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller, both in their thirties at the time of their first Broadway successes – were in fact shaped by the previous decade in which they had written, and indeed staged, radical dramas. They certainly reflected the mood of their own time – Miller, in particular, taking pride in his sensitivity to the contemporary – but both were marked by a decade in which the solitary individual was



It is also telling us about what had been happening from the 1930s and 40s onwards Eugene O'Neill succumbs to Parkinson like disease and it frustrates his efforts to write and it also I mean he continues to write for a bit, but his as Brooksville also points out.

He what we know happened in his life from there, he picked up the raw materials of plays that confronted his characters with their failure to realize the hopes that had once energized and now ironized them plays whose very bleakness he had judged too great for wartime audiences .

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Stylistically, O'Neill moved from a lyric celebration of the outsider, to an exuberant expressionism, to a strained realism, a naturalism which mocked its own assumptions. Williams and Miller both sought a more fluid, or, to use Williams's own word, plastic staging in which dramatic metaphor found a correlative in visual symbol. O'Neill's appeal lay in a relentless quality, as characters were driven beyond the point at which they could negotiate the terms of their existence. Miller's lay in the strenuous demands made of those required suddenly to confront the nature and extent of their own moral failings. Williams took his audience in a wholly different direction. His plays often threatened and, indeed, delivered, violence or displayed sexual need. Their



Then, two other playwrights also emerged in the mid-1940s we have taken a look at them, Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller, both in their thirties at the time of their first Broadway successes and they were also shaped by the previous decade and they also reflected the mood of the times the political times the socio cultural times and Miller in particular took pride in his sensitive nature he had the sensitivity his plights had the sensitivity to respond to the contemporary times and we do have looked at two of Miller's plays which ambly reflects that sentiment.

We find that O'Neil moves from a lyric celebration of the outsider, to an exuberant expressionism, to a strained realism, a naturalism which mocked it is own assumptions. We find his later place becoming a very different from say emperor Jones, we find him experimenting, we did see how the expressionist techniques were majorly experimented with in the in emperor Jones and we find those trend those trends also undergoing changes from within too.

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southern settings and lyrically expressive language offered a seductive exoticism not wholly unrelated to that being explored by Jack Kerouac, for whom the improvisatory free spirit lay, if not at the heart of meaning, then at the heart of the search for such.

Writing of the 1950s, Daniel Bell observed that: "America in mid-century is in many respects a turbulent country. Oddly enough, it is a turbulence born, not of depression, but of prosperity. Contrary to the somewhat simple notion that prosperity dissolves all social problems, the American experience demonstrates that prosperity brings in its wake new anxieties, new strains, new urgencies" (*The End of Ideology*, 103). Prosperity, indeed, was in part the problem. As Kenneth Keniston and Paul Goodman, psychologist and philosopher respectively, were to observe, materialism was not an ideal in itself; on the contrary, it provoked a desire for transcendence, for a personal economy independent of that generated by a mechanistic civilization. The very success of America gave economic power to a generation that in time found the ritual of earning and spending inadequate to their needs. They, or at least a number of them, became rebels without knowing the faith in whose name they rebelled. America, immediately after the war, may have celebrated its renewed status as a city on the hill and many of its citizens begun to dream a familiar dream, but there were others, and many writers among them, for



We know there are a lot of other things too which happen around this time and the 50s and 60s are very turbulent too. We find the place responding to that we also find that the world climate the world political climate is also changing drastically to which America also needs to respond and oddly the crisis within America it is not something which is entirely brought about through political or social or cultural tragedies .

As Daniel Bell observes about the 1950s, America in mid-century is in many respects a turbulent country oddly enough it is a turbulence born not of depression, but of prosperity. I think this is very relatable when we also put this in context with the and we compare this with the place that we have read through its a turbulence, it is a dilemma, it is a crisis which is born not entirely out of depression, but out of prosperity which is very interesting.

Contrary to somewhat simple notion that prosperity dissolves all social problems, the American experience demonstrates that the prosperity that prosperity brings in its wake new anxieties, new strains, new urgencies.

So, in a nutshell this is something that we witness in most of the place that we have looked at there are new anxieties, new strains, new urgencies which were not there in the previous decade which is why this trends that it becomes extremely important to experiment with genre experiment with different modes of performances .



This is something Daniel Bell observed in his work the end of ideology which is a hugely interesting work. The author continues to state America immediately after the war, may have celebrated its renewed status as a city on the hill and many of its citizens begun to dream of a familiar dream, there were others and many writers among them for whom the logic of history had other lessons to teach than Americas steady rise towards the empyrean .

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rise toward the empyrean.

Looking back from the distance of the mid-seventies, Bell, or, rather, the writers whose views he summarized, and who had themselves emerged as commentators and primary movers (Norman O. Brown, Michel Foucault, R. D. Laing, and, in another sense, Charles Reich and Theodore Roszak), saw a generation which, in the late fifties and through the sixties, had chosen as their field of revolt "consciousness: a new polymorphous sensuality, the lifting of repression, the permeability of madness and normality, a new psychedelic awareness, the exploration of pleasure" (Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, 476). But this is not how the world seemed in 1945 when the war ended and Americans celebrated the return of what they took to be normalcy.

As ever, wars both mark a social and psychological divide and provoke a desire for continuities. Philip Roth, or his fictional alter ego Nathan Zuckerman, in *American Pastoral*, speaks of "the clock of history" being "reset" as Americans celebrated the end of the Second World War. "Everything was in motion," he insists. Men were back from Europe and Japan. America was the sole possessor of the Bomb. What could resist the newly unleashed energy of a nation politically secure and economically booming? Admittedly, the Depression was only a few years in the past and a tremor of anxiety could still pass through those who had lived through that time, but the rallying cry,



If we take a look at Miller's plays or at Tennessee Williams' plays, we find that it is also about this alternate existence about the alternate history and the lessons that the America had to offer not just its homogenous journey towards the American dream.

Daniel Bell in another work, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*, he notes this about the emergence of a consciousness a new polymorphous sensuality, the lifting of repression, the permeability of madness and normality, the new psychedelic awareness the exploration of pleasure.

But this is not how the world seemed in 1945 when the war ended and Americans celebrated the return of what they took to be normalcy. So, in the past in the Post-World War period when most of the Americans thought they were returning to normalcy, they were actually returning to new anxieties and new crisis like *All My Sons* talks about of the kind of prosperity that war brings the material come, the material wealth that war

brings the wartime prosperity and the discomfort that certain individuals or an entire family might have with it that becomes a reason for conflict.

The father-son conflict is also because of this divide as we would see in not just in all my sense, but in a few other plays as well. This is the stark reality in some sense what America was facing and now if we try to map this against the place it would begin to make more sense too. Philip Roth in his American pastoral he speaks about the clock of history being reset as Americans celebrated the end of the Second World War.

Everything was in motion men were back from Europe and Japan America was the sole processor of the bomb what could rest is the newly unleashed energy of a nation politically secure and economically booming, we find that the world order had completely changed the power equations had completely changed and America as a nation in a technical sense in a theoretical sense is indeed celebrating this resetting of the clock of history.

Because we find all equations that we were hitherto familiar with in terms of international politics everything has changed in the Post-World War period. But what has that done, what did they do to the individuals and to the families and that is something increasingly we find that the American theatre was trying to unravel was trying to expose in some sense.

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as he recalls it, was "Make something of yourselves." His generation, he insists, "were steered relentlessly in the direction of success" (41).

