

---

**Unravelling the Paradox of Love in Selected Plays by Sarah Kane:****A Postdramatic Perspective**

by

**Dr Ayman I. Elhalafawy**Associate Prof. of English Literature  
Faculty of Arts, Kafrelsheikh University**Abstract**

This paper examines the paradoxical portrayal of love in selected plays by Sarah Kane (1971-1999), a renowned British playwright known for her provocative and intense works. Through a postdramatic lens, this study explores how Kane challenges conventional notions of love and its complexities in her plays, which include *Blasted* (1995), *Phedra's Love* (1996), and *Cleansed* (1998). By analyzing the themes, characters, and dramatic techniques employed by Kane, this study aims to shed light on the conflicting nature of love and its transformative power in contemporary society. The paper examines how Sarah Kane's three plays depict the dual nature of love. All three plays are known for their dark and often ferocious themes. Nevertheless, beneath the surface of violence and melancholy, there is often a deep and abiding love. This love can be a cause of severe abuse. In *Blasted*, for example, Ian's love for Cate is what leads him to commit the atrocities that he does. Similarly, In *Phaedra's Love*, the title character's love for her stepson is what drives her to commit suicide. However, love can also be a source of healing. In *Cleansed*, all the characters are able to use their love to help heal the abuses that have been inflicted upon them. Drawing on a postdramatic approach, the analysis of Kane's three plays has revealed three important findings: (1) In all three plays, love has been depicted paradoxically as being capable of both destruction and redemption; (2) through the use of postmodern theatrical elements, Kane has conveyed the abominableness of life; (3) Kane has, swimmingly, created aesthetically pleasing image out of the violent and chaotic atmosphere.

**Keywords:**

Paradox, Love, Abuse, violence, Sarah Kane's theatre, postmodern theatrical elements

## تكشف مفارقة الحب في مسرحيات مختارة لسارة كين: دراسة من منظور ما بعد المسرح

## المُلخَص:

تستكشف هذه الدراسة التصوير المتناقض للحب في المسرحيات المختارة لسارة كين (١٩٧١-١٩٩٩)، المؤلفة البريطانية الشهيرة بأعمالها المثيرة والمكثفة، حيث تستكشف هذه الدراسة من خلال الرؤية ما بعد المسرحية كيف تتحدى كين المفاهيم التقليدية للحب وتعهده في مسرحياتها، التي تشمل *الدمرون* (١٩٩٥) - *عشق فيبر* (١٩٩٦) - *التطهير* (١٩٩٨)، إذ تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تسليط الضوء على الطبيعة المتضاربة للحب وقوته التحولية في المجتمع المعاصر من خلال تحليل التيمات والشخصيات والتقنيات المسرحية المستخدمة من قبل كين حيث يستعرض هذا البحث كيف تصور ثلاث مسرحيات لسارة كين الطبيعة المزدوجة للحب إذ تعرف هذه المسرحيات بمواضيعها المظلمة والعنيفة في كثير من الأحيان. ومع ذلك، تحت سطح العنف والحزن، غالبًا ما يكون هناك حب عميق وثابت. يمكن أن يكون هذا الحب سببًا للإيذاء الشديد. في مسرحية *الدمرون*، على سبيل المثال، يؤدي حب إيان لكيت إلى ارتكابه الفظائع التي يرتكبها. بالمثل، في مسرحية *حب فيبر*، يدفع حب الشخصية الرئيسية لابن زوجها إلى الانتحار. ومع ذلك، يمكن أن يكون الحب أيضًا مصدرًا للشفاء. في مسرحية *التطهير*، يتمكن جميع الشخصيات من استخدام حبهم للمساعدة في الشفاء من الإيذاء الذي تعرضوا له. كشف تحليل مسرحيات سارة كين الثلاثة من خلال الاستفادة من نهج ما بعد المسرح عن ثلاثة نتائج هامة: (١) في جميع المسرحيات الثلاثة، تم تصوير الحب بشكل متناقض على أنه قادر على التدمير والشفاء؛ (٢) من خلال استخدام عناصر ما بعد المسرح، قدمت كين رمزية الحياة البشعة؛ (٣) صنعت كين بسلاسة صورة جمالية من الأجواء العنيفة والفوضوية.

## الكلمات الرئيسية:

مفارقة، الحب، الإساءة، العنف، مسرح سارة كين، عناصر مسرح ما بعد الحداثة

Sarah Kane, a prominent British playwright who gained recognition in the late 20th century, is celebrated for her daring and intense theatrical works. Born in 1971, Kane's plays defied conventional norms and delved into controversial subjects such as violence, trauma, and the human condition. She authored five notable plays: *Blasted*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Cleansed*, *Crave*, and *4.48 Psychosis*. Kane's contributions have had a profound impact on modern theater, generating ongoing discussions and debates (T. Spajic, 2018). Her young age and the boldness of her on-stage performances led the British media to label her an "enfant terrible" (Babbage, 2011). When reviewing her debut play, *Blasted*, the majority of critics were highly critical (Urban, 2004). They spared no harsh words, using a range of derogatory terms to express their discontent, such as vulgar, terrifying, degrading, gloomy, prurient psycho-fantasies, unfiltered brutality, and intense humiliation. They depicted the experience as having one's face forcibly pushed into an overflowing ashtray or leaving a bitter aftertaste in the mind (Sierz 20). Due to this infamous reputation, both *Phaedra's Love* and *Cleansed* faced severe scrutiny and condemnation. Consequently, Kane made the decision to stage her fourth play, *Crave*, under the pseudonym Marie Kelvedon, in order to avoid direct comparisons with her previous works.

One recurring theme in Sarah Kane's plays is the paradoxical nature of love. In literature, a paradox refers to a situation, statement, or concept that appears to be contradictory or absurd, but upon closer examination, reveals a deeper truth or complexity. It involves the use of seemingly contradictory elements or ideas that coexist and create tension within the narrative. Paradoxes in drama often serve to highlight the complexities of human nature and the inherent contradictions within the human experience (Cuddon, 509). The paradox of love is a specific type of paradox commonly explored in drama. It revolves around the idea that love, while often associated with joy, fulfillment, and happiness, can simultaneously bring pain, suffering, and heartbreak. It explores the contradictory nature of love and the conflicts and tensions that arise from it. The paradox of love suggests that love can be both a source of great joy and deep anguish, and it often raises questions about the true nature of love and its inherent contradictions.

