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Modern Realisms and Anti-Realisms (Late 1800s to Early 1900s)

A. Turn of the Century, TIMELINE

- 1890s, the number of US lynchings peaked, as vigilante mobs executed people without trial, usually black men accused of miscegenation or murder—with over 4000 occurring from the late 1800s until the 1960s, while spectators sometimes brought picnic lunches and had their photos taken with the corpse
- 1893, Thomas Edison built the first movie studio with his "Black Maria" building in New Jersey, creating film strips for the Kinetoscope (viewed by one person at a time through a peephole at the top of the machine)
- 1894, Guglielmo Marconi invented radio
- 1895, the Lumiere Brothers offered the first public projected films in France with their cinématographe (camera/projector, invented by Léon Bouly in 1892), showing short "actualities," with about a minute of everyday life, such as a train pulling into the station
- 1896 (April–May), the US Supreme Court, in Plessy v. Ferguson, allowed "separate but equal," black and white public facilities, schools, trains, buses, restaurants, restrooms, and drinking fountains, according to Jim Crow laws in the Southern states, which continued until the 1960s
- 1896 (May), Georges Méliès started making films with magical effects, creating over 500 films in the next 17 years
- 1896–97 and 1899–1900, the lack of monsoon rainfall in India caused two famines, with about a million deaths each time

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- 1903, the Wright Brothers flew the first airplane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina
- 1904–07, Germany enacted the first genocides of the twentieth century against the Herero, Nama, and San people in southwest Africa (today's Namibia), responding to an anticolonial rebellion
- 1905, the First Russian Revolution, during the Russo-Japanese War, was suppressed by Tsar Nicholas II, with over 14,000 executed
- 1913, Henry Ford started mass-producing automobiles, with his moving assembly line producing one car every 15 minutes at a price his workers could afford with four months' salary
- 1914–18, World War I (known then as the "Great War" or the "war to end war") brought destruction across Europe with trench warfare, machine guns, mortars, flamethrowers, tanks, aircraft, and poison gas producing 18 million dead and 23 million wounded
- 1914, British vaudeville comedian Charlie Chaplin acted in his first silent film with California's Keystone Studios (famous for the "Keystone Cops" movies) and then gained global fame as star of *The Tramp* (1915), which he also wrote and directed
- 1915, director D. W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* showed the advance of movies from fixed-camera, filmed theatre to mobile-camera action cinema—and the power of melodramatic stereotypes—as a three-hour epic with heroic Klan members in white robes and pointed hats on horseback, in South Carolina after the Civil War, saving white victims in a cabin from the mulatto villain's militia soldiers in blackface (like later Westerns with "Indians" as villains), after also getting vengeance by lynching a lustful blackface villain
- 1917, the Second Russian Revolution ended the Russian Empire (1721–1917), creating the Soviet Union (USSR), ruled by the Communist Party and led at first by Vladimir Lenin
- 1918, the "Spanish Flu" pandemic, probably starting in the overcrowded camps of the Western European war theatre, killed 50–100 million people in two years, 3–5% of the global population
- 1918–19, the German Revolution collapsed that empire and changed its monarchy to a parliamentary democracy during the Weimar Republic
- 1919–21, the Irish War of Independence (after the failure of the Easter Rising in 1916) led to the separate country of Ireland and yet Northern Ireland remaining part of Great Britain

- 1919, the US "Prohibition" against drinking alcohol began, but gangsters like Al Capone operated "speakeasies" as clubs with illicit drinks where races mixed and jazz flourished, during the "Roaring Twenties"
- 1920 (August), women gained the right to vote with the Nineteenth Amendment to the US Constitution, through efforts of the Suffrage Movement since the 1840s
- 1920 (October), Buster Keaton, a vaudeville knockabout comedian since age 3, got his first starring role in a silent feature film when *The Saphead* was released, and then directed, wrote, and starred in movies and television shows until the 1960s, often with dangerous stunts and deadpan facial expressions, becoming known as "The Great Stone Face"
- 1921, Adolph Hitler became the fascist Führer of the National Socialist (Nazi) Party, as the Weimar Republic began to suffer hyperinflation and economic depression, through the pressures put on Germany from treaty terms at the end of World War I
- 1923, the Ottoman Turkish Empire changed from being a Caliphate monarchy for 450 years to a secular republic—after losing World War I with its German allies and committing genocides against the Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks
- 1925, Benito Mussolini, with his National Fascist Party, became dictator of Italy, promising to restore order with his "Blackshirt" militia, through "revolutionary nationalism"
- 1926, dictators also took power in Greece, Poland, and Portugal
- 1927, the first feature-length film with sound, *The Jazz Singer*, was released (with Al Jolson as Jakie Rabinowitz, torn between performing as a cantor at his father's synagogue or in blackface in a New York revue) but with sound only in brief moments of dialog, such as Jolson's famous phrase, "You ain't heard nothing yet," and in songs, such as "Mammy"
- 1929, the US Stock Market crashed, starting a global "Great Depression" in the 1930s
- 1933, Hitler became Chancellor (and dictator) of Germany, after his Nazi Party was elected as the majority in parliament, promising order and advocating a Social Darwinist eugenics policy, which led in the next decade to the sterilization of people deemed subhuman, six million deaths in genocides against Jews and Romani (Gypsies), and the deaths of many Jehovah's Witnesses and other pacifists, male homosexuals, and political opponents, such as communists, in the concentration camps
- 1936, Stalin's "Great Purge" started in the USSR as a large-scale repression of his opponents in the Communist Party, government, and military,