But Roth's novel is a story not just of paradise remembered (the title of its first section) but of paradise lost. For if ahead lay a materialism to be celebrated and deplored, ahead also lay assassinations, racial conflict, riots, corruptions, and another war which scarred a generation, and his novel is an account of the loss of innocence, the crumbling of assurance, a deepening anxiety about personal and public meaning, the "disruption of the anticipated American future. . . the ritual postimmigrant struggle for success turning pathological" (85-86).

But that lay far ahead. For the moment, the response was euphoria, followed by a desire to reach back not to Depression but the world which that disruption of the dream had seemed to invalidate, a world of material well-being and a confident faith in American principles. Consumerism was the new god while Manifest Destiny seemed reinstalled and legitimated. People picked up their lives and elected first a haberdasher from Missouri and then a general from Denison, Texas (who described his policy as one of "dynamic conservatism") as President, content to view the past only as processed through the calculated nostalgia of *Saturday Evening Post* covers. Meanwhile, a pediatrician, Dr. Benjamin Spock, was on hand to tell mothers that a new day had cian, Dr. Benjamin Spock, was on hand to tell mothers that a new day had



“The fundamental aim which was almost thrust upon every individual was to make something of yourselves and as they all also foreground that they were steered relentlessly in the direction of success.”

It is this journey towards success and the multiple failures or the alternate paths which do not take one to the conventional modes of success that is sometime in some sense the crux of most of the plays that we have looked at as well. So, in this introduction, it is also highlighting the emergence of consumerism as a new way of living as a new mode of living. He is giving some very specific examples.

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awaned, that they should trust themselves. He reassured them that the rigors of discipline need no longer prevail; desires could be satisfied without guilt.

✓ The one-car family became the two-car family. Television plugged Americans into a common cerebral cortex. The consumer society consumed. As John Updike's narrator observed, in a short story called "When Everyone Was Pregnant," "Guiltlessness. Our fat Fifties cars, how we loved them, revved them: no thought of pollution. . . Romance of consumption at its height. Shopping for baby food in the gaudy trash of the supermarkets. Purchasing power: young, newly powerful, born to consume." And yet, as he pointed out, this coexisted with a "smug conviction that the world was doomed. Beyond the sparkling horizon, an absolute enemy. Above us, bombs whose flash would fill the scene like a cup to overflowing" (in *Museums and Women*, 92-93). And, indeed, the world had changed profoundly. The sky had been lit up by the twin suns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and when the Soviet Union broke the American monopoly on nuclear destruction and China was "lost," for the first time a country previously invulnerable to attack felt deeply vulnerable. And since its military and scientific preeminence had been an article of faith, such catastrophes could only be a result of treachery and subversion. When had that subversion begun? Was it, perhaps, in the days of the New Deal or the brief period of U.S.-Soviet cooperation? If so, then it was necessary to rewrite history in such a way as to show that the thirties had been an aberration.

But the war itself had already sent a shock wave through those who could



The one car family became the two car family, television plugged Americans into a common cerebral cortex the consumer society consumed in Updike's short story when everyone was pregnant. Their guiltlessness our fat 50s cars how we loved them revved them no thought of pollution romance of consumption at its height shopping for baby food in the gaudy trash of the supermarkets purchasing power young newly powerful born to consume.

The new terms that the American society and most capitalist societies are coming to terms with consumerism, the power to consume and the purchasing power becomes another mode of world power which is also aiding this change of equations and indeed the world had changed profoundly the sky had been lit up by the twin sons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and when the Soviet Union broke the American monopoly on nuclear

destruction and China was lost for the first time our country previously invulnerable to attack felt deeply vulnerable.

Since it is military and scientific pre-eminence had been an article of faith such catastrophes could only be a result of treachery and subversion. These are the things which have not come have not been part of the plays that we have so, far dealt with, but we do know that there are the anxiety the stress the conflicts within families, the conflicts which look as if it is an individual conflict it is in fact, very heavily handed down from and through these decisions made by the state.

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not regard the allied victory as a vindication of the human spirit, and that tremor, as ever, was registered by the writer. Thus, in Europe, the bleakly comic ironies of the absurd had their roots in a very precisely definable political and social reality, while the *nouveau roman*, which marginalized the human figure, was, Alain Robbe-Grillet explained, no more than an expression of what he had observed in a war which relegated the individual human being quite literally to the ash heap. The Jewish writer in particular was unlikely to regard the Holocaust as no more than a brief interruption in the ascent of man.

The Jewish American writer, indeed, took from the war either a sense that the individual was a victim, trying to understand the ironies in which he was apparently trapped, or a desperate desire to reconstitute values apparently so profoundly denied as to negate the very idea of social or metaphysical purpose. Either way there was a sense of deep dismay, often rendered comically. The irony, however, was that by degrees such writers found themselves speaking for those for whom an old world – essentially rural, untroubled – no longer seemed accessible. Nor were Jewish writers the only ones to flirt with black humor (James Purdy, John Hawkes, Kurt Vonnegut, Joseph Heller), or the deracinated or alienated individual (J.D. Salinger, Carson McCullers, Truman Capote). The new world was urban or, at best, suburban and, beyond



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We can find getting reflected in some of Albee's plays too, we saw that in *A Zoo Story*. The new world was urban or at best, suburban and, beyond the glitter of consumer products, was increasingly perceived as charged with tensions, infected with deep insecurities sexual, financial, racial, as we saw this in *A Zoo Story*, *A Raisin in the Sun*.

It operates the anxieties operate at multiple levels and by the time, they begin to articulate themselves, even to the point of driving individuals and families to different tragic circumstances we realize that it is also not really within the individual's control, things seem to have gone entirely out of the individual control with an overarching system governing their decisions sometimes even on a daily basis.

What was at stake was a sense of identity and purpose, something which we saw very heavily in the latest play that we looked at a *raisin in the sun*. Unsurprisingly, this was felt most acutely by those whose grip on national myths and realities was most tenuous the Jewish and the Jewish and African American writers which is precisely what we witnessed in Hansberry's play.

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cerned with moral identity as the novels of Denlow and Ransom. Indeed, in 1943 he himself wrote a very successful novel, *Focus*, which explored both the nature of American anti-Semitism and the existential dilemma of a man who struggles toward a sense of his own identity and of his responsibility toward others. In his plays his characters cry out their names precisely because identity has been placed under such pressure. The American dream, meanwhile, becomes an evasion, merely the expression of a need for coherence and meaning, a project whose indefinite deferral is a judgment equally of the individual and his society. When Willy Loman, in *Death of a Salesman*, tries to offer his false dreams as an inheritance to his sons he acknowledges a failure which touches very directly on his sense of himself. As Erich Fromm observed:

When a person feels that he has not been able to make sense of his own life, he tries to make sense of it in terms of the life of his children. But one is bound to fail within oneself *and* for the children. The former because the problem of existence can only be solved by each one only for himself, and not by proxy; the latter because one lacks in the very qualities which one needs to guide the children in their own search for an answer. (*The Art of Loving*, 86)

By the same token Tennessee Williams's characters spoke of their sense of paranoia as power and money assumed an implacable authority, and the natural processes of mortality denied the very promises that life seemed to offer. His fragile characters, menaced in their sexuality and their social roles,



In this context when one is looking at these plays where the American dream is big deal in so, many different ways we find that the American dream becomes an evasion. Merely the expression of a need for coherence and meaning a project whose in fine indefinite deferral is a judgment equally of the individual and his society

It is very interesting to look at the American dream as an evasion over here. It is to think about Arthur Miller's play where perhaps one of the earliest explorations critical explorations of the American dream and dream as it has different facets were foregrounded.