In drama, the paradox of love can be depicted through various means, such as complex relationships, unrequited love, forbidden love, or the exploration of the darker aspects of love, such as jealousy, betrayal, and sacrifice. By presenting these contradictions and tensions, playwrights and dramatists aim to delve into the complexities of human emotions, relationships, and the human condition itself. Overall, the paradox of love in drama highlights the intricate and often conflicting nature of love, emphasizing that it is not a simple or straightforward emotion, but

rather a complex entanglement of various emotions, desires, and experiences (Robert Leach, 2006).

Kane presents love as a complex and contradictory force, capable of both destruction and redemption. Through her characters and dramatic techniques, she explores the tensions, conflicts, and transformative power inherent in love. The paradoxical portrayal of love in Kane's plays raises questions about the nature of love itself and its relationship to violence, power, and personal agency (Erica Stevens Abbitt, 2003; Sean Carney, 2005).

The primary objective of this paper is to examine the paradox of love in selected plays by Sarah Kane and analyze its significance within her dramatic works. This study will employ a postdramatic lens to analyze Sarah Kane's selected plays and their treatment of love. Postdramatic theater refers to a form of theater that challenges conventional narrative structures and focuses on the creation of theatrical experiences rather than traditional storytelling. By adopting this approach, the research will consider the non-linear narrative structures, fragmented dialogues, and symbolic elements used by Kane to convey the paradoxical nature of love. Overall, this study aims to contribute to an understanding of Sarah Kane's works and provide insights into the paradoxical portrayal of love within her plays. By employing a postdramatic approach, it seeks to uncover the nuances and complexities of love as depicted by Kane, shedding light on its transformative power and societal implications.

Sarah Kane's theatrical works aim to depict the relentless brutality and harsh truths of the world by delving into themes such as destructive love, sexual longing, agony, both physical and psychological torment, anguish, sorrow, and mortality (Bicer, 2011). She rejects traditional theatrical conventions and their associated elements found in all her works, such as a linear timeline, clearly defined characters with stated names and genders, and a recognizable plot. Additionally, she deviates from the traditional principles of unity of time, place, and action, as well as cause-and-effect relationships (Bicer, 76). Kane's works transcend the boundaries of traditional drama; they lack a traditional plot and instead focus on eliciting vivid imagery through fragmented, concise, yet powerful and poetic language. While her phrases may not rely on repetition, they contain rich implicit meaning through their use of imagery. Kane employs postdramatic techniques, such as actively involving the audience instead of relegating them to passive observers. Furthermore, she integrates visual representations from various forms of media during her performances, investigates the ideas surrounding gender and authority, experiments with the abundance of symbols, embraces egalitarian structures, highlights the significance of physical presence, and challenges conventional understandings of what is real (Bicer, 76).

While some critics argue that authors associated with the in-your-face movement resorted to violence as a means to compensate for weak storylines, underdeveloped characters, and a lack of understanding of their own creations (Bicer, 78), Sarah Kane does not fit this characterization. Despite drawing inspiration for her plays from violent acts, she clarifies that her imagination is not excessively twisted, as she simply gathers material from reading the news. For instance, in her play *Blasted*, she asserts that it is more devastating than anything found in a newspaper because it eliminates the mundane aspects (Saunders, 102). The brevity of her lines and the absence of elaborate backstories might create the impression that she has limited knowledge of her characters. However, Kane refutes this notion by providing insight into her writing process. She initially included extensive monologues in the original draft of *Blasted*, delving into the backgrounds, emotions, and opinions of the characters, aiming for articulation and precision. However, after reading Edward Bond's *Saved*, she realized that concise utterances of nine to ten words can be even more expressive and precise. Nevertheless, she emphasizes that the initial draft helped her establish a connection with her characters, and she subsequently trimmed unnecessary words from the script, prioritizing emotions over explicit statements (Sierz 20). Critics often attempt to label her writing as politically charged in terms of sexuality, race, or class. However, Kane rejects these categorizations, asserting that she addresses issues that all humans face. She believes that class, race, and gender disparities are not the causes of violence but rather the consequences of a violent society. She states:

My only responsibility as a writer is to the truth, however unpleasant that truth may be. I have no responsibility as a woman writer because I don't believe there is such a thing. When people talk about me as a writer, that's what I am, not on the basis of my age, gender, class, sexuality or race. (Qtd. in Saunders, 82)

Kane believes that the purpose of theater is to enable experimentation that would be impossible in the real world. According to her, by experimenting in the theater, it may be possible to reject violence altogether. She holds the belief that people can change, and as a species, we have the potential to shape our future. This is why she writes the way she does. According to Sarah Kane, theater should encompass the full spectrum of human emotions and encounters. She highlights the significance of immersing oneself in imaginary and hellish scenarios as a means of preventing their actual manifestation. The act of remembering events that we haven't personally lived through is vital to avoiding their repetition. Kane expresses a preference for taking risks and exploring extreme situations within the realm of theater, rather than encountering them in real life (Sierz 111).

Kane was a talented actress but she felt depressed and inferior so that she spent her time for writing instead (Sivicic, 2003). While Sarah Kane's plays are often perceived as bleak and gloomy, they can also be regarded as an exploration of the human condition, particularly in relation to the complex nature of love, which can both inflict trauma and offer a path to healing. This theme of violence intertwined with love is prominently depicted in *Blasted* and *Phedra's Love*. In the play *Blasted*, the character Ian expresses the words "I love you" before committing a sexual assault against Cate. As the play progresses, during the Soldier's final words while assaulting Ian, the concept of love is mentioned with a tone of compassion.

Likewise, in *Phedra's Love*, Phaedra's expression of love for Hippolytus is succeeded by her tragic death by suicide and a deceitful accusation of rape against him. In *Cleansed*, the central focus revolves around the theme of warfare and its lasting consequences. Kane asserts that people and their environment are greatly impacted by the brutality of war. Carl and Rod, Graham and Grace are, undoubtedly, casualties of this traumatic experience. However, love can help to repair both their physical and psychological abuses. Ultimately, from the brutality of war, love emerges as an effective remedy for the psychological abuses endured by humanity. Given this review and based on a postdramatic approach, the paper seeks to answer the following questions: (1) How can issues like love and violence be related? (2) What postdramatic strategies have Kane employed in her three plays? (3) How does Kane portray healthy love in *Cleansed*?; (4) How does Kane portray toxic love in *Blasted* and *Phaedra's Love*?