involving police surveillance, imprisonment, and execution of "counter-revolutionaries," with an estimated 600,000 deaths

- 1936–39, the Spanish Civil War between leftist revolutionaries and conservative fascists resulted in a half-million deaths, through battles and purges, and then the dictatorship of the fascist leader, General Francisco Franco, for the next 36 years

[How do world events at the turn of the twentieth century relate to changing social values and identity needs today?]

B. Psychological Realism

1. In the late 1800s, mass transportation and media increased connections and communications—benefitting many, including a growing working class. But these developments also led to great destructiveness through vying ideologies. Darwinian evolution, Freudian psychoanalysis, and Marxist communism challenged traditional views of self and society. Likewise, philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche announced that "God is dead. … And we have killed him. How can we console ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? … who will wipe this blood from us?" (120). Physicist Albert Einstein demonstrated mathematically that time is *relative*, yet tied to gravity as a warping of space(time) around planets (General Relativity Theory, 1907–15). Such theories inspired "modern" (current mode) artists to aim for a new sense of *universal truth* as identity framework for transcendent meaning.
2. *Alienation* (in the earlier, Romantic outcast) continued to develop as a major concern of modern theatre, through industrialization, urbanization, and changing cultural values. So did psychological and social *repression*, involving the uncanny return of the repressed, as in the dark family secret of the well-made play, revealed in the climax. Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) used that formula in his *realistic tragedies* to explore inner conflicts and current social problems, while questioning conventional morality.
3. Ibsen first wrote Romantic, nationalistic, verse dramas, such as *Peer Gynt* (1867) with trolls in the woods. Then he developed psychological realism with *A Doll's House* (1879), which shows Nora leaving her husband and children because he blames her for forging her father's signature on a loan to save his life. Nora's exit, an act of social suicide (after she considers actual suicide as a Romantic ideal), became known as "the door slam heard round the world."

4. Ibsen's realist period also included *Ghosts* (1881), about Oswald who wants to marry his mother's servant but learns that she is his half-sister and that he has a mind-deteriorating venereal disease inherited from his philandering father, *An Enemy of the People* (1882), about a doctor who discovers contamination in his spa-town's water and gets attacked for publicizing it, and *The Wild Duck* (1884), about a little girl's suicide through love for her father and his friend's "claim of the ideal." Then Ibsen wrote more symbolist dramas, such as *Hedda Gabler* (1890). It focuses on the idolization of a book manuscript, as the "child" of an illicit love affair, which is burned by Hedda, leading to a "beautiful" but foolish double-suicide.
   [How do the nationalist folk-fantasies of Ibsen's early verse drama and the realist critique of such Romantic ideals in his later plays reflect changing social values and technologies, with the themes of alienation, repression, and suicide pointing to parallels today?]
5. In *The Inspector General* (1836), Nikolai Gogol (1809–52) exposed corruption in the Russian government, foreshadowing later experiments in modern realism and naturalism, but with exaggerated comical characters.
6. In *A Month in the Country* (written 1850, staged 1872), Ivan Turgenev (1818–83) showed realistic daily life on a Russian country estate.
7. Similar situations appeared in the realist tragicomedies of Anton Chekhov (1860–1904), but with intense twists of foolish passions, as staged at the Moscow Art Theatre, through the direction and new acting system of Konstantin Stanislavski (1863–1938). This started with *The Seagull* in 1898 (written and performed elsewhere two years earlier), showing the comical ironies of various romantics at a country estate, including a young playwright named "Konstantin." He tries to commit suicide (succeeding the second time) after not being appreciated for his artistic innovations by his actress mother and her lover, a popular writer, or for the gift of a dead seagull to the young actress who performed "the soul of the world" in his symbolist play, as she falls in love with the popular writer instead.
8. Chekov's further tragicomedies included *Uncle Vanya* (1897) about a professor and his young wife visiting and disrupting the lives of people on his country estate, *Three Sisters* (1901) about women in their twenties longing for love and the big city, and *The Cherry Orchard* (1904) about an aristocratic woman unable to stop the sale of her family's estate to the son of a former serf who worked there, reflecting the emancipation of serfs in 1861 and a rising merchant class.