When Willy Loman as the author says in death of a salesman tries to offer his false dreams as an inheritance to his sons, he acknowledges a failure which touches very directly on his sense of himself. We find this intergenerational intertwining over here a tragedy a dream as well as a tragedy, a dream as well as a dissolution which is passed on to the next generation simultaneously and that is what the American dream apparently ends up doing.

It is sort of an evasion one does not look at the imminent crisis in hand, but on the other hand chooses to pass on a dream which might also lead to a lot of insecurities which perhaps is already breeding a lot of anxieties. So, as Erich Fromm observes in the art of loving. When a person feels that he has not been able to make sense of his own life he tries to make sense of it in terms of the life of his children think about the plays again

Miller's plays and think about how in glass menagerie the parents the including the absent parent there is a way in which leaves a burden on to the children.

But one is bound to fail within oneself and for the children the former because the problem of existence can only be solved by each one for himself and not by proxy. The latter because one lacks in the very qualities which one needs to guide the children in their own search for an answer.

So, this is increasingly visible in the fragile characters of Tennessee Williams in those in Arthur Miller's characters who seem to be destined to move closer towards failure, the way if their lives could be defined as ontological opposites of what success meant in the American society then and in the zoo story also we find that there are these absent parents and hence there is no dream there is nothing in fact, that a character can inherit as we noticed in the zoo story.

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desperate for a love which simultaneously terrified them, registered something more than his intensely personal sense of oppression as homosexual and artist. Throughout his life he insisted on his radicalism, a radicalism literal enough in the works which he wrote in the thirties, but evident, too, in the subversive drive of plays which constantly celebrated the marginal, the dispossessed, the disregarded. In interviews and public statements he denounced a society which literally and legally proscribed his sexuality but that also, from time to time, menaced the freedom which his plays celebrated even in the moment that that freedom was being withdrawn. What some took for his southern gothicism, his melodramatic imagination, he regarded as a staging of the conflict between an implacable materialism and a redeeming, though ultimately defeated, human spirit.

Despite the fact that decades are little more than convenient means of organizing memories, each to be formed and edited with exactness, they do, in



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logical discipline and hence, to a large degree, from moral constraint. Dr. Spock, who had been responsible for their nurturing, now found himself attacked for creating a permissive generation and himself followed what seemed to him to be the logic of his profession, as pediatrician, by protesting the war and even running for the presidency as a way of protecting future generations of babies. In short, within the course of a decade old authorities had lost their power: economic, social, moral.

Kenneth Keniston spoke of an "unprogrammatic alienation," a "rebellion without a cause" (*The Uncommitted*, 67). In his book on alienated youth in America he observed the degree to which the vocabulary of social commentary increasingly stressed the distance between people and between people and the objects of their concern.

Alienation, estrangement, disaffection, anomie, withdrawal, disengagement, separation, non-involvement, apathy, indifference, and neutralism – all of these terms point to a sense of loss, a growing gap between men and their social world. The drift of our time is away from connection, relation, communion and dialogue, and our intellectual concerns reflect this conviction. Alienation, once seen as imposed on men by an unjust economic system, is increasingly chosen by men as their basic stance toward society. (*The Uncommitted*, 1)

It is hard not to see this as a description of the mood of Edward Albee's first success, *The Zoo Story* (1959), produced on the cusp of the sixties, in which the protagonist, withdrawn, disaffected, acutely aware of the gap between himself and others, has, indeed, chosen alienation; nor hard either to see in it



This also leads to a lot of paranoia as most characters whom we have met through these plays they seem to be paranoid in some form or the other. Now, we briefly let us also talk about Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* again 1959. So, this in fact, in some sense it could be defined as unprogrammatic alienation a rebellion without a cause.

So, Kenneth Keniston in his work will be uncommitted this is how he talks about this talks about this mode which we also find getting reflected in Albee's *The Zoo Story*. Alienation, estrangement, disaffection, anomie, withdrawal, disengagement, separation, non-involvement, apathy, indifference, and neutralism all of these terms point to a sense of loss, a growing gap between men and their social world.

The drift of our time is away from connection, relation, communion and dialogue, and our intellectual concerns reflect this conviction. Alienation, once seen as imposed on man by an unjust economic system, is increasingly chosen by men as their basic stance towards society and this is as Keniston would say this reflects the mood of Albee's *The Zoo Story*.

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It is hard not to see this as a description of the mood of Edward Albee's first success, *The Zoo Story* (1959), produced on the cusp of the sixties, in which the protagonist, withdrawn, disaffected, acutely aware of the gap between himself and others, has, indeed, chosen alienation; nor hard either to see in it a reflection of those concerns voiced by another psychologist, Erich Fromm, who, in his fifties book *The Art of Loving*, reflected both Keniston's views and those to be found in Albee's *The American Dream* when he observed that: "Modern man has transformed himself into a commodity. . . He is alienated from himself, from his fellow men and from nature" (88), consoled by the "strict routine of bureaucratized, mechanical work" (74). The paramount need, Fromm insisted, was "to leave the prison of his aloneness." The mechanism whereby this was to be attained was love: "a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others" (24). The imagery was specifically that taken up by Albee, the potentially religious overtones being preserved in the symbolism of his early plays, as it was by Tennessee Williams, for whom love was indeed an active principle capable of neutralizing the alienation felt by so many of his characters. As the fifties slid into the sixties, love, counterpoised to the mechanistic drive of materialism or, more specifically, of the military, was celebrated as a



And this is of course, a play which is produced on the cusp of the sixties in which the protagonist is withdrawn disaffected acutely aware of the gap between himself and others and he has chosen alienation. So, this is a very important term it is not as if alienation was imposed on him and due to the various circumstances a lot of things were imposed on him, but he chooses alienation.

It is to see this as a type of an individual who is forced to make the choices because of the circumstances and Albee's American dream also it makes for the sense, modern man has transformed himself into a commodity he is alienated from himself from his fellow men, from nature, consoled by the strict routine of bureaucratized mechanical work to and this becomes something which describes the characteristics of most of Albee's protagonists.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:45)



Timeline: Post-World War II to 1998
 Compiled by Don B. Wilmeth with Jonathan Curley

This chronological chart by years (only major events are ordered chronologically within each year) provides a quick overview of major events during the time period covered by this volume (through June 1998). Briefly noted in the timeline are the following: in column one, major theatrical events in the history of the theatre in the United States; in column two, other U.S. cultural and his-

torical events of significance, or representative data; and in column three, key historical and cultural events from other parts of the world, included in order to provide points of reference in a wider context. Unless otherwise indicated specific theatrical events in column one occurred in New York City and dates refer to production.

DATES	THEATRICAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
1946	Eugene O'Neill's <i>The Iceman Cometh</i> premieres.	U.S. birthrate soars to 3,411,000 births, up from 2,858,000 the previous year.	Fulbright scholarships established for U.S. teachers, researchers, and students to encourage exchange programs with other nations.
	Irving Berlin musical <i>Annie Get Your Gun</i> is directed by Joshua Logan and stars Ethel Merman.	U.S. GI Bill passed.	J.-P. Sartre publishes <i>Existentialism and Humanism</i> .
	<i>State of the Union</i> by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse.	U.S. military branches united under Department of Defense.	Violent protests against British rule in several Indian cities (21-22 Feb.).



So, having said it would be interesting to take a look at this chronological chart the timeline of post World War theatre and this here we find that the theatrical events in America is mapped against two other kinds of milestones one is one selected historical or cultural events within America and the historical and cultural events throughout the world .