Postdramatic theater is a term coined by the German theater director Hans-Thies Lehmann in his book "Postdramatic Theatre" (1999). It refers to a shift in theatrical practices that emerged in the late 20th century and challenged traditional notions of drama and storytelling. Postdramatic theater moves away from the dominance of the dramatic text and instead focuses on theatricality, performance, and the presence of the actors. Postdramatic theater challenges the traditional dominance of written text and explores alternative modes of artistic expression within the theatrical context. It emphasizes non-linear narratives, fragmented structures, and the use of visual, physical, and sensory elements. Moreover, Postdramatic theater highlights the performative aspects of theater, emphasizing the presence of the actors and their physicality. It often incorporates dance, movement, multimedia elements, and experimental staging techniques. Postdramatic theater challenges traditional boundaries between different art forms, such as theater, dance, visual arts, and music. It encourages interdisciplinary collaborations and embraces a hybrid approach to performance. Postdramatic theater seeks to actively engage the audience, often breaking the fourth wall and

inviting direct participation. It aims to create an immersive and experiential theatrical environment. Richard Schechner also talked paradoxically about a “postdramatic drama”, in which the “story” was no longer the “generative matrix”, but the “game” (here understood as performance) (22).

After World War II, the notion of "postmodernism" gained prominence. It challenges the established norms and ideas of modernism. Instead of rejecting modernism outright, postmodernism offers what modernism lacks. According to Kumar, modernity had become a series of constant innovations and changes in style, essentially an ongoing cycle of fashion, despite numerous "new movements" (122). Investigating the convictions and values related to modernism brings about postmodernism. Postmodernism is a time of transition, where the outlooks of modernism are being metamorphosed into a puzzle. It is an approach characterized by comprehensive uncertainty, subjectivity and a questioning of the originality of truth.

Postmodernism can be conceptualized as a pervasive skepticism of rationality and a heightened awareness of the link between ideology and its consequential effects on the political and economic spheres (e.g., Michael Freeden, 2006; Richard A. Brosio, 2023). It is essential to note that the concept of 'reality' is an artificial construction, a fabrication of human subjectivity. Cultural components are utilized by individuals in order to form their own understanding and interpretation of the world. Art and literature created within this environment depict the sense of social detachment and alienation. French philosopher Jean François Lyotard in his book *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time* asserts: “Hidden in the cynicism of innovation is certainly the despair that nothing further will happen.” (106-107), rightly expressing the spirit of the time.

The impact of postmodernism on drama is reflected in a shift away from attempting to construct an accurate depiction of reality as it was traditionally understood. Postmodern drama seeks to craft an abstract, distorted universe which wields an undeniable authority. Audiences recognize that this alternate reality cannot be replicated in reality. As a result of postmodernism's presence in theater, the emphasis has switched from sensibility to interpretation and the impact of the performance has been amplified.

In postmodern theater, the emphasis shifts towards performance itself as the central focus, diminishing the significance of the written text to a secondary role. Throughout history, theater has been renowned for its exploration of ethical, moral, political, and legal themes (Lehmann 18). The captivating and immersive nature of theater has been integrated into innovative theatrical styles such as Avant-garde, In-Yer-Face, and Fringe Theater. In these distinct genres, the written text is utilized

as a means to animate the staging and engage the audience (see Dragan Klaic, 2012; Clare Wallace, 2013).

Postmodernist drama stands in contrast to modernism in terms of style and ideology. Postmodern plays defy conventional norms of structure, plot, and style, opting instead to incorporate elements such as minimalism, distortion, breaking the fourth wall, and the integration of various theatrical signs. Postmodern drama can be seen as a critical response to modern drama, offering a departure from established norms. The term "postmodern" introduces new questions that were not previously raised within the framework of modernity, while still maintaining some connections and similarities to it, thus remaining a facet of the broader "modern" tradition (Lehmann 27).

Despite privileging the term 'postdramatic' over 'postmodern' to characterize contemporary theatre, Lehmann's ideas about postdramatic theatre are clearly resonant with many elements of postmodernist thinking. Postmodern drama is characterized by a departure from the traditional attempt to establish an illusion of reality on the stage, opting instead to present an altered world meant to reflect the condition of the isolated postmodern individual (Lehmann, 2006). Through their exploration of human experience in the postmodern milieu, artists of the early twentieth century sought to reconceptualize the world in a variety of non-realistic ways. The emergence of a new theatre has engendered a sustained relationship and dialogue between thespians and observers.

It has been suggested by Lehmann that postmodern theatre, which encapsulates postdramatic theatre, is a more contemporary method of theatrical expression compared to traditional dramatic theatre. In contrast to traditional dramatic theater, which typically employs a subjective perspective to present a familiar outlook on life to the audience, postmodern theater embraces a more complex and non-linear approach, abandoning the concept of logical causality found in traditional forms.

The emergence of postmodernism in drama occurred during the latter half of the twentieth century as a distinct opposition to the concepts, methods, and approaches of modernism. The turbulent events of the century prompted a transformation of modernist principles. Upon closer examination and comparison of modernism and postmodernism in drama, it becomes clear that modernist drama places significant importance on the structure and composition of the play.

Postmodern theater has played a significant role in the evolution of the performing arts, enabling viewers to become active participants in the performance (e.g., Bonnie Marranca, 2023; Monica Prendergast, 2023). Its influence has given rise to various dramatic styles, incorporating new elements and embracing technological advancements, including the impact of the film industry.



The performance of Ursula Martinez, titled "*O.A.P*" and directed by Martin Whitelaw, exemplifies a typical postmodern theatrical style. This becomes apparent through the audience's reaction when Martinez takes the stage disguised as an elderly woman and inquires if anyone among the spectators would be interested in kissing her. This question serves to highlight the multitude of anxieties and contradictions that the audience is confronted with. The exploration of media's influence on postmodern performances reveals the potency of technology and its interconnection with our lives. The influence of media is apparent not only in the utilization of advanced multimedia elements on stage but also in the contrasting approach of plain stages with minimalistic and unembellished aesthetics. Despite their simplicity, these stages can only be fully understood when seen within the context of a society that is deeply immersed in media.