9. Stanislavski's acting system, influencing what later became known in the US as the "Method," involved these principles: relaxation, concentration, analyzing the "given circumstances" of the play's plot and "super-objective" of the character, substitution (finding parallel experiences in one's life to the character's), the "magic if" of imagination, sense memory, affective memory, "animal work," and (after 1917) "psychophysical action." Near the end of his career (in 1938), Stanislavski employed "active analysis" with his actors instead of initial table readings, emphasizing movement as a director (Kemp).
   [Which identity needs and social values are reflected by the Stanislavski system, originally and today, onstage and onscreen?]
10. Irish drama critic and playwright George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950), who won the Nobel Prize in 1925, wrote realistic comedies of manners, with dialectical debates about social problems. These included *Major Barbara* (1905) about a "Major" in the Salvation Army whose absent father suddenly appears in her life and writes a large check for the shelter where she helps the homeless. She finds this morally disgusting because his wealth comes from manufacturing weapons. Yet he wins her over by showing her his factory and workers' community, saving them from poverty.
11. Shaw's *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1893), about the female owner of a brothel who tries to convince her daughter about the necessity of her profession, and the hypocrisy of those who criticize it, led to the arrest of actors in a 1905 New York production.
12. In Finland, early feminist Minna Canth (1844–97) wrote plays while managing a draper's shop as a widow raising seven children. Her *Anna Liisa* (1895) depicts a young woman who gets pregnant without being married, hides her pregnancy, and panics when her child is born, suffocating it. Her boyfriend's mother helps her bury it in the woods. But the boyfriend and his mother threaten to reveal her dark secret when she wants to marry another man. She confesses and finds peace in prison.
13. Actress-playwright Susan Glaspell (1876–1948) wrote another key work of psychological realism involving gender issues, based on her journalism, the one-act play, *Trifles* (1916). It shows two women finding evidence in the kitchen of a farmhouse, which male authorities miss, about an alienated, abused wife murdering her husband. Glaspell and husband, George Cram Cook, founded the Provincetown Players, the first modern American theatre company (1915–16 in Provincetown, Massachusetts, and 1916–23 in New York).

[How do the realistic plays of Shaw, Canth, and Glaspell reflect changing moral frameworks in their time with parallels today?]

14. Eugene O'Neill (1888–1953), working initially with that company, wrote various plays influenced by European realism, naturalism, and ancient Greek tragedy. These included *Beyond the Horizon* (1920), *Mourning Becomes Electra* (1931), *The Iceman Cometh* (1939, first performed in 1946), and *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1941, first performed in 1956). The latter was about his own family, including his father, the Irish immigrant and melodramatic stage actor, James O'Neill, who played the lead in *The Count of Monte Cristo* over 6000 times. But Eugene O'Neill also experimented with anti-realist styles in *The Emperor Jones* (1920, his first big hit), *The Great God Brown* (1926, using masks), and *Strange Interlude* (1928, with unspoken thoughts as asides by various characters in stream-of-consciousness speeches). O'Neill won the Nobel Prize in 1936.
15. American designer Robert Edmond Jones (1887–1954), an early member of the Provincetown Players, brought them the "new stagecraft" of Adolphe Appia and E. Gordon Craig, after a year of informal study at Max Reinhardt's Deutsches Theater in Berlin. Jones developed impressionistic designs, focusing on the performer, through "simplified realism," integrating scenery with story, vivid colors, and simple lighting, as described in *The Dramatic Imagination* (1941).
    [How do aspects of O'Neill's and Jones's work continue today in American stage and screen media?]

C. Socialist Realism and Propaganda

1. *Socialist realism*, glorifying workers and the new regime, became the imposed propagandistic style in the USSR and Eastern Europe, from the 1920s to 1960s, especially under Joseph Stalin in the 1930s.
2. Propaganda plays and films were made by the Nazis, with Hitler idealized as a Christ-figure (in Richard Euringer's *German Passion: 1933*), with mass marches performed in highly choreographed, outdoor spectacles (filmed by Leni Riefenstahl for *Triumph of the Will*, 1935), and with documentary films, such as *The Eternal Jew* (1940), which evoked racist hatred by associating Jews of all classes with disease-bearing rats.
    [Where does propaganda appear today and how is it similar to socialist realism or Nazi plays/films, through idealization and hatred of certain people? How is it resisted and at what cost?]