(Refer Slide Time: 22:09)

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	<i>State of the Union</i> by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse.	U.S. military branches united under Department of Defense.	Violent protests against British rule in several Indian cities (21-22 Feb.).
	Maxwell Anderson's <i>Jean of Lorraine</i> .	Atomic Energy Commission founded.	Verdicts reached in Nuremberg war trials.
	Lillian Hellman's <i>Another Part of the Forest</i> .	U.S. scientist creates first artificial snowstorm by seeding cloud with dry ice.	Riots over bread shortages in Paris and Rouen (4 Jan.).
	Garson Kanin's <i>Born Yesterday</i> opens with Judy Holliday, who takes over at last minute and achieves stardom.	U.S. scholars complete "Revised Standard Version" of the Bible.	German novelist Herman Hesse awarded Nobel Prize for Literature.
	<i>Call Me Mister</i> , with sketches by Arnold Aurebach and Arnold B. Hewitt, premieres, showing the difficult transition of World War II veterans from war to the labor force.	Robert Penn Warren's <i>All the King's Men</i> .	Juan Perón elected President of Argentina.



So, beginning from 1946 the post war period it that is when we will primarily look at the theatrical events in America and it is to understand how this could be mapped against the

historical and cultural events in America as well as and the rest of the world. So, 1946 witnesses Eugene Oneill's *The Iceman Cometh* and it is also the time when a series of such performances musicals are produced as we can see over here even Irving Berlin Howard, Lindsay Maxwell Anderson, Lillian Hellman, and Garson Kanin.

These are we have not gone into the details of these works, but of course, we do get a sense of what kind of performances these were from Eugene Oneill's work that we dealt with emperor Jones there is a lot of there is a tendency to experiment with expressionism and there is also a tendency to get into the human mind and to do psychological exploration. So, we find that this is also the time when a lot of new changes are happening within America as well as elsewhere.

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Theatre founded; defunct by 1948.

James B. Conant's *Understanding Science*. Italy becomes a republic.
 Willem De Kooning begins series of black and white paintings which establish him as a leading Abstract Expressionist. French playwright Jean Anouilh's *Medea*.
 Mark Rothko's painting *Prehistoric Memories*. Christopher Fry's play *A Phoenix Too Frequent*.
 William Wyler's film *The Best Years of Our Life* released. Terence Rattigan's play *The Winslow Boy*.
 Bikini swimsuits introduced.

1947 Actors Studio opens.

22nd Amendment proposed by Congress to limit presidential services to two terms in office (21 March). It is ratified 26 February 1951.
 Truman warns USSR that U.S. "would support free peoples who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure." The policy is known as the Truman Doctrine.
 Marshall Plan implemented as coordinated program to help European nations recover from World War II.

Poet Robinson Jeffers adapts *Medea* for the stage. Jackie Robinson becomes first black man to sign on to a professional ball club, the Brooklyn Dodgers (11 April).
 Pandit Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leaders of two major Indian political parties, Congress and Muslim League, endorse Britain's plan for partition of India (June).
 Bertolt Brecht summoned to testify before House Un-American Activities Committee. Christian Dior introduces the "New Look" into women's fashion clothes; ultra-feminine and full-skirted, it differs greatly from wartime wear and fashion (3 June).

NPTEL

In 1947 a lot of systemic changes institutional changes are also happening, the actors studio opens Robinson Jeffers adapts media for the stage Brecht is summoned to testify before the house un American activities committee these are the few things that we have observed while we were looking at the major backgrounds which influence the American theatre major political background which influenced it.

So, this is also a time when the UN we find that around the same time holds its first session Italy becomes an independent republic. So, even a few cultural changes also happen like bikini swimsuits are introduced around the same time. So, we there is a lot of


change Christian Dior introduces the new look into women's fashion feminine full skirted it differs greatly from wartime wear and fashion.


So, this shift is not just in terms of what we understand is literature, culture or a politics, this affects the everyday life. There is a lot of change which is coming into being in the way in which people look at their everydayness and lived realities are undergoing a lot of change as well.

There is something which is closer to home which is mentioned here as well Pandit Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah leaders of two major Indian political parties congress and Muslim league endorsed Britain's plan for partition of India. So, the world order is entirely changing this is in 1947, when American theatre is beginning to bloom and the world economy, the world polity, the world the political climate and the cultural climate and the everyday climate is changing drastically too.

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<p>Margo Jones founds theatre (as Theater '47) in Dallas; Alley Theatre opens in Houston.</p> <p>Tennessee Williams's <i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> opens on Broadway with Marlon Brando (4 Dec.).</p> <p>Arthur Miller's <i>All My Sons</i>. <i>Brigadoon</i>, a Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe production, hits the stage.</p> <p>Burton Lane and E.Y. Harburg's <i>Finian's Rainbow</i> introduces choreographer Michael Kidd.</p> <p>First Tony Awards dinner held at Waldorf Astoria.</p> <p><i>The Heiress</i> by Ruth and Augustus Goetz. William Haines's <i>Command Decision</i>.</p> <p>First production of O'Neill's <i>A Moon for the Misbegotten</i> (written 1943) in Ohio; did not play New York.</p>	<p>Congress passes antilabor-union Taft-Hartley Act over Truman's veto (23 June).</p> <p>Rocket-powered research plane flown by Charles Yeager breaks the sound barrier at 650 m.p.h. (14 Oct.).</p> <p>Polaroid camera developed.</p> <p>U.S. congressional committee claims there are Communists in movie industry, leading to blacklisting of suspect writers and actors.</p> <p>Lionel Trilling's <i>Middle of the Journey</i>.</p> <p>Paul Samuelson's <i>Foundations of Economic Analysis</i>.</p> <p>Willem De Kooning's painting <i>Pink Angels</i>. Goodyear introduces tubeless tire.</p> <p>First microwave cooker sold in United States.</p> <p>Henry Ford dies.</p> <p>Great Books Program started.</p> <p>Sculptures by Albert Giacometti and ..</p>	<p>The "Dead Sea Scrolls" discovered in cave in Jordan.</p> <p>Marc Chagall's painting <i>Madonna of the Sleigh</i>.</p> <p>Albert Camus's novel <i>The Plague</i>.</p> <p>India gains independence.</p> <p>Anne Frank's diary published.</p> <p>Jean Genet's play <i>The Maids</i>.</p>
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So, Tennessee Williams 19 the the late 1940s continues to be very interesting for America a streetcar named desire, it opens on Broadway where with Marlon Brando Arthur Miller's All My Sons. So, it is a very prolific period Eugene Oneill's a moon for miss begotten and look at the some of the other everyday changes which are happening over here. First microwave cooker is sold in United States it is also the year when Henry Ford dies. So, India gains independence of course, and Camus novel the plague is published Anne Frank's diary is published.

So, we find a range of things coming together alternate histories getting created as well as fore grounded . So, Anne Frank’s diary is published which gives a different turn to the holocaust history and the in some sense the colonial world the colonial empire is coming to an end. And it is at the same time when the a new economic order is being created and massively recreated to within America and a newer kinds of technologies are being explored Polaroid camera developed as we can see over here.