Sarah Kane was a British playwright known for her provocative and intense works. Her plays, such as "*Blasted*," "*Phaedra's Love*," and "*Cleansed*," are often analyzed within the framework of postdramatic theater due to their departure from conventional dramatic structures. Kane's works emphasize the performative aspects of theater. Analyzing her plays through the lens of performance theory can explore how her use of physicality, gestures, and staging techniques contributes to the overall meaning and impact of her work. Kane's plays often depict extreme physical and psychological violence. Sierz emphasizes that the aim of Kane has been to "make violence as horrible, and as inescapable, as possible", not "in order to titillate, or to make powerless audiences feel powerful and fascistic, in the way Hollywood films do, but in order to shock them out of their complacency" (Aragay et al, 144).

Examining her works from the perspective of body theory and the representation of violence in theater can shed light on the sociopolitical and psychological themes she explores. For her, violence has strong cathartic potential: "we have to descend to hell imaginatively to avoid going there in reality" (Stephenson and Langridge, 133). While postdramatic theater challenges the dominance of the written text, language still plays a significant role in Kane's works. Analyzing her use of language, its fragmentation, repetition, and poetic qualities can reveal the emotional and psychological depths of her characters. Kane's plays frequently explore themes of gender, sexuality, and power dynamics. Feminist and gender theories can provide insights into the ways in which her works challenge traditional representations of gender and address issues of oppression and control.

Sarah Kane's plays exhibit several postdramatic elements that align with the characteristics of postdramatic theater. Kane's plays often employ non-linear

structures, fragmented storytelling, and a lack of clear causality. In all her plays, Kane deviated from traditional dramaturgy and its features like "linear sequence of time, creating definitive characters whose names, genders are stated, and recognizable plot, three unities of time, place and action, cause and effect connection" (Bicer, 76). This fragmentation and disruption of traditional narrative forms contribute to the disorienting and intense experiences often associated with postdramatic theater. Kane's works emphasize the presence of the actors and their physicality on stage. The staging of violent and highly visceral actions, along with the use of choreographed movements and physical expressions, creates a heightened sense of theatricality. Kane's use of language is often fragmented, poetic, and repetitive, challenging traditional notions of linear dialogue. Her plays explore the possibilities of language as a performative tool, highlighting its sonic qualities and evocative power (Stivcic, 2003).

Kane's works frequently break the fourth wall and directly address the audience. This direct engagement with the audience creates a sense of immediacy and blurs the boundaries between the performers and spectators, aligning with the postdramatic emphasis on active audience participation. Overall, Sarah Kane's plays demonstrate a strong affinity with postdramatic theater through their challenging of traditional dramatic structures, emphasis on theatricality and performance, and exploration of alternative modes of storytelling and audience engagement.

Sarah Kane's plays explore the paradoxical nature of love, presenting it as a complex and multifaceted force that can be both destructive and redemptive, intertwined with violence, and a means of resistance and liberation. In Sarah Kane's works, love is often portrayed as a destructive and consuming force. It can lead to obsession, possessiveness, and the erosion of individual identity. Characters in her plays often engage in toxic relationships characterized by emotional manipulation, abuse, and self-destruction. Love, in this sense, becomes a catalyst for violence, both physical and psychological, as it exposes the darker aspects of human nature and the potential for harm within intimate connections (Armstrong, 2015).

Despite its destructive potential, Kane also explores the redemptive and healing aspects of love. In some of her works, love is presented as a transformative force that has the power to heal emotional wounds and offer solace in the face of trauma. It becomes a source of hope and connection, offering characters a glimpse of compassion, tenderness, and the possibility of redemption. Love, in this sense, serves as a counterbalance to the violence and despair depicted in her plays. Sarah Kane's plays often explore the intricate interplay between violence and love. Love and violence are depicted as intertwined and inseparable, with moments of

tenderness and intimacy often juxtaposed with scenes of brutality and aggression. This juxtaposition highlights the inherent contradictions and complexities of human relationships, where love can be both nurturing and destructive, gentle and harsh. Kane's works challenge conventional notions of love by exposing its capacity for both beauty and cruelty.

In some of her plays, Sarah Kane presents love as a means of resistance and liberation in the face of oppressive forces. Love becomes a form of defiance against societal norms, power structures, and the constraints placed upon individuals. It can be an act of rebellion, breaking free from societal expectations and embracing unconventional forms of love and desire. Kane's exploration of love as a means of resistance highlights its potential for personal and political transformation. Through these nuanced portrayals, Sarah Kane raises questions about the complexities of love and its impact on human relationships. Her plays delve into the contradictions and tensions inherent in love, presenting it as a force that can both heal and harm, unite and divide. By exploring the paradoxical nature of love, Kane invites audiences to examine their own experiences of love and confront the inherent contradictions within this deeply human emotion.

Sarah Kane's debut one-act play, *Blasted*, premiered at the Royal Court Theatre Upstairs in London in 1995. The play's controversial nature stems from its portrayal of disturbing acts such as anal rape, masturbation, urination, feces, fellatio, rubbing bodies together, cannibalism, and eye-gouging. According to Saunders, the play commences by portraying an abusive relationship between Ian, an older journalist, and Cate, a much younger former girlfriend. Ian invites Cate to a hotel room in Leeds with the intention of seducing her, but despite Cate's objections, the situation escalates into Ian sexually assaulting her. Cate eventually manages to escape by fleeing through the bathroom window (25).

Following Cate's escape, the play takes a drastic stylistic shift when an unnamed Soldier enters the room. Suddenly, a mortar bomb strikes the room, leaving both men to recover from the impact. The Soldier proceeds to divulge the brutalities he has committed in the midst of a civil war, creating ambiguity about the actual setting, which may no longer be Leeds but another location in the world. The interaction between Ian and the Soldier reaches its height when the Soldier rapes and blinds Ian before taking his own life. Later, Cate reappears, accompanied by a baby under her care. Despite the tragic death of the infant, Cate chooses to bury it and offers prayers for its well-being in the afterlife. Ian is left alone once again, and time becomes distorted. As seasons pass by, Ian engages in increasingly peculiar actions, ultimately culminating in him consuming the buried baby and occupying its makeshift grave. The play concludes with Cate's return, as she feeds

Ian bread, sausage, and gin. Ian's final words are a simple "Thank you" (Saunders, 25).

"*Blasted*" explores the breakdown of love and humanity in a war-torn world. The play depicts a hotel room that becomes a microcosm of society, where love is tested and ultimately shattered. The characters, Ian and Cate, initially engage in a relationship characterized by power dynamics and manipulation. As the play progresses, their connection disintegrates amidst acts of extreme violence, including rape and cannibalism. Love, in "*Blasted*," is portrayed as fragile and vulnerable, unable to withstand the brutal realities of war and the darkest aspects of human nature.

