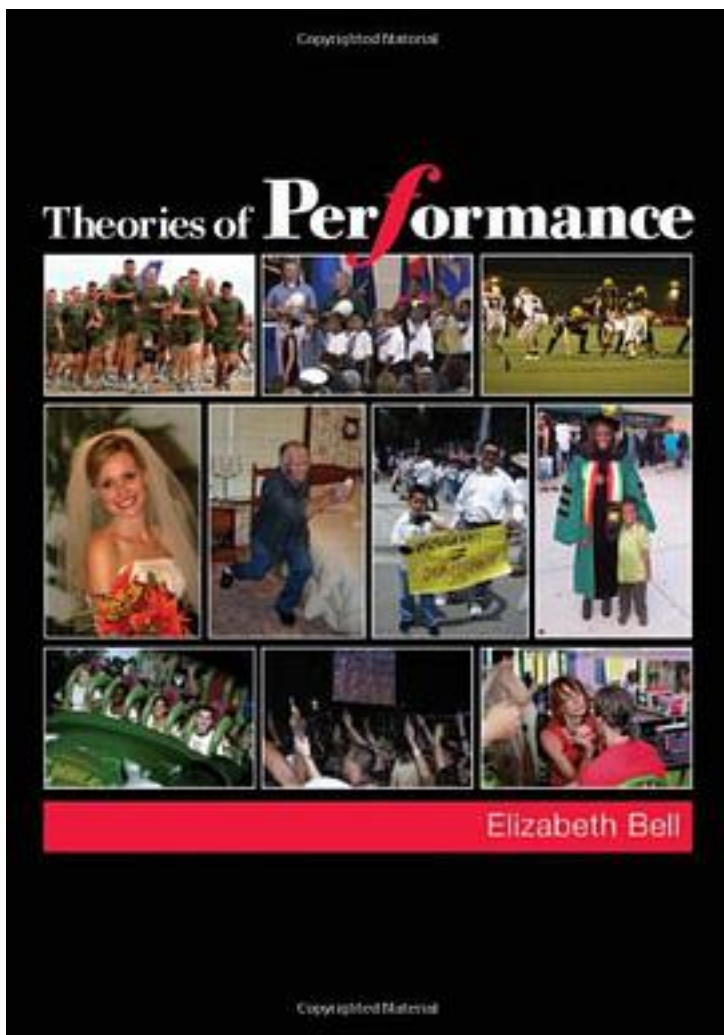


Theories of Performance



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Theories of Performance invites students to explore the possibilities of performance for

creating, knowing, and staking claims to the world. Each chapter surveys, explains, and illustrates classic, modern, and postmodern theories that answer the questions, "What is performance?" "Why do people perform?" and "How does performance constitute our social and political worlds?" The chapters feature performance as the entry point for understanding texts, drama, culture, social roles, identity, resistance, and technologies. Written specifically for the undergraduate classroom, performance theories are explained in ways accessible to students, relevant to their lives, and richly illustrated with examples that encourage students to think more, to think harder, and to think differently about performances around them. Each chapter engages theory ---as shifting and always political answers to "What?" "Why?" and "How?" questions; ---as an ongoing history of knowledge production about selves, language, aesthetics, and power; and ---as foundational to understanding performance as constitutive, epistemological, and critical endeavors. Each chapter ends by asking students to "rethink" these theories in light of criticisms, historical shifts, and new insights. Theories of Performance draws from scholarship in Communication Studies. From mundane to monumental moments in daily life, communication and performance intersect as invitations and challenges to embody, participate, and interact to create, maintain, and transform the world around us. Each chapter engages performance and communication ---through theoretical links between poetics and rhetoric, drama and life, social roles and identity, play and ritual, self and other; technology and embodiment; ---through the academic traditions of expression, oral interpretation, and performance of literature to contemporary theories and practices of textuality, performativity, and technology; and ---through connections to areas of Communication, drawing from scholarship in rhetoric, interpersonal communication, organizational communication, health communication, intercultural communication, gender studies, queer theory, mass communication, and media studies. Each chapter features an engaging application of theory, "Theory Meets World," written by a Communication scholar. Theories of Performance incorporates a variety of pedagogical strategies to encourage students to demonstrate, apply, extend, and share their discoveries about theory. Each chapter provides student-centered exercises, activities, and prompts, including ---"Make a List"--an invitation to make a list (performances, films, roles, rites, websites, resistance strategies). When students generate their own examples, theoretical concepts are suddenly relevant. ---"Act Out"--a prompt to create performance work that demonstrates understanding of theoretical concepts and issues. ---"Caught Looking"--a call to explore examples from film, television, advertising, and the Internet that engages critical skills of application, analysis, and evaluation. ---"Go Figure"--an opportunity to ponder (in discussions, debates, and in writing) a question, situation, or concept raised by theoretical claims. ---"Read More About It"--an excerpt from a published work that illustrates relevant theoretical concepts. These excerpts, from fiction, non-fiction, poetry, newspapers, magazines, and web-based work, animate theoretical concepts in revealing ways. From Aristotelian tragedy to on-line avatars, Dramatism to performativity, cultural performance to public protest, canon wars to virtual reality, Theories of Performance brings classic, modern, and postmodern theories to life in the classroom.

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