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<p>Arthur Miller's <i>All My Sons</i>. <i>Brigadoon</i>, a Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe production, hits the stage.</p> <p>Burton Lane and E.Y. Harburg's <i>Fimian's Rainbow</i> introduces choreographer Michael Kidd.</p> <p>First Tony Awards dinner held at Waldorf Astoria.</p> <p><i>The Heiress</i> by Ruth and Augustus Goetz. William Haines's <i>Command Decision</i>. First production of O'Neill's <i>A Moon for the Misbegotten</i> (written 1943) in Ohio; did not play New York.</p>	<p>Polaroid camera developed.</p> <p>U.S. congressional committee claims there are Communists in movie industry, leading to blacklisting of suspect writers and actors.</p> <p>Lionel Trilling's <i>Middle of the Journey</i>.</p> <p>Paul Samuelson's <i>Foundations of Economic Analysis</i>.</p> <p>Willem De Kooning's painting <i>Pink Angels</i>. Goodyear introduces tubeless tire.</p> <p>First microwave cooker sold in United States.</p> <p>Henry Ford dies.</p> <p>Great Books Program started.</p> <p>Sculptures by Albert Giacometti and Henry Moore exhibited.</p> <p>American physicist William Shockley invents the transistor.</p> <p>CORE stages "Journey of Reconciliation," first freedom ride to challenge segregation on interstate transit.</p>	<p>Albert Camus's novel <i>The Plague</i>.</p> <p>India gains independence.</p> <p>Anne Frank's diary published.</p> <p>Jean Genet's play <i>The Maids</i>.</p>	
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DATES	THEATRICAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
1948	Living Theater founded by Judith Malina and Julian Beck.	Organization of American States Charter provides for regional security and economic development.	A Universal Declaration of Human Rights approved by UN General Assembly. It declares essential human rights for all people.
	Thomas Heggen's and Joshua Logan's World War II comedy <i>Mr. Roberts</i> , starring Henry Fonda, opens in February.	Harry S. Truman elected thirty-third President.	
	World premiere of Bertolt Brecht's <i>The Caucasian Chalk Circle</i> at Carlton College.	Controversial, pseudo-scientific Kinsey report on male sexual behavior published.	George Orwell's novel <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> .
	<i>A Streetcar Named Desire</i> wins Pulitzer and Drama Critics' Award (film, 1951).	First self-service McDonald's hamburgers restaurants open in California. The franchise will spread across the nation and around the world by end of twentieth century.	Gandhi assassinated (30 Jan.).
	Cole Porter's <i>Kiss Me, Kate</i> premieres, with Alfred Drake and Patricia Morison.	Norman Mailer's <i>The Naked and the Dead</i> .	State of Israel proclaimed, with David Ben-Gurion as head of provisional government (14-15 May).
	Moss Hart's <i>Light Up the Sky</i> .	B.F. Skinner's <i>Walden Two</i> .	Somali people appeal to UN for united Somalia after Ethiopia takes control of Somalia's Reserved Areas (23 Sept.).
	Maxwell Anderson's <i>Anne of the Thousand Days</i> .	Alger Hiss accused of spying.	First Arab-Israeli War.
	Lindsay and Crouse's <i>Life With Mother</i> . First New York production of Williams's <i>Summer and Smoke</i> (premiered in Dallas	James Gould Cozzen's <i>Guard of Honor</i> . Jackson Pollock exhibits controversial "action painting" in New York for first	T.S. Eliot wins Nobel Prize for Literature. Laurence Olivier's film <i>Hamlet</i> opens.

So, the transistor is invented and coming down in by 48, we find that the streetcar named desire it wins the Pulitzer prize and the drama critics award film, a world premiere of Brecht's the Caucasian circle it happens in Carlton college. And around the same time a lot of controversial sort of topics are also getting discussed getting published, we find that pseudoscientific Kinsey report on male sexual behavior is published Henry Harry Truman is elected as the 33rd president of America.

The same year Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated in India Orwell's 1984 is published. So, we will find that this is the very turbulent period the late 1940s, it is changing the world order the course of history is getting radically changed and now we know the kind of anxiety and the kind of stress which has gone into the making of these a plays is tremendous too.

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1949

Andrew Wyeth paints *Christina's World* in American Realist style.
 James Michener's *Tales of the South Pacific*.
 Baseball slugger Babe Ruth dies.
 LP (long-playing record) introduced.
 Armed forces desegregated per order of the President.
 Clifford Odets writes *The Big Knife*.
 Robert Motherwell's painting *At Five in the Afternoon*.
 Jackson Pollock's painting *Number 10*.

Term "Cold War" coined by Bernard Baruch.

The North Atlantic Treaty is signed in Washington, DC by Britain, Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Denmark, Luxembourg, Portugal, Iceland, Norway, Canada, and the United States. It promises mutual assistance against the Soviet Union in a defensive pact under the guidance of the North Atlantic Council (4 April).

Revolution in China under Mao Tse-Tung, Beijing falls to Communists; the Siege of Peking a crucial military success as well (22 Jan.).
 French Existentialist Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*.

Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, directed by Elia Kazan, is brought to stage and wins Pulitzer.
 The Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific*, with Mary Martin and Ezio Pinza, wins Pulitzer in 1950 (second musical to do so).
 Robert Merton's *Social Theory and Social Justice*.
 Merton White's *Social Thought in America*.
 Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

NPTEL

And it is also the time the term Cold War begins to be coined by Bernard Baruch and we find that this is the term which continues to be handy for the longest time for the next many decades.

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1949 Clifford Odets writes *The Big Knife*.

Robert Motherwell's painting *At Five in the Afternoon*.
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Joseph Campbell's *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*.

Mary McLeod Bethune founds National Council of Negro Women, which opposes poll tax and racial discrimination, and promotes teaching of black history in public schools.

Pandit Nehru becomes Prime Minister of India.

The Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *South Pacific*, with Mary Martin and Ezio Pinza, wins Pulitzer in 1950 (second musical to do so).

The Falmouth Playhouse, a summer stock repertory theatre, is founded by Richard Aldrich.

William Faulkner wins Nobel Prize for Literature.

Eire leaves Commonwealth and becomes Republic of Ireland (18 April).

Maxwell Anderson's musical dramatization of Alan Paton's novel *Cry, the Beloved Country*, called *Lost in the Stars*, produced.



Arthur Miller's death of a salesman it has performed on stage it wins a Pulitzer prize, Faulkner wins Nobel Prize for literature we find that American literature in general is also getting a lot of attention . And it is no longer the literary circle the literary the inner circle is no longer dominated by just the English and the European writers, but we find that in America also becomes a major player.

We find a lot of women writers gaining visibility too, in the next couple of decades. So, this is the time when the iconic work which changed the way in which feminist movement took off *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir French existentialist writer. So, and this is also the period when Pandit Nehru becomes the Prime Minister of India.

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DATES	THEATRICAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
	Anita Loos's book <i>Gentlemen Prefer Blondes</i> is adapted for the stage as a musical by Jule Styne; makes Carol Channing a Broadway star. Sidney Kingsley's <i>Detective Story</i> .		T.S. Eliot's drama <i>The Cocktail Party</i> .
1950	During 1949-50 season, only fifty-nine new plays debut on Broadway.	The Brink's Bank Robbery breaks all previous records for losses to armed robbers: \$1,218,211 in cash and \$1,557,000 in money orders is taken (17 Jan.). U.S. Atomic Energy Commission is ordered by President Truman to construct a hydrogen bomb.	Apartheid established in South Africa. Bertolt Brecht founds The Berliner Ensemble.
	The New York Commissioner of Licenses requires <i>Michael Todd's Peep Show</i> , a burlesque revue, to tone down its strip tease routine and make costumes less revealing. The Arena Stage is founded by a group associated with George Washington University, in Washington, D.C. Shirley Booth opens in William Inge's <i>Come Back Little Sheba</i> .	Minimum wage of 8.75 goes into effect under amendment to the Fair Labor and Standards Act. Color television broadcasts begin.	UN Security Council establishes unified command under the United States to send aid to South Korea (7 July). George Bernard Shaw dies (b. 1852).
		Diners' Club introduces the charge card, the first example of a credit card.	Ezra Pound's <i>Cantos</i> published.