*Phaedra's Love* is the second play by Sarah Kane, drawing inspiration from Seneca's rendition (Saunders, 45). The main characters in the play are Phaedra, Hippolytus, Strophe, and Theseus, along with a supporting cast of nine players who portray an angry crowd. In Sierz's analysis, Kane's adaptation commences by portraying Hippolytus in a poorly illuminated space, observing television and expressing his anguish through actions such as blowing his nose into a discarded sock and engaging in joyless masturbation. He is diagnosed with depression by a doctor. The focus then shifts to Phaedra, Hippolytus' stepmother, and her intense desire for him. The ancient tragedy takes on a contemporary soap opera-like quality. A pivotal moment occurs when Phaedra performs fellatio on Hippolytus, but he does not derive pleasure from it. This lack of reciprocation leads to Phaedra's suicide, leaving behind a note accusing Hippolytus of rape. Consequently, Hippolytus faces the wrath of an angry mob who castrate him and grill his genitals on a barbecue. As vultures gather around him, his final words are, "If there could have been more moments like this" (17).

"*Phaedra's Love*" is a reimagining of the classical myth of Phaedra, exploring themes of love, desire, and the search for connection. The play depicts a dysfunctional family in which Phaedra develops a destructive infatuation with her stepson, Hippolytus. Love, in this play, is portrayed as a distorted and obsessive force that leads to tragedy. It explores the complexities of desire, the consequences of forbidden love, and the destructive power of unrequited affection. Kane's treatment of love in "*Phaedra's Love*" is characterized by intense passion, anguish, and the inability to find genuine emotional connection.

*Cleansed* is the second part of a loosely interconnected trilogy that explores themes of hope, faith, and love amidst the backdrop of war. In "*Cleansed*," Kane explores the theme of love amidst sadistic violence and control. The play is set in a dystopian institution where characters are subjected to physical and psychological torture. Amidst this oppressive environment, love emerges as a source of resistance and hope. The characters Carl and Rod love each other

deeply, and their love is portrayed as a form of solace and defiance against the oppressive forces that seek to dehumanize them. However, their love is also tested and distorted by the violence and control surrounding them, blurring the boundaries between affection and manipulation.

The play consists of twenty scenes, but it lacks a clear narrative structure. In Sarah Kane's *Cleansed*, she exposes the decadent and perverse life within a university, focusing on the sadistic character of Tinker, who cruelly and inhumanely controls the lives of his colleagues, imposing his own rules that shatter their social existence (Morley, 1996). *Cleansed* is set in a university, hospital, or a similar institution, where four interconnected stories unfold. These stories are not tied to a specific time or place.

The main story revolves around Grace's quest for her brother Graham, who was murdered by Tinker, a sadistic guard or doctor at the institution. Grace assumes Graham's appearance, dances with his spirit, engages in sexual intimacy with him, and ultimately undergoes a penis transplant to become him. In addition to the narrative of incest and sibling bond, there exists a love story between two men, Carl and Rod, who engage in conversations about love and betrayal. Carl, who pledges everlasting love, eventually betrays his partner, whereas Rod, who embraces the present moment, tragically dies for love.

In a subplot, a disturbed nineteen-year-old named Robin develops feelings for Grace when she attempts to teach him to read. After discovering the extent of his sentence through an abacus, he realizes its length and ends his life by hanging himself. The final story revolves around Tinker, who visits a peepshow and projects Grace's identity onto the erotic dancer. He seduces her but then turns hostile. In the end, Tinker has his own version of "Grace," while Grace resembles Graham, and Carl dons Grace's attire. Despite Grace punctuating her final speech with the word "pointless," the play concludes in a place illuminated by sunlight (Sierz 112).

In *Blasted*, Kane employs the phrase "I love you" (15) to explore the theme of violence. Ian, who utters these words, proceeds to rape Cate. Likewise, in *Phaedra's Love*, Phaedra's declaration of "I love you" (77) is followed by her suicide and her false accusation of rape against Hippolytus. As a result, both plays defy expectations by using the phrase as a signal that violence and discord will follow, rather than evoking the conventional connotations of happiness and satisfaction.

In *Blasted*, as Ian makes advances towards Cate, she becomes uncomfortable and stammers, indicating her lack of receptiveness. Ian then declares the phrase as a means to absolve himself of responsibility, stating, "Sorry. pressure, pressure, I love you, that's all" (15). Ian consistently belittles

Cate, demeaning her intelligence and mocking her appearance by comparing her to a lesbian. His declaration of love is a facade to manipulate Cate into accepting mistreatment. After directing racist insults towards someone Cate admires, Ian proclaims, "Cate, love. I'm trying to take after you. Stop getting hurt" (16). Following his display of envy by degrading an African-American man, Ian reiterates, "I love you" (16), while hypocritically avoiding genuine sympathy for individuals of different ethnicities. The contrast between hatred and love is profoundly embedded within Ian, as made apparent by his subsequent remark concerning his former spouse: "I loved Stella till she became a witch and fucked off with a dyke, and I love you, though you've got the potential" (17).

Similarly, Ian accuses Cate of possessing the same potential as his ex-wife, holding her responsible for his own shortcomings as a good person. In the provided excerpt, Ward contrasts Ian's act of rape with Cate's experience, stating, "It is not as such a domestic environment. But it is an environment in which a species of rape familiar in domestic environments can take place" (230). The luxurious hotel room transforms into a battlefield, where the domestic rape is followed by a soldier wielding a rifle committing murder.

The violent exploitation of Cate's body is masked by the façade of love, in contrast to Ian's rape that is without any such illusion. The Soldier expresses sympathy for Ian in his last words before taking his own life, saying: "He ate her eyes / Poor bastard / Poor love" (48). This use of the word "love" differs significantly from Ian's declarations, and it is clear that in both cases, love has been twisted into something unrecognizable.

Love occupies a comparable role in *Phaedra's Love*. Strophe makes the following statement, suggesting that her mother has affections for Hippolytus:

Strophe: You're in love with him.

Phaedra: (laughs hysterically) What are you talking about?