D. Naturalism

1. Influenced by the positivism of philosopher Auguste Comte in France, in the 1830s–40s, which valued objective social sciences, *naturalism* emerged in the late 1800s. It examined the cooperative yet competitive human animal as shaped and pressured by its domestic, urban environment (like a Darwinian naturalist studying other species). This style emphasized realistic scenery, characters of various classes, and "slice of life" plots without dramatic structure—through the theory of Émile Zola (1840–1902) that plays should be realistic, meaningful, and simple.
2. Subtlety was emphasized in psychological realism and environmental naturalism, but such plays encountered censorship problems for addressing mental and social ills. They were developed in small "independent theatre" clubs that members attended by subscription, such as the Moscow Art Theatre, London's Independent Theatre Society, Berlin's Free Stage (Freie Bühne), and Paris's Free Theatre (Théâtre Libre) founded by Andre Antoine in 1887. These styles also emphasized the "fourth wall" and used "motivated lighting" (ordinary lamps within the setting).
3. Swedish playwright August Strindberg (1849–1912) wrote *Miss Julie* in 1888. Exemplifying naturalism, its preface asks for real shelves and kitchen utensils (rather than painted flats), solid doorframes, no footlights, and actors playing *for* the audience, not at them. But it also shows the aristocratic Julie tempted toward a sexual affair with her father's servant, Jean, while a wild folk dance occurs mid-play. She then runs away with him, after killing her pet bird as a sacrifice, symbolizing her death as well.
4. Another naturalistic play, *The Weavers* (1892), by German playwright Gerhart Hauptmann (1862–1946), shows a group of weavers in Silesia protesting industrialism in the 1840s.
5. *The Lower Depths* (1902) is also considered a naturalist or social realist play, written by Russian playwright Maxim Gorky (1868–1936), who publicly opposed the ruling Tsar. Showing various poor people in a shelter, deceiving themselves about their problems, it was first presented at the Moscow Art Theatre, directed by and starring Konstantin Stanislavski.
6. Australian actor, Frederick Matthias Alexander (1869–1955) developed his "Alexander Technique" in the 1890s, to cure his own loss of voice through better posture. It is taught today for health and performance, retraining the body's habitual tensions with natural, balanced postures, movements, and vocalizations (including the "Whispered Ah").
   [How are naturalist or psychological realist elements shown in current verbatim theatre, cinéma vérité, docudramas, "reality TV shows," or other genres—and why?]

E. Neo-Romanticism and Symbolism (as Anti-Realist Styles)

1. Benoît-Constant Coquelin (1841–1909) toured the US with Sarah Bernhardt in 1900, as they starred in *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Edmund Rostand's neo-romantic tragicomedy (from 1897). It featured a fine swordsman with a long nose, who professes his love in poetry spoken by a handsome surrogate, only revealing his feelings directly to his beloved when it is too late.
2. Neo-romanticism developed into *symbolism* in France, Germany, Poland, Scandinavia, and Ireland in the 1890s, showing the visionary truth of myth and fantasy, often aligned with nationalism (Table 10.1). With the ideal of "the word creates the décor," this movement turned toward alternative spiritual worlds with a focus on "mood." Symbolism also appears in the paintings of Moreau, Redon, and Klimt, plus the tonal to atonal music of Scriabin.
3. Paris became the center of the symbolist movement with French poet Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–98) and Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck (1862–1949). Maeterlinck's theory of a "static theatre" (in 1896) tried to evoke the mysterious, invisible, and true meaning of life, beyond the realistic level, through dream and fantasy. He created obscure, metaphysical tragedies in ambiguous medieval settings, with incantatory dialog and iconographic gestures.
4. Belgian Michel de Ghelderode (1898–1962) wrote over 60 plays, influenced by symbolism and expressionism. In his *Escurial* (1927), a mad king, trapped in his palace with a dying queen, trades places with his court jester, who then attempts vengeance within the game, because he loved the queen.
5. Stanisław Wyspiański (1869–1907), Polish painter, poet, playwright, and director, created *The Wedding* (1901) about a village party after the marriage of an educated man and peasant woman. It includes ghosts of famous historical people, symbolizing the guilty superegos of the living, plus a poet, a black knight, a journalist, a court jester, and a gold horn to call the people to revolt, which is lost.
6. After suffering from paranoia during his "Inferno Crisis," August Strindberg embraced occult mysticism. Influenced by the Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg, as well as Wagner and Maeterlinck, Strindberg turned from his earlier naturalism toward writing symbolist dramas. These included *A Dream Play* (1902) and various intimate "chamber plays," such as *The Ghost Sonata* (1907). They were based in

Table 10.1 Anti-realist styles and movements (1890s–1930s)

	Symbolism (neo-romanticism)	Expressionism	Epic Theatre (see Brecht)	Dada	Surrealism (cf. Artaud)	Futurism	Biomechanics and Constructivism
Period	1890s	1910s	1920s–30s	1910s	1920s	1910s–20s	1920s
Country	France, Ireland, and Germany	Germany	Germany	Switzerland and France	France	Italy	Russia
Philosophy	Visionary truth of myth/fantasy	Man alienated by society		Insane world (global war)	Mimic logic of myth and dream	Reject past forms	Muscle pattern elicits emotion
Politics	Nationalism	Provoke social change		Protest	Find psychic truth as antidote	Glorify war and technology	Belief in science
Style	Stage iconography and unified mood ("the word creates the decor")	Project interior (subjective) reality as scenographic distortion	Distancing effect with "gestic" acting and visible stage mechanisms	Calculated madness, chaotic discord and rule of chance	Juxtapose ordinary and weird in self- (sub-) conscious parody	"Synthetic" (compressed) drama, mixing human/object, actor/spectator, and multiple arts	Replace the Stanislavski Method with physical and emotional reflexes, using the stage as a "machine for acting"
Attitude toward modern technology	Escape into alternative spiritual world	Show mechanical subjection and pain	Use tech to show social problems and provoke political activism	Decry the madness of war machine	Return to subconscious truth and its mechanisms	Embrace technological progress	

subconscious visions and musical forms more than plot, "seeking only beauty in depiction and mood," which also influenced the expressionist and surrealist movements (Strindberg, qtd. in Styan 2: 44).