So, we find a lot of changes happening simultaneously politically, culturally, philosophically and there is a lot of visibility for race, gender, and the colonized nations. So, multiple things are happening at the same time. So, the colors television broadcast begins and we find that this new modes of entertainment are a challenge as well as a supplementary product when we look at literature and culture.

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DATES	THEATRICAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
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	Frank Loesser's and Abe Burrows's <i>Gays and Dolls</i> opens 24 November at The 46th Street Theatre in New York and runs for 1,200 performances.	Diners' Club introduces the charge card, the first example of a credit card. Lionel Trilling's <i>Liberal Imagination</i> . Henry Steele Commager's <i>The American Mind</i> . T.W. Adorno et al., <i>The Authoritarian Personality</i> .	Ezra Pound's <i>Cantos</i> published. Korean War begins.



And we find that during this time, the number of plays that they are that are getting debuted on Broadway it is also coming down during 49 50 season only 59 new plays are

debut on Broadway it is also the same time when color television broadcasts begin and Korean war begins to.

It is not a peaceful time all around, but the international politics is getting more and more turbulent as we can see despite the Second World War having come to an end. But we realize that each nation also seems to have their own way to deal with it as well.

(Refer Slide Time: 30:09)



1951

Clifford Odets's *The Country Girl*, directed by the author.
 Novelist Carson McCullers adapts her book *The Member of the Wedding* to the stage.
 Broadway theatre begins tradition of the Gypsy Robe when a dancer presents a dressing robe adorned with mementos to a friend in the cast of the next show to open.
 Arthur Miller's version of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*.

The American Shakespeare Theatre is founded in Stratford, Connecticut, by Lawrence Langner.
 Actors' Equity appoints Frederick O'Neal to head committee to investigate declining employment of black actors on Broadway. O'Neal finds that only thirteen blacks had parts in Broadway plays between 1 September 1951 and 15 March 1952.

David Riseman et al., *The Lonely Crowd*, Erik Erikson's *Childhood and Society*.
 Ralph Bunche wins Nobel Peace Prize for negotiating armistice between Israelis and Arabs.
 Jackson Pollock's painting *Lavender Mist*.

National Council of Churches is established.
 Over 100 million tons of steel manufactured annually by this year.
 Direct long-distance dialing service begins.

Scandal erupts in college basketball when revelations of game-fixing for gambling emerge.

Chiang Kai-Shek resumes presidency of Nationalist China.
 So-called "Theatre of the Absurd" appears in France (e.g., Eugene Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano*).
 Christopher Fry's play *Venus Observed*.

Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister of Britain.

Eugene Ionesco's play *The Lesson*.
 Christopher Fry's play *A Sleep of Prisoners*.
 Jean Anouilh's play *Colombe*.



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1951

to a friend in the cast of the next show to open.
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John Van Druten's *I Am a Camera*.
 Tennessee Williams's *The Rose Tattoo* (film 1955).
 Maxwell Anderson's *Barefoot in Athens*.

Rodgers-Hammerstein production of *The King and I*, with Yui Brynner and Gertrude Lawrence (in her final stage role), opens 29 March.

William Styron's *Lie Down in Darkness*.
 Rachel Carson's *The Sea Around Us*.
 Robert Frost's *Complete Poems*.
 James Jones's *From Here to Eternity*.
 J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.
 C. Wright Mills's *White Collar*.
 Talcott Parsons's *The Social System*.
 Hannah Arendt's *Origins of Totalitarianism*.
 W.V.O. Quine's "Two Dogmas of Empiricism."

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 Over 100 million tons of steel manufactured annually by this year.
 Direct long-distance dialing service begins.

Scandal erupts in college basketball when revelations of game-fixing for gambling emerge.

Salvador Dalí's painting *Christ of St. John on the Cross*.

Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister of Britain.

Eugene Ionesco's play *The Lesson*.
 Christopher Fry's play *A Sleep of Prisoners*.
 Jean Anouilh's play *Colombe*.

Benjamin Britten's opera *Billy Budd* and Ralph Vaughan Williams's opera *The Pilgrim's Progress* premiere in London.



So, 1950 is also the year when Arthur Miller his version of Ibsen's An Enemy of the People is being performed and National Council of Churches is established which is also

giving us some kind of a lead into how the secular politics and the need to contain religion it takes a more systematic more institutionalized form as well.

Eugene Ionesco's play *The Lesson* Christopher Fry's play *A Sleep of Prisoners*, Dali's painting the Christ of Saint John on the Cross. So, all of these things are happening simultaneously as we can see over here the American Shakespeare theatre is founded in Connecticut.

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20

1952

<p>Donald Bevan's and Edmund Trzcinski's <i>Stalag 17</i>.</p> <p>Lillian Hellman's <i>The Autumn Garden</i>.</p> <p>Sidney Kingsley's stage version of Arthur Koestler's novel <i>Darkness at Noon</i> produced.</p> <p>Jan de Hartog's <i>The Fourposter</i>.</p> <p>Off-Broadway records first major success with José Quintero's revival of Tennessee Williams's <i>Summer and Smoke</i> at the Circle in the Square.</p> <p>The American Mime Theatre founded in New York by Paul Curtis.</p> <p>Joseph Kramm's <i>The Strike</i> wins Pulitzer.</p> <p><i>The Climate of Eden</i> by Moss Hart opens.</p>	<p>Kenneth Arrow's <i>Rational Choice and Individual Value</i>.</p> <p>Release of Huston's film <i>The African Queen</i> and Minelli's <i>An American in Paris</i>.</p> <p>Gian Carlo Menotti composes <i>Amahl and the Night Visitors</i> for NBC Television.</p> <p>C. Vann Woodward's <i>Origins of the New South</i>.</p> <p><i>I Love Lucy</i> begins its long television run.</p> <p>Dwight D. Eisenhower elected President.</p> <p>Rocky Marciano wins heavyweight boxing championship from "Jersey" Joe Walcott in Philadelphia, knocking him out in the thirteenth round.</p> <p>Some 17 million U.S. homes have TV sets at year's end, up from 5 to 8 million in 1950.</p> <p>In <i>Dennis et al. v. U.S.</i>, Supreme Court rules in favor of 1946 Smith Act, a law against the advocacy of overthrow of government by force.</p>	<p>U.S. explodes first hydrogen bomb at Eniwetok Atoll in the Pacific.</p> <p>Batista seizes power in Cuba (10 March).</p> <p>Dr. Kwame Nkrumah becomes first African prime minister south of the Sahara (21 March).</p> <p>U.S. occupation of Japan ends (28 April).</p>
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21