Strophe: Obsessed. (65)

Strophe's utilization of love as an analogue to obsession in *Phaedra's Love* elucidates the multifaceted and convoluted meaning of love. Similarly, the utilization of love in *Blasted* rationalizes the violent and oppressive conduct of its characters. Phaedra's fixation on Hippolytus is manifested in her demand to have a sexual encounter with him, to which Hippolytus reluctantly acquiesces. This contrasts starkly with Hippolytus' nonchalance:

Phaedra: I did it because I'm in love with you.

Hippolytus: Don't be, I don't like it. (77)

The tragedy of the Royal family is brought about by Phaedra's unfulfilled passion for Hippolytus, as she takes her own life, blaming him for her rape. Her actions exemplify a distorted interpretation of love, and that is reflected in the character of Hippolytus. His portrayal is mutable and this is highlighted by Kane's theatrical work. The complexity of his character oscillates between aversion and fondness. His indifference to his own fate leads to his demise.

In *Cleansed*, the concept of love is expressed through two distinct relationships: the queer connection between Rod and Carl, and Grace's journey to find genuine love with her brother Graham. Rod and Carl, feeling a deep sense of deprivation, look to their unconventional romantic relationship as a way to cope with their personal problems. The encounter transpires in broad daylight, as they take a seat on the university's lawn surrounded by a perimeter fence. From beyond the fence, the distinct sounds of a cricket match reach the ears. As a symbol of commitment, Carl removes his ring and hands it to Rod:

Carl: (Closes his eyes and puts the ring on Rod's finger.)

Rod: What are you thinking?

Carl: That I'll always love you.

Rod: (Laughs.)

Carl: That I'll never betray you.

Rod: (Laughs more.)

Carl: That I'll never lie to you. (109)

Carl's actual feelings for Rod are no longer possible to conceal. In these hypnotic words, he shows his admiration:

I love you now.

I'm with you now.

I'll do my best, moment to moment, not to betray you. Now.

That's it. No more. Don't make me lie to you. (109)

The lines clearly demonstrate Rod's deep affection for Carl. Betrayal is a recurring theme in the world of culture and specifically in theatre. On the contrary, the connection between Carl and Rod symbolizes the antithesis of betrayal, highlighting the significance of love in transcending the prevalent emotional stagnation typically found in Sarah Kane's works.

In Sarah Kane's plays, fraternal love is a significant form of affection portrayed. This particular form of love is regarded as foundational, as it

encompasses a sense of obligation, compassion, esteem, and empathy towards fellow human beings, coupled with a genuine intention to enrich their lives. Graham and Grace personify this fraternal love within the play. In Scene 3, taking place in a white room at the university, Grace approaches Tinker to inquire about her brother Graham's fate. Tinker examines a file containing information about Graham's whereabouts in order to provide Grace with precise details. Grace stands alone, waiting—an experience often regarded as deeply unpleasant due to the absence of a beloved. The scene then unfolds with a dialogue between Tinker and Grace:

Tinker: He's been dead six months. We don't normally keep the clothes that long

Grace: What happens to them?

Tinker: Recycled. Or incinerated.

Grace: Recycled?

Tinker: Most likely incinerated, but- Grace: You give them to someone else?

Tinker: Yes. Grace: Isn't that very unhygienic?

Tinker: He died of an overdose.

Grace: Then why burn his body?

Tinker: You thought nobody cared. (112)

Grace is absolutely outraged after finding out about her sibling's death due to an overdose and the subsequent cremation of his body in order to preserve the environment. This painful event has caused her great sadness and despair. Sierz reflects on Grace's agonizing predicament, expressing that people are purified through pain and terror; Grace is purged and cleansed through torture. In order to compensate for the absence of her brother, she relinquishes her own sense of self. Grace's adoption of her deceased brother's identity serves multiple purposes: as an expression of love towards him, as a means of self-discovery, and as a catalyst for personal transformation. Traumatic events often present opportunities for individuals to demonstrate resilience and develop a unique sense of self.

Scene five maintains a strong connection to scene three, continuing the narrative of Grace's relationship with her brother. In this scene, Grace experiences a dream where she engages in a conversation with Graham. This



dream sequence is heavily influenced by the belief that love has the power to heal and reconcile the effects of a traumatic experience.

Graham: Hello, Sunshine.

Silence.

Grace stares at him. She smacks him around the face as hard as she can, then hugs him to her as tightly as possible.

She hold his face in her hands and looks closely at him

Grace: You're clean.

Graham: (Smiles.)

Grace: Don't ever leave me again.

Graham: No.

Grace: Swear.

Graham: On my life.

Pause.

They look at each other in silence. (118)

The act of dancing holds significant importance as it symbolizes harmony and mutual understanding. Graham's performance of a "dance of love for Grace" (119) highlights this concept. Grace skillfully and swiftly mirrors Graham's movements, reaching a point where she no longer needs to watch him but accurately reflects his every step, resulting in perfect synchronization. Dancing symbolizes a harmonious and structured existence in the world, acting as a symbolic manifestation of the community coming together around the couple. The symbolic unity is further accentuated by the song "You Are My Sunshine" composed by Jim Davis and Charles Mitchell, which reinforces the profound connection between Grace and Graham. Love plays an undeniable role in bringing immense joy to their lives, as demonstrated in this fraternal narrative. With genuine love, all obstacles can be successfully overcome.

In Scene 10, multiple invisible men with distinct voices violently assault and rape Grace. She endures repeated beatings with baseball bats and reacts in pain, lying motionless out of fear of further harm (131). Meanwhile, Graham symbolizes fraternal love in the midst of this chaos.

As one of the voices sexually assaults Grace, she maintains eye contact with Graham, and he holds her head between his hands (132). Both Grace and Graham experience bleeding, exemplifying their spiritual connection and the profound impact of their bond. This heinous act of rape leaves Grace's clothes stained red from excessive bleeding, mirroring Graham's own bleeding body and further strengthening their spiritual connection.

Graham shields Grace's body with his own, and holds her head between his hands.

The gunfire goes on and on and on.

The wall is pitted with bullet marks, and as the gunfire continues, huge chunks of plaster and brick are blown from the wall.

The wall is being shot to pieces and is splatted with blood.