7. Likewise influenced by Swedenborg and Maeterlinck, Irish poet William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) developed local folktales, Christian stories, and Japanese *noh* drama into his own, nationalistic, symbolist plays, such as *At the Hawk's Well* (1916). It is written in verse, for actors in masks and mask-like makeup, about a mythic Ulster hero, Cuchulain, who tries to drink from a well that gives immortality, but misses the water's bubbling up when distracted by a hawk-like old woman. Many of Yeats's plays were produced at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, which he co-founded with Lady Gregory in 1904.
8. Another co-founder of the Abbey Theatre, John Millington Synge (1871–1909), wrote neo-romantic, realistic dramas about rural Ireland. These included *Riders to the Sea* (1904), about ancient Celtic beliefs in the spiritual forces of nature persisting behind Catholic culture in the Aran Islands, and *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), about a charming storyteller/killer in County Mayo. It offended nationalists, causing a riot on its opening night.
9. Seán O'Casey (1880–1964) also wrote neo-romantic, realistic plays, about the working class in Dublin, such as *The Plough and the Stars* (1926), which caused a riot at the Abbey as well.
10. An earlier Irish playwright, Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), might be considered a neo-romantic, proto-symbolist with his "art for art's sake" Aestheticism in *Salomé* (1893, first performed in 1896 in Paris). But he is most famous for his witty comedy of manners, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895 in London), and his subsequent celebrity trials for "gross indecency" as a homosexual in England. He was jailed for that (1895–97), leading to his death a few years later at age 46.
11. American poet TS Eliot (1888–1965), who moved to England and converted to Anglicanism, wrote explicitly religious, symbolist, verse drama, with *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935), based on the historical assassination of St. Thomas Becket, and *The Family Reunion* (1939), based on the ancient *Oresteia*, in a modern setting.
12. French playwright Paul Claudel (1868–1955) also wrote symbolist dramas influenced by Catholicism.
13. Alfred Jarry (1873–1907) created a parody of symbolist idealism with his "pataphysical" (scientific yet imaginary) farce, *Ubu the King* (*Ubu*

Roi, 1896). It also parodied Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and scandalized the French audience with its opening word, "Pshit" (*merdre*), yet influenced later surrealist and absurdist writers.

14. Swiss designer Adolphe Appia (1862–1928) advocated simple, geometric, three-dimensional set pieces, "painted with light," through colors and shadows, rather than painted flats. With his *mise-en-scène* (setting into scene) for Wagner's operas and his theoretical writings, starting in the 1890s, Appia evoked symbolist mystery and mood, through romantic story and song—by unifying the actors' dynamic movements, perpendicular scenic elements, and depths of space.
15. In the early 1900s, British designer E. Gordon Craig (1872–1966), son of actress Ellen Terry, developed symbolist ideas of the director-designer with a unifying, controlling vision of the stage picture. Influenced by Asian styles, Craig argued for actors as "super-puppets" (Übermarionetten), use of masks, lighting from above, and neutral, mobile screens, trying to capture "pure emotion." He edited and wrote for the first international theatre magazine, *The Mask*, and created a school of theatrical design.

    [How does symbolism appear in visual art, theatre, film, or other media today, reflecting mystical elements of our inner theatres and social values, with the danger of nationalistic folktale aspirations as a unifying greatness?]

F. Dada

1. In the 1910s, anti-realist Dada artists in Switzerland and France, led by Hugo Ball (1866–1927) and Tristan Tzara (1896–1963), staged performance events with calculated madness, chaotic discord, and the rule of chance. Dadaists rejected the logic and artistic values of capitalism, while protesting the insanity of a developing global war. With performances involving collages, cut-up writing, sound poetry, and other visual and acoustic media, Dadaists foreshadowed the later development of "performance art."

    [Which artists, popular and elite, protest war today—like/unlike the Dadaists?]