1953

<p>George Axelrod's <i>The Seven Year Itch</i> begins a 1,141-show run on Broadway.</p> <p>Arthur Laurents's <i>The Time of the Cuckoo</i>.</p> <p><i>Invisible Man</i> by Ralph Ellison published. Whitaker Chambers's <i>Witness</i>.</p> <p>Paul Tillich's <i>The Courage to Be</i>.</p> <p>Edmund Wilson's <i>The Shores of Light</i>.</p> <p>Herman Wouk's <i>The Caine Mutiny</i>.</p> <p>Ernest Hemingway's <i>The Old Man and the Sea</i>.</p> <p>Reinhold Niebuhr's <i>The Irony of American History</i>.</p> <p>Humphrey Bogart wins Best Actor Oscar for <i>The African Queen</i>.</p> <p>John Cage's notorious musical composition "4'33"," in which no sound is recorded.</p> <p>Willem De Kooning's <i>Woman I</i> painting. Film <i>High Noon</i> released.</p> <p>Phoenix Theater founded by T. Edward Hambleton and Norris Houghton.</p>	<p>"American Bandstand" premieres on television.</p> <p>A polio epidemic strikes 47,500 Americans.</p> <p><i>Invisible Man</i> by Ralph Ellison published. Whitaker Chambers's <i>Witness</i>.</p> <p>Paul Tillich's <i>The Courage to Be</i>.</p> <p>Edmund Wilson's <i>The Shores of Light</i>.</p> <p>Herman Wouk's <i>The Caine Mutiny</i>.</p> <p>Ernest Hemingway's <i>The Old Man and the Sea</i>.</p> <p>Reinhold Niebuhr's <i>The Irony of American History</i>.</p> <p>Humphrey Bogart wins Best Actor Oscar for <i>The African Queen</i>.</p> <p>John Cage's notorious musical composition "4'33"," in which no sound is recorded.</p> <p>Willem De Kooning's <i>Woman I</i> painting. Film <i>High Noon</i> released.</p> <p>The Rosenbergs, first sentenced as atomic spies in 1951, are executed.</p>	<p>Irish expatriate Samuel Beckett's play <i>Waiting for Godot</i>.</p> <p>Agatha Christie's play <i>The Mousetrap</i> opens at London's Ambassador Theatre (still running in 1999).</p> <p>Dr. Albert Schweitzer wins Nobel Peace Prize.</p> <p>Contraceptive pill introduced.</p> <p>Jean Anouilh's play <i>Waltz of the Toreadors</i>.</p> <p>Ionesco's play <i>The Chairs</i>.</p> <p>George VI dies; Elizabeth II becomes Queen of England.</p> <p>U.S. biologist James Watson and British physicist Francis Crick describe their famous model of the DNA molecule, showing its structure to be a double helix.</p>
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So, 52 is when the U.S explores the first hydrogen bomb in the Pacific and we find that the theatre performances the productions they are continuing to gain momentum, though the numbers perhaps have come down there is a polio epidemic in America there is a polio epidemic in America around this time.

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DATES	THEATRICAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
30	William Inge's <i>Picnic</i> (wins Pulitzer). Robert Anderson's <i>Tea and Sympathy</i> . John Patrick's <i>Teahouse of the August Moon</i> . Howard Teichmann's and George Kaufman's <i>The Solid Gold Cadillac</i> . Eugene O'Neill dies (b. 1888). Musical <i>Wonderful Town</i> reunites composer Leonard Bernstein with lyricists Betty Comden and Adolph Green.	Robert Oppenheimer, father of atomic bomb, has security permit withdrawn by President Eisenhower, having been accused of being a Communist and holding up development of hydrogen bomb (23 Dec.). Saul Bellow's <i>The Adventures of Augie March</i> . James Baldwin's <i>Go Tell It on the Mountain</i> . Daniel Boorstin's <i>The Genius of American Politics</i> . Leo Strauss's <i>Natural Right and History</i> . Alfred Kinsey's <i>Sexual Behavior in the Human Female</i> . Dylan Thomas dies in New York. Buckminster Fuller designs geodesic dome. Federal budget deficit hits high to date for peacetime: \$9.4 billion.	French semiotician Roland Barthes's <i>Writing Degree Zero</i> . Stalin dies (b. 1879); Nikita Khrushchev appointed First Secretary of the Communist Party. Ceasefire in Korea. Korean War ends soon after. Martial law imposed in East Berlin. Fidel Castro leads abortive coup against Batista in Cuba (26 July). Elizabeth II crowned Queen of England. Anouilh's play <i>The Lark</i> .



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31	Gian Carlo Menotti's opera <i>The Saint of Bleeker Street</i> wins Pulitzer (1955). Tennessee Williams's <i>Cat on a Hot Tin Roof</i> directed by Elia Kazan wins both Critics' Circle Award and Pulitzer.	for hearings on Communist activities in the government. Elvis Presley makes first professional recording at nineteen and achieves some success with "That's All Right, Mama" and "Blue Moon of Kentucky". First "TV dinners" are sold by Swanson Co. Hemingway wins Pulitzer for literature. Marlon Brando wears denim jeans and leather jacket in <i>The Wild One</i> , setting new fashion. Wallace Stevens's <i>Collected Poems</i> . David Potter's <i>People of Plenty</i> . Newport Jazz Festival founded. Veterans Day (11 Nov.) proclaimed holiday to honor all who fought for nation. Jasper John's painting <i>Flag</i> . Disneyland, America's most popular amusement/theme park, is founded in Anaheim, California.	Rebellion breaks out against French control in Algeria. Death of Spanish playwright Jacinto Benavente (b. 1866). Terrence Rattigan's play <i>Separate Tables</i> . Enid Bagnold's play <i>The Chalk Garden</i> . Death of artist Henri Matisse (b. 1869). Federico Fellini's film <i>La Strada</i> . U.S. begins economic aid to Laos, Cambodia, and South Vietnam.
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		Richard Holstadter's <i>Age of Return</i> . Norman Vincent Peale's <i>The Power of Positive Thinking</i> .	
1956	<i>Long Day's Journey Into Night</i> , which O'Neill ordered to be withheld until 25 years after his death or until all of the models for his characters had died, is performed for the first time. It garners a Pulitzer the following year. Alan Jay Lerner's and Frederick Loewe's <i>My Fair Lady</i> , based on Shaw's <i>Pygmalion</i> , is produced with Rex Harrison and Julie Andrews. Philadelphia Drama Guild founded.	An oral vaccine against polio is developed by Arthur Sabin. Elvis Presley releases <i>Heartbreak Hotel</i> , the first of his string of more than 170 hit singles and 80 hit albums. World heavyweight boxing champ Rocky Marciano retires, having won all forty-nine bouts of his career (April).	Atomic Energy Commission develop atomic powered rockets. Khrushchev's "secret speech." Soviets crush rebellion in Hungary.
23	<i>The Diary of Anne Frank</i> , by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, wins Pulitzer. Ringling Bros., Barnum & Bailey give last circus performance under canvas big top. Samuel Beckett's <i>Waiting for Godot</i> with Bert Lahr and E.G. Marshall stuns audiences and alters course of modern theatre.	Allen Ginsberg's long experimental poem, <i>Howl</i> , described as an elegy of the American dream, is the first major work of the Beatnik cultural/literary movement. By mid-50s bust lines are accentuated in figure-hugging evening wear. Suits and dresses are the fashion in women's daily wear. C. Wright Mills's <i>Power Elite</i> . William H. Whyte's <i>The Organization of Man</i> . Walter Kaufman, ed., <i>Existentialism from</i>	Biggest anti-Communist uprising since 1953 when Polish workers riot at industrial fair in Poznan (28 June). Egyptian President Nasser seizes Suez Canal (26 July). Ingmar Bergman's film <i>The Seventh Seal</i> released. Swiss playwright Friedrich Durrenmatt's <i>The Visit</i> .