After several minutes, the gunfire stops. (119)

This paper has shown that love, in *Blasted* and *Phedra's love*, is portrayed as a destructive force that results in violence and death. In other words, both plays subvert the usual notion of what is anticipated by using the phrase "I love you" to allude to the impending bloodshed and violence. It has also accentuated that love, in *Cleansed*, is portrayed as a potent force that can aid individuals in overcoming their anguish and suffering. Kane claims that the violence of war has a significant impact on both individuals and their surroundings. Clearly, this tragic event has taken its toll on Carl and Rod, Graham and Grace. Love, on the other hand, aids in healing their psychological and physical abuse. On this wise, love emerges from the savagery of war as a potent cure for the psychological wounds sustained by humanity.

While all three plays by Sarah Kane delve into the complexities of love, they offer different perspectives and treatments of this theme. "*Blasted*" portrays love as fragile and susceptible to the horrors of war, ultimately leading to its breakdown. The violence and brutality depicted in the play expose the vulnerability of love, suggesting that it cannot withstand extreme circumstances. "*Phaedra's Love*" explores the destructive nature of love and desire. It portrays love as obsessive, distorted, and ultimately leading to tragedy. The play examines the consequences of forbidden love and the inability to find genuine emotional connection, highlighting the darker aspects of love's expression. In "*Cleansed*," love emerges as a form of resistance and hope amidst sadistic violence and control. Despite the oppressive environment, the love between Carl

and Rod acts as a source of strength and defiance, highlighting the transformative potential of love even in the most adverse conditions.

In comparing these plays, we see a range of perspectives on love, from its vulnerability and breakdown ("*Blasted*") to its potential for resistance and transformation ("*Cleansed*") and its destructive and tragic consequences ("*Phaedra's Love*"). Sarah Kane's exploration of love in these plays challenges conventional romantic notions and delves into the complexities and contradictions inherent in human relationships.

Furthermore, this research paper has demonstrated that *Blasted*, *Phedra's Love*, and *Cleansed* possess several characteristics of postdramatic theater. In the case of *Blasted*, these postdramatic elements manifest in the depiction of a bombing sequence, the portrayal of Cate and Ian being subjected to rape as a representation of postdramatic suffering and catharsis, the abandonment of traditional theatrical conventions such as the three unities of time, place, and action, and the rejection of conventional heroes and characters. As for *Phedra's Love*, Kane utilizes the postdramatic element of erasing the boundary between the audience and the actors by eliminating a designated performance space and seating the actors among the audience. The setting itself is deliberately intense and confined, thrusting the audience into the heart of the action, allowing them to witness the unfolding events as if eavesdropping on a family. This is particularly evident in the play's climax, where Hippolytus is brutally killed, and the audience is confronted with the sight of bloodied body parts scattered throughout their midst. Similarly, in *Cleansed*, Kane crafts a narrative that unfolds with an unexpected yet unrelenting logic, engaging the audience's senses from the depths of their perception to the core of their consciousness.

Kane's use of language is marked by its poetic quality, fragmentation, and repetition. She experiments with the rhythms and sonic qualities of words to create a distinct and immersive theatrical experience. The dialogue often reflects the characters' emotional states, with their language becoming a vessel for their inner turmoil and despair. Silence is also utilized effectively, creating moments of tension, unease, and introspection. The deliberate use of language and silence in Kane's plays enhances the atmospheric and emotional impact of her works (Scott C. Knowles, 2016).

Imagery, metaphor, and symbolism play significant roles in Sarah Kane's plays. She employs vivid and evocative imagery to convey powerful emotions and ideas. Through metaphorical language, Kane explores complex themes and psychological states, inviting audiences to engage with the deeper layers of her work. Symbolism is also used to represent abstract concepts and create resonant visual and thematic connections. Kane's plays often contain recurring symbols,

such as blood, water, and mirrors, which add depth and richness to the overall theatrical experience.

Kane's plays frequently employ non-linear narrative structures and fragmented dialogues. The traditional cause-and-effect structure of storytelling is disrupted, allowing for a more fragmented and visceral portrayal of characters and events. The non-linear structure may involve overlapping scenes, time jumps, or multiple storylines. This fragmentation reflects the chaotic and disorienting nature of contemporary existence, challenging the audience's expectations and inviting them to actively engage with the play's themes and meanings.

Kane's stage directions often contain explicit instructions for physical actions and movements, emphasizing the importance of the body in her works. The physicality of the characters, their gestures, and their interactions with the space are integral to the overall dramatic impact. Through these stage directions, Kane creates a heightened and visceral theatricality that complements the thematic exploration of violence, desire, and the human condition.

By utilizing these dramatic techniques and symbolism, Sarah Kane creates a distinct theatrical language that pushes the boundaries of conventional storytelling. Her plays invite audiences to confront uncomfortable truths, explore the depths of human experience, and engage with the complexities of language, imagery, and fragmented narratives (Scott C. Knowles, 2016).

Sarah Kane's plays engage with the societal implications of love, offering a critical lens through which to examine the influence of societal norms, patriarchal power structures, and the potential for love to subvert and bring about radical change. Kane's works often explore how love is shaped and constrained by societal norms and expectations. Love becomes a reflection of the values and conventions of the society in which it exists. Characters in her plays grapple with societal pressures, social hierarchies, and cultural expectations that define and limit their experiences of love. By examining the influence of society on love, Kane highlights the ways in which societal structures can shape and restrict the expression of love and intimate connections.

Sarah Kane's plays offer a critique of patriarchal power structures and the ways in which they impact love relationships. She exposes the dynamics of power, control, and gender inequality that can permeate intimate connections. Kane challenges traditional gender roles and stereotypes, questioning the ways in which patriarchal structures can restrict and harm individuals' experiences of love. Through her exploration of these power dynamics, Kane highlights the need for dismantling oppressive systems to create more egalitarian and authentic expressions of love.

Kane suggests that love has the potential to subvert established norms and bring about radical change. In her works, love becomes a tool for resistance, a means of challenging oppressive structures and societal expectations. By depicting unconventional and non-traditional forms of love, Kane disrupts the status quo and invites audiences to envision alternative possibilities. Love, in this sense, becomes a catalyst for personal and societal transformation, offering glimpses of liberation and the potential for creating more inclusive and just communities.

Through her exploration of love's societal implications, Sarah Kane challenges conventional notions of love, exposes the ways in which it can be influenced and constrained by societal norms, and highlights its potential as a force for resistance and radical change. Her plays encourage audiences to critically examine the societal structures that shape love and imagine more equitable and transformative expressions of intimacy and connection.

