



Women Stage Directors Speak: Exploring the Influence of Gender on Their Work

By *Rebecca Daniels*

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Though stage directing has traditionally been a male-dominated profession, the number of women directors in the United States has grown significantly in recent years.

In this work, 35 contemporary women stage directors, with regional, national and international theater backgrounds, share their views on the creative process and the influences of gender on their artistic decision making. How does it feel to be defined as a woman director rather than simply a director? Does gender affect their authority? These questions and many others are explored in this study.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

While the majority of theater directors are male, the number of women in the profession has been increasing. These two books represent an attempt to bring more popular and critical attention to these women. In *Other Words* focuses on 14 female directors whose careers have been based primarily in Britain. The book's three sections address various aspects of the directing career: preparation, process, and a more intimate, personal section called "The Passion," which allows the women to talk about issues such as feminism, family, their role models, and future goals and plans. Manfull (theater, Pennsylvania State Univ.) does not intend her book to be a blueprint for careers, but it could certainly motivate young women looking at work in the theater "behind" the curtain. *Women Stage Directors Speak* looks at 35 female American stage directors, focusing on the issue of gender. Daniels (speech, St. Lawrence Univ.) asks these directors such questions as, Does gender affect their authority? How has gender influenced their creative decision making? Do they feel "defined" as a woman director and not simply as a director. Included is a fascinating section on collaboration, which most but not all these women see as their greatest strength. The black-and-white photos add little information unless you like seeing what people look like. Daniels is the more extensive and scholarly, but Manfull provides a more personal sense of communication. Both books are recommended as excellent and valuable additions to theater and women's studies collections. Susan L. Peters, Emory Univ., Atlanta, Ga. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Review

"excellent and valuable addition to theater and women's studies collections" -- *Library Journal*

"quite thorough...fascinating and informative" -- *Theatre Journal*

"recommended for all academic and professional libraries" -- *Choice*

About the Author

Rebecca Daniels was one of the founding members of the Artists Repertory Theatre in Portland, Oregon. She is currently an associate professor in the department of Performance and Communication Arts at St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York.

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