G. Expressionism and Related Developments in African-American Theatre

1. In Germany, Frank Wedekind (1864–1918) was briefly associated with naturalism, but rejected its determinism in favor of Nietzschean vitality. Considered a precursor to expressionism, he wrote *Spring's Awakening* (1891) and his "Lulu plays" (*Earth Spirit*, 1895, and *Pandora's Box*, 1904), which show frank depictions of homoeroticism, masturbation, teen sadomasochism, rape, suicide, and lesbianism, with references also to abortion, unusual for their time. The former was adapted as a successful Broadway musical in 2006.
2. In the 1910s and 1920s, expressionists in Germany and the US used scenic distortions to show environmental pressures on the inner world of the hero, reflecting his animal drives and growing madness. This involved "station dramas" of alienation and mechanical subjection—drawing on the "Stations of the Cross" (a Catholic ritual with church images recalling Christ's agony en route to his crucifixion). A precursor to this was Strindberg's *To Damascus, Part 1* (1898).
3. Expressionist plays focused on failing social values through the hero's despair and ecstasy. They also involved mythic character types, rhapsodic or telegraphic speech, choral effects, grotesque intensity, and apocalyptic overtones. This sometimes included patricide, as in Walter Hasenclever's *The Son* (1914) and Arnolt Bronnen's *Patricide* (1922). The latter influenced the young Bertolt Brecht, who changed the spelling of his name to match Arnolt's.
4. German expressionism developed as a style in painting, sculpture, architecture, dance, and film, especially early silent movies, such as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (1920, directed by Robert Wiene) with external distortions revealing inner emotions. Such artworks were censored by the Nazis as "degenerate" and associated with Jews (including Hasenclever's writings, which were burned). But expressionism greatly influenced the Hollywood genres of horror and film noir.
   [How does expressionism extend from stage to screen today, in various genres?]
5. Spain's Ramón del Valle-Inclán (1866–1936), who influenced many later writers, mixed expressionism and realism in *Bohemian Lights* (1924), a tragedy about a blind poet wandering the streets of Madrid at night, encountering strange people and historical violence, during the Restoration of the monarchy (1874–1931). It illustrated

Valle-Inclán's theory of *esperpento* (distortion of norms to criticize society). But it was banned by the government after its serial publication in a magazine and not performed during his lifetime.

6. Eugene O'Neill used expressionism in *The Emperor Jones* (1920), with a caricatured yet sympathetic tragic hero, a corrupt black ruler of a Caribbean island, haunted by ghosts of his past in the US and by "Little Formless Fears," as he loses his throne and suffers a nervous breakdown in the jungle—where he tries to escape the rebels hunting him with witchcraft and an ever-increasing drum beat. O'Neill's expressionist play, *The Hairy Ape* (1922), shows a white laborer suffering an identity crisis after a wealthy young woman on a cruise ship calls him a "filthy beast."
7. *The Emperor Jones* made black actor Charles Gilpin (1878–1930) a star on Broadway in 1920 and during a subsequent two-year tour. But he often substituted "Negro" or "colored" for the word "nigger" in O'Neill's script. The playwright replaced him with the young concert singer Paul Robeson (1898–1976) in the play's 1924 New York revival and London production, which launched Robeson's acting career. He also starred in the 1933 film version.
8. Gilpin's career began with the Lafayette Players, a black repertory company in Harlem, New York City, founded in 1915 by actress and playwright Anita Bush (1883–1974). The company continued until 1932, performing white characters, sometimes in whiteface, in the desegregated, 1500-seat Lafayette Theatre where black spectators could sit in the main areas, not just in the balcony as was the norm elsewhere.
9. Additional black companies during the Harlem Renaissance were the Ida Anderson Players (1917–28), started by Anderson who had worked with the Lafayette Players; the Krigwa Players (1925–28), started by WEB Du Bois and playwright Regina Anderson, which then became the Negro Experimental Theatre (1928–34); and the Alhambra Players (1927–31).
10. Most African-American performers made their living in vaudeville, in black acts that toured to various cities in "chitlin' circuits" (booking associations), using school gyms as well as theatres in black neighborhoods, from the late 1800s to the 1960s. In the 1920s, these offered alternatives to the mainstream Theatre Owners Booking Association, TOBA, also known as "Tough on Black Actors."
11. Paul Robeson was the third black student at Rutgers University in New Jersey, where he became an All-American football star. He then played for two National Football League teams (the Akron Pros and

Milwaukee Badgers) in the early 1920s while earning a law degree at Columbia University. His subsequent acting and singing career made him an international star of stage and screen. But his political views in the 1950s, arguing for civil rights, saying that lynchings were genocide, advocating the independence of European colonies in Africa, and praising the Soviet Union, led to a denial of his US passport. That limited his ability to tour until 1958 when his passport was restored.

[How do the innovations of Gilpin, Robeson, Bush, and the chitlin' circuits relate to current black artists and entertainers, reflecting identity needs and changing social values?]

12. Another expressionist play, *The Adding Machine* (1923), by Jewish American writer Elmer Rice (1892–1967), shows an accountant, replaced by such a machine, killing his boss, being executed for it, and going to a heaven-like setting where he gets a similar job, but just temporarily.
13. Likewise, Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal* (1928, with Robert Edmond Jones designing the set) shows a low-level female stenographer in the rituals of her job. She marries her repulsive boss, has a baby with him, but then has an affair with a younger man. She eventually murders her husband/boss and is executed in the electric chair.