The analysis of selected plays by Sarah Kane, namely "*Blasted*," "*Cleansed*," and "*Phaedra's Love*," reveals a range of perspectives on love. "*Blasted*" portrays love as fragile and vulnerable, susceptible to the horrors of war. In "*Cleansed*," love emerges as a form of resistance amidst sadistic violence and control. "*Phaedra's Love*" explores the destructive nature of love, highlighting obsession, distortion, and tragic consequences. These plays challenge conventional notions of love and delve into the complexities and contradictions inherent in human relationships.

This study deepens our understanding of Sarah Kane's works and their exploration of love. It highlights the ways in which love reflects societal norms and expectations, critiques patriarchal power structures, and possesses the potential to subvert and bring about radical change. By examining these implications, we gain insights into the broader societal dynamics that shape love and intimate connections. The study prompts us to reflect on the limitations and transformative possibilities of love in contemporary society.

There are several areas for further research in the study of love in Sarah Kane's plays. One avenue of exploration could be an analysis of the role of trauma and its impact on love relationships in her works. Investigating the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, and power dynamics within the context of love in Kane's plays could provide deeper insights into the critique of patriarchal structures. Additionally, studying the reception and interpretation of love in different cultural and historical contexts could contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the universality and cultural specificity of love themes in Kane's plays.

In conclusion, this paper illustrated the multifaceted nature of love in Sarah selected plays by Sarah Kane. It uncovers the ways in which love is influenced by societal norms, critiques patriarchal power structures, and possesses the potential for subversion and radical change. The findings of this study have implications for understanding human relationships, societal dynamics, and the transformative power of love. Further research in related areas will continue to enrich our understanding of love in dramatic literature and its relevance to contemporary society.

---

### Works Cited

- Abbitt, Erica. Stevens. *Resisting bodies: Promise and Change in the Feminist Representation of Girls in the Performative Arena* (Order No. 3089020). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (305349076). Retrieved from <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/resisting-bodies-promise-change-feminist/docview/305349076/se-2>, 200٢.
- Aragay, Mireia *et al* . *British Theatre of the 1990s*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.Print.
- Armstrong, Jolene. *Cruel Britannia: Sarah Kane's Postmodern Traumatics*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2015. Print.
- Babbage, H. *One Night Stand: A Critic's View of Modern British Theatre*. London: Nick Hern Books, 2011.Print.
- Bicer, Ahmed Gokhan. "Sarah Kane's Post-dramatic Strategies in *Blasted, Cleansed, and Crave*". *The Journal of International Social Research*. Vol. 4, Issue 17, pp75-80, 2011. Print.
- Brosio, Richard A. "Chapter Fourteen: Postmodernism as the Cultural Skin of Late Capitalism: Educational Consequences." *Counterpoints*, vol. 3, 1994, pp. 593–625. *JSTOR*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42974911>
- Carney, Sean. "The Tragedy of History in Sarah Kane's *Blasted*". *Theatre Survey*, 46(2), 275-296. doi:10.1017/S0040557405000165, 2005.
- Cole, Emma. "Paralinguistic Translation in Sarah Kane's Phaedra's Love." In *Adapting Translation for Stage*. Ed. by Geraldine Brodie and Emma Cole. London: Routledge, 2017. Print.
- Cuddon, J. A. *A Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory*. UK: Wiley-Black Well, 2013. Print.
- Michael Freeden . "Ideology and political theory", *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 11:1, 3-22, DOI: [10.1080/13569310500395834](https://doi.org/10.1080/13569310500395834), 2006.

- Kane, Sarah. *Blasted*. London, Royal Court Theatre: Methuen Drama, 2011. Print.
- . *Cleansed*. Methuen Publishing Ltd, 1998. Print.
- . *Sarah Kane - Complete Play*. London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2015. Print.
- Klaic, Dragan. *Resetting the Stage*. USA : The University of Chicago Press, 2012. Print.
- Knowles, Scott C . *DYSTOPIAN PERFORMATIVES: NEGATIVE AFFECT/EMOTION IN THE WORK OF SARAH KANE*. Ph.D. Thesis , Faculty of the University of Kansas , 2016. Microsoft Word - 051016Knowles\_Dystopian\_Performatives.docx (core.ac.uk)
- Kumar, Krisham. *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society: New Theories of the Contemporary World*. 2nd ed. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Leach, Robert. *Theatre Studies. The Basics*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Lehmann, Hans-Thies. *Postdramatic Theatre*. Translated by Karen Jürs-Munby, USA, Canada: Routledge, 2006. Print.
- Liotard, Jean-François. *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*, transl. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1991. Print.
- Marranca, Bonnie. "Theatre and the University at the End of the Twentieth Century." *Performing Arts Journal*, vol. 17, no. 2/3, 1995, pp. 55–71. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3245777>.
- Morley, Sheridan. Rev. of *Cleansed*, by Sarah Kane. *Theatre Record* 23 September-6 October: 1244, 1996. Print.
- Prendergast, Monica. "‘Playing Attention’: Contemporary Aesthetics and Performing Arts Audience Education." *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, vol.



- 38, no. 3, 2004, pp. 36–51. *JSTOR*, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3527442>.  
Saunders, Graham. *'Love Me or Kill Me': Sarah Kane and the Theatre of Extremes*. Manchester University Press, 2002. Print.
- Schechner, Richard. *Performance Theory*. New York: Taylor and Francis, 1988. Print.
- Schmidt, Kerstin. *The Theater of Transformation: Postmodernism in American Drama*. NY: Rodopi, 2005. Print.
- Sierz, Aleks. *In-Yer-Face-Theatre: British Drama Today*. Faber and Faber, 2000. Print.
- Spajic, T. *Sarah Kane' Completed Works*. London: Edward Arnold, 2018. Print.
- Stephenson, Heidi , and Natasha Langridge. *Rage and Reason: Women Playwrights on Playwriting*. London: Methuen, 2007. Print.
- Stivicic, I. *Attempts on Her Life*. New York: MIT, 2003. Print.
- Urban, Ken. "Towards a Theory of Cruel Britannia: Coolness, Cruelty, and the 'Nineties." *New Theatre Quarterly*, Vol.20, No.4, pp. 354-372, .٢٠٠٤ Print.
- Wallace, Clare. *The Theatre of David Greig*. Londn: Bloomsbury, 2013. Print.
- Ward, Ian. "Rape and Rape Mythology in the Plays of Sarah Kane." *Comparative Drama*. 47.2 (2013): 225–248. Web. 10 May 2021.