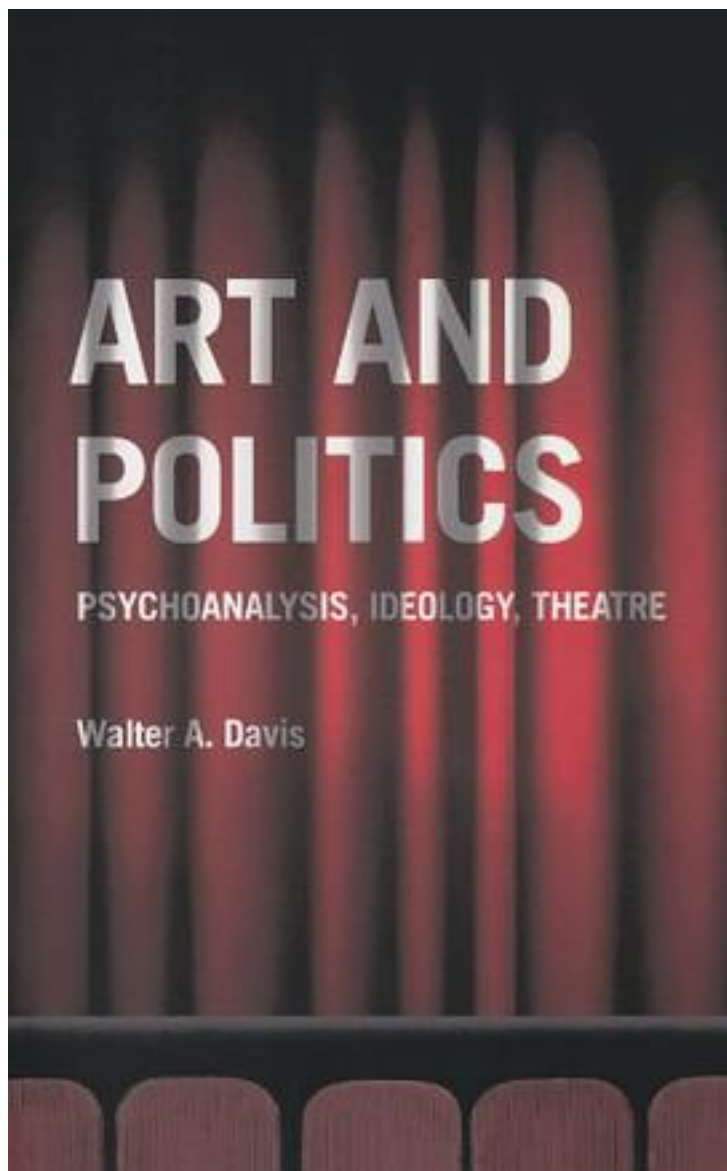


# Art and Politics



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This book explores the complex relationship between art and politics to develop a psychoanalytic critique of the impact that the current political climate is having on all artistic endeavour.

Starting with an analysis of the censorship of the play *My Name Is Rachel Corrie*, which was withdrawn last year from production by a major New York theatre due to political pressure, “Art and Politics” shows how all art that challenges the mainstream is suppressed or distorted to suit the politics of our time — one that will not recognize the contradictions of capitalist society.

Davis, like Herbert Blau, is a critic who writes persuasively and vigorously about the preconceptions of both audience and artist; it helps that Davis, like Blau, is a practitioner of the theatre himself. His criticism and his theatre both range across and through a post-Marxist critique of capitalist society and its illnesses, but he's no mere nay-sayer.

"Only by developing the most radical and comprehensive critique of ideology can we create the kind of theatre that will offer audiences concrete experience that will shatter the hold ideology has over them, that will make it difficult, if not impossible, to accept the limits that ideology imposes on the heart as well as the mind," he writes. "Unless or until the general foundations of ideology are exposed, there is no way for most playwrights to avoid falling back into every ideological trap they wish to escape."

Davis finds one potential, urgent project in the recovery of tragic drama and tragic monologue, by which he certainly does not mean *The Vagina Monologues*. "So many on the left have for so long found it so easy to dismiss the dramatization of inner consciousness as irrelevant, bourgeois self-indulgence," he writes. "What we've lost, as a result, is concrete experience when it is most revealing, when emotional and psychological courage strips away all the ideological guarantees and emotional needs that protect us from understanding the true, tragic exigencies of experience."

作者介绍:

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