[How do the style, structure, and aim of initial expressionist plays relate to current metaphysical frameworks for bio-cultural identity needs, from theatre to film, TV, and music videos?]

H. Futurism

1. In the 1910s–20s, Italian *futurists*, rejecting past forms, glorified war and technology with "synthetic" compressed dramas, which mixed human and object, performer and spectator, puppets and electronic media. This anti-realist style also developed in Russia, Great Britain, and Belgium, with every type of art, including cooking.
2. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876–1944) wrote the "Manifesto of Futurism" in 1909, celebrating speed, youth, machinery, industry, and violence, for the modernizing and cultural rejuvenation of Italy. Later, the futurists sought approval from the Mussolini regime, though they also had leftist supporters and were eventually rejected by the fascists as "degenerate."

[Which futuristic works today celebrate youth, progress, and technology, even to the point of violent, revolutionary change?]

I. Surrealism

1. In the 1920s, *surrealists* in France (and Stanisław Witkiewicz in Poland), influenced by Freud and Dada, drew on classical myths, personal dreams, and "automatic" writings to explore subconscious truth and its mechanisms. This involved the cool, sometimes whimsical juxtaposition of ordinary and fantastic elements in self-conscious parody.
2. French writer Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918) coined the term, "surrealist," in the preface of his play, *The Breasts of Tiresias* (1903, first performed in 1917), about an ancient Greek soothsayer changing his sex to obtain power and equality.
3. French anti-fascist poet and art collector André Breton (1896–1966) published a "Surrealist Manifesto" in 1924 and another version in 1929. He defined the style as pure "psychic automatism" without any control exercised by reason (against a rival manifesto written by Yvan Goll in 1924). Spaniard Salvador Dali (1904–89) eventually became the movement's most famous painter.
4. Surrealist writer-director Jean Cocteau (1889–1963) adapted ancient Greek myths to modern settings, turning some of his plays into films with experiments in new techniques, as in *Orpheus* (1925 play, 1950 film) about a poet traveling to the underworld to retrieve his dead wife. Cocteau also made the innovative film, *Beauty and the Beast* (1946), which evoked later Hollywood and Broadway musicals.
5. Spanish poet Federico García Lorca (1898–1936), influenced by surrealism, developed its darker side (like the French writer Georges Bataille). His plays, such as *Blood Wedding* (1932) and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (1936), evoked "*el duende*," the Nietzschean, Dionysian spirit of the earth and flamenco dance, with intense, authentic, bodily emotions. (The term refers to a house-possessing goblin in folklore.) But García Lorca was murdered at age 38, probably by fascists because he was a socialist and homosexual. His works were censored by Franco's government until 1953.
   [How does the surrealist exploration of subconscious realms, in cool self-parody or earthy intensity, relate to various elements of the brain's inner theatre and its manifestations onstage/onscreen today?]

J. Other Movements and Artists of the Early 1900s

1. In 1912, Chicago's Little Theatre, along with an earlier Hull House theatre group (in a residence for immigrants), started the "Little Theatre Movement" in the US. This continued in various cities, such as Boston, Seattle, and Detroit. Like earlier "independent theatres" in Europe, these groups created non-profit, reform-minded, intimate performances, against the grand spectacles of commercial theatres.
2. From the 1910s to 1930s, director Jacques Copeau (1879–1949) rebelled against naturalism in Paris by focusing on a bare stage, simple screens and lighting, and a strongly trained actor. He used "eurhythmic" movement techniques from Émile Jacques Dalcroze, while stressing the text, improvisation, drama games, mask work, and ensemble acting toward "theatre as communion" with the audience.
3. Oskar Schlemmer (1888–1943) influenced performance design, combining Art Deco and brutalist functionality, through his work at Weimar's Bauhaus School (1919–33), founded by Walter Gropius, as part of German, post-expressionist, "New Objectivity" in modernist art and architecture.
4. Czech playwright Karel Čapek (1890–1938) originated the term "roboti" with the title of his science-fiction play, *R.U.R.* (1921), or "Rossom's Universal Robots," about people of flesh and blood, created in a factory, who rebel and destroy the human race.
5. Italian dramatist Luigi Pirandello (1867–1936) used meta-theatrical techniques and lengthy speeches to explore philosophical issues of reality and illusion, sanity and madness. In his *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1921), passionate characters from an unfinished story ask the director and actors onstage, who are rehearsing another Pirandello play, to complete theirs instead.
6. Jewish and Polish-American writer Sholem Asch (1880–1957) caused a scandal in 1923 with his play, *God of Vengeance* (1907, originally in Yiddish). Set in Poland, it portrays a brothel owner who tries to keep his daughter a virgin and buys a Torah scroll for prestige. But his daughter falls in love with one of his prostitutes, leading to the first lesbian kiss on Broadway and the jailing of the producer and cast for obscenity.