So, we will quickly go down to the end of the 1950s a lot of American writers they continue to win awards international awards popular culture is also taking a very different turn altogether. 56 is when Elvis Presley's Heartbreak Hotel is released and an oral vaccine against polio is getting developed we find that the scientific advancements are also going simultaneously along with the emergence of popular culture and nothing seems to affect anything there is a growing stress there is a growing anxiety there is an increasing need to deal with all of these things simultaneously, but we find that the world is galloping forward in this newly acquired format of modernity.

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		Launching in the U.S. of the first atomic submarine (9 June), and the first atomic-powered cargo ship, <i>Seawanh</i> (21 July). First Barbie doll introduced in California.	
1959	Lorraine Hansberry's <i>A Raisin in the Sun</i> , showing the tribulations of a struggling black family, opens to boisterous critical and popular praise (with Sidney Pottier, Ruby Dee, Diana Sands). The San Francisco Mime Troupe, founded by R.G. Davis and using techniques from the commedia dell'arte, is started. Mixing radical politics with farce and invective, they stage crude parables and in later years Vietnam protest plays. Dallas Theater Center founded.	Alaska and Hawaii, under U.S. territorial control since 1912 and 1898 respectively, achieve state status. Xerox introduces its first copier.	C.P. Snow's <i>The Two Cultures</i> . After Batista flees, Castro takes control and becomes premier of Cuba (2 Jan.). Mrs. Indira Gandhi, only daughter of India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, elected President of ruling Congress Party (2 Feb.).
37	Edward Albee's <i>The Zoo Story</i> premieres in Berlin. Jack Gelber's <i>The Connection</i> staged by Living Theatre. Poet Archibald Macleish wins Pulitzer for his verse play <i>J.B.</i> (opened 1958 with Christopher Plummer, Raymond Massey, Pat Hingle). Lindsay's and Crouse's, Rodgers's and Hammerstein's <i>The Sound of Music</i> (with Mary Martin). Marv Rodgers's and Marshall Barer's <i>OH-</i>	The "Twist" dance is introduced. Singer and teen idol Buddy Holly dies in a plane crash at age twenty-two (3 Feb.). Blues singer Billie Holiday dies at age forty-four. Harold Rosenberg's <i>Tradition of the New</i> . Norman O. Brown's <i>Life Against Death</i> . William A. Williams's <i>The Tragedy of American Diplomacy</i> .	Resistance to Chinese rule in Tibet leads to revolt, Chinese forces crush rebellion, and the Dalai Lama flees to India (13-27 March). Eamon De Valera resigns as premier and becomes President of Eire. Charles De Gaulle becomes President of France (17 June).



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37

<p>BY KAL. DAVIS AND USING TECHNIQUES FROM the commedia dell'arte, is started. Mixing radical politics with farce and invective, they stage crude parables and in later years Vietnam protest plays.</p> <p>Dallas Theater Center founded.</p> <p>Edward Albee's <i>The Zoo Story</i> premieres in Berlin.</p> <p>Jack Gelber's <i>The Connection</i> staged by Living Theatre.</p> <p>Poet Archibald Macleish wins Pulitzer for his verse play <i>J.B.</i> (opened 1958 with Christopher Plummer, Raymond Massey, Pat Hingle).</p> <p>Lindsay's and Crouse's, Rodgers's and Hammerstein's <i>The Sound of Music</i> (with Mary Martin).</p> <p>Mary Rodger's and Marshall Barer's Off-Broadway musical <i>Once Upon a Mattress</i> with Carol Burnett.</p> <p><i>Gypsy</i> created by team of Jerome Robbins, Jule Styne, Stephen Sondheim, and Arthur Laurents (with Ethel Merman).</p> <p><i>Fiorello!</i> (Jerome Weidman, George Abbott, Jerry Bock, and Sheldon Harnick) with Tom Bosley as La Guardia (wins 1960 Pulitzer).</p>	<p>COURTIA SINCE 1212 AND 1220 RESPECTIVELY, achieve state status.</p> <p>Xerox introduces its first copier.</p> <p>The "Twist" dance is introduced.</p> <p>Singer and teen idol Buddy Holly dies in a plane crash at age twenty-two (3 Feb.). Blues singer Billie Holiday dies at age forty-four.</p> <p>Harold Rosenberg's <i>Tradition of the New</i>; Norman O. Brown's <i>Life Against Death</i>; William A. Williams's <i>The Tragedy of American Diplomacy</i>; C. Wright Mills's <i>The Sociological Imagination</i>.</p> <p>William Burroughs's underground novel <i>The Naked Lunch</i>.</p> <p>Robert Lowell's poetry collection <i>Life Studies</i>.</p> <p>William Faulkner's novel <i>The Mansion</i>.</p> <p>Philip Roth's novel <i>Goodbye, Columbus</i>.</p>	<p>After Batista flees, Castro takes control and becomes premier of Cuba (2 Jan.).</p> <p>Mrs. Indira Gandhi, only daughter of India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, elected President of ruling Congress Party (2 Feb.).</p> <p>Resistance to Chinese rule in Tibet leads to revolt. Chinese forces crush rebellion, and the Dalai Lama flees to India (13-27 March).</p> <p>Eamon De Valera resigns as premier and becomes President of Eire.</p> <p>Charles De Gaulle becomes President of France (17 June).</p> <p>Eugène Ionesco's <i>The Rhinoceros</i>.</p> <p>Jean Genet's <i>The Blacks</i>.</p>
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We look at 1959 the year when the turn of the decade which becomes extremely important for our understanding too. So, in 1959 is when Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun*, it showcases the tribulations of a struggling black family opens to a boisterous critical and popular praise and it is also the time when America launches its first atomic submarine and the first atomic powered cargo ship .

The first Barbie doll is also introduced in California around this time Xerox introduces its first copier the twist dance is introduced. So, look at the range of things which is happening and now, we are better equipped to understand the background where all of these things are happening in *Zoo Story* or in Hansberry's play.

Edward Albee's *The Zoo Story* premieres in Berlin and it is also another interesting twist Albee's *The Zoo Story* premieres not in America, but in Berlin and Ionesco's *The Rhinoceros* Jean Genet's *The Blacks* Charles de Gaulle becomes the President of France. So, multiple things happening in a way that this struggle which is captured in *Zoo Story* or in *A Raisin in the Sun* it feels more and more real over here .

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DATES	THEATRICAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS IN AMERICA	SELECTED HISTORICAL/CULTURAL EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD
	Williams's <i>Sweet Bird of Youth</i> directed by Kazan with Paul Newman and Geraldine Page (a work in progress had been seen in Florida in 1956; film 1962).	Jasper Johns's painting <i>Numbers in Color</i> .	John Arden's play <i>Serjeant Masgrave's Dance</i> .
	William Gibson's <i>The Miracle Worker</i> (with Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke).	Hawaii becomes 50th state.	Films <i>Hiroshima, Mon Amour</i> (Alain Resnais) and <i>La Dolce Vita</i> (Fellini) released.
	Paddy Chayeksky's <i>The Tenth Man</i> .		Pope John XXIII calls Ecumenical Council, first since 1870.
1960	Association of Producing Artists founded.	John F. Kennedy elected thirty-fifth (and youngest) President.	
		D.H. Lawrence's <i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i> is ruled not obscene, and therefore available, by the U.S. Court of Appeals in	American U-2 spy plane, piloted by Francis Gary Powers, shot down over Russia.



It is to know how diverse those times were and how through perhaps one or two individual characters or a family what these playwrights are actually trying to capture is not just the spirit of America, but the spirit of the entire world itself the changing world order the changing political order and more importantly trying to understand each person's worth and identity in these changing times.