7. American novelist and playwright Thornton Wilder (1897–1975) experimented meta-theatrically in *Our Town* (1938). It shows small-town New Hampshire life at the turn of the century through a Stage Manager as narrator on a mostly empty stage. Actors mime their props and sometimes address the audience to give information, as the play moves from the romance and marriage of Emily and George to a final graveyard scene with ghosts, after Emily's death in childbirth. Wilder also wrote *The Skin of Our Teeth* (1942), which mixes a modern family, the prehistoric Ice Age, an impending flood, and a war scene, with biblical archetypes, classical philosophers, and actors addressing the audience about problems backstage.
   [Which directors, designers, or dramatists today reflect the minimalist, communal approach of Copeau, the New Objectivity of Schlemmer and Gropius, or the philosophical, meta-theatrical passions of Pirandello and Wilder?]
8. American actress Maude Adams (1872–1953) starred as Peter Pan in JM Barrie's play in 1905, becoming the highest paid performer of her time. She also innovated a "light bridge" above the stage in 1908, with seven incandescent lamps for natural illumination, reducing footlight shadow-faces.
9. John Barrymore (1882–1942), whose father Maurice, brother Lionel, and sister Ethel were famous actors, became a celebrated American tragedian when starring in *Richard III* and *Hamlet* in the early 1920s. He starred as a silent film actor, too, starting with *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1920), and then sound films in the 1930s. But he struggled with alcohol abuse, was divorced four times, and eventually went bankrupt. He was the grandfather of movie actress Drew Barrymore (1975–).
10. John's mother, Georgie Drew Barrymore (1856–93), was a stage actress and member of the Drew family of actors, which included her father John Drew, mother Louisa Lane Drew, and brothers Sydney and John Drew Jr.
11. Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940) worked with Stanislavski at the Moscow Art Theatre (acting the role of Konstantin in *The Seagull*). He then developed his own theatre, school, and psychophysical acting system in the 1920s. He promoted the acting system of *biomechanics*, with gestures producing emotions based on commedia and circus effects, along with simplified costumes and *constructivist* scenery as a "machine for acting." But after first embracing communism and then opposing socialist realism, he was arrested, tortured, and executed in 1939–40, during Stalin's Great Purge.

12. Russian director Yevgeny Vakhtangov (1883–1922) worked eclectically to find the right style for a given script, combining Stanislavski's realism and Meyerhold's theatricalism.
13. Director Max Reinhardt (1873–1943) experimented eclectically with various styles in Austria and Germany. But as a Jew, he left when the Nazis took control, emigrating to London and then to Hollywood, where he set up a theatre school and made films (as he had done earlier in Berlin). These included a famous film of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935).
14. Michael (Mikhail) Chekhov (1891–1955), nephew of Anton Chekhov and student of Stanislavski, developed an acting system of "psychological gestures," influenced also by Meyerhold. Chekhov focused on the unconscious creative self (through indirect external means), as a "permeable organism," and the "dual consciousness" of actor and character. This involved a range of dynamic exercises to develop the character's "imaginary body," such as floating, flying, radiating, and molding to find the physical core of a character. Chekhov described this in his book, *On the Technique of Acting* (1942), and trained various American stage and screen actors in the 1940s.

    [Which actors and acting theories currently work from the "outside in" like biomechanics and psychological gestures? Which directors of theatre or film use various styles, or combine them, like Reinhardt and Vakhtangov?]
15. In the 1920s Noël Coward (1899–1973) became one of the world's highest-earning writers, with his popular, witty British comedies, eventually penning over 50 plays and a dozen musicals.
16. Musical theatre developed from vaudeville and variety shows in the 1800s, through the comic operettas of Offenbach in the 1850s–70s and of Gilbert and Sullivan in the late 1800s, plus revues like the Ziegfeld Follies combining song, dance, and comic sketches, into the "book musical" tradition of *Showboat* (1927) and *Oklahoma!* (1943), with a continuous, complete story. Especially influential were the London musicals of George Edwardes in the 1890s, the New York musicals of Bert Williams and George Walker, plus George M. Cohan, in the early 1900s, and then the later musicals of Jerome Kern, Oscar Hammerstein II, Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart, and George and Ira Gershwin.

    [How do musicals today reflect their origins in vaudeville, variety shows, comic operettas, revues, and earlier forms of music and dance as parts of theatre?]

17. In the early 1900s, psychotherapist Jacob L. Moreno (1889–1974) started an improvisational group in Vienna, the Theatre of Spontaneity. He formulated theories of "psychodrama," which he took to New York in the 1920s, developing various group therapy techniques with role-playing and improvisation. These also included "sociodrama," which later influenced Viola Spolin's theatre games and various sociologists doing sociometric analyses.
[How do improv theatre and group-therapy role-playing interrelate today?]

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