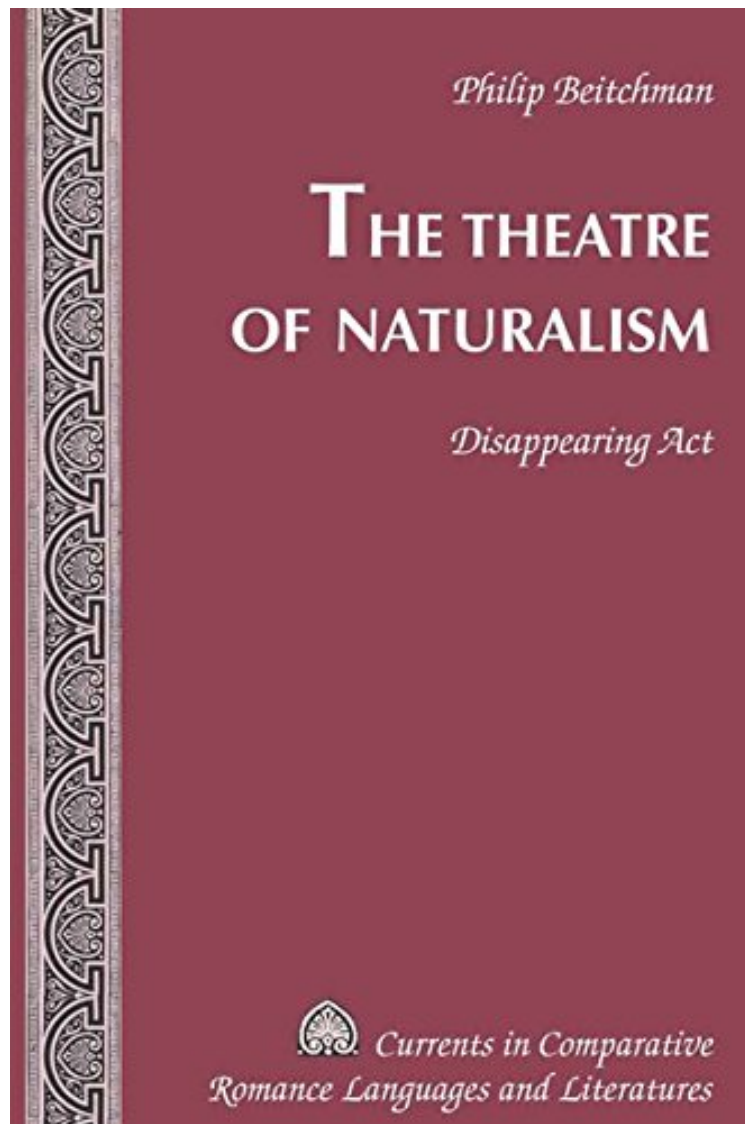


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## The Theatre of Naturalism: Disappearing Act (Currents in Comparative Romance Languages and Literatures)

*Philip Beitchman*

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**Philip Beitchman : The Theatre of Naturalism: Disappearing Act (Currents in Comparative Romance Languages and Literatures)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Theatre of Naturalism: Disappearing Act (Currents in Comparative Romance Languages and Literatures):

The impact of naturalism, a literary approach invented by Zola and especially significant in the field of the novel through his American disciples Crane, Norris, and Dreiser, is well acknowledged and recognized. Not so well recognized, but equally important, is naturalistic theatre; this was a style that also originated with Zola, but its progeny was more international and its significance more radical and insurrectionary than in the less spectacular genre of fiction. *The Theatre of Naturalism: Disappearing Act* establishes the incipiently revolutionary context (between the Paris Communist Commune, crushed in 1871, and the successful Bolshevik insurrection of October 1917) more or less foregrounded or in the background of works by Zola, Strindberg, Ibsen, Hauptmann, Synge, Shaw, and Tolstoy, focused especially on issues of class struggle and class war, as well as the prospects and possibilities of challenging the hegemony of the ruling orders. Especially in regard to later theatre, for instance the hypernaturalism of *The Brig (Living Theatre)* of Kenneth Brown, and of plays by Arnold Wesker and David Storey Philip Beitchman frequently invokes themes culled from recent French theory, particularly Derrida's deconstruction and Baudrillard's ideas about simulation. *The Theatre of Naturalism* will open up new perspectives for anyone interested in theory or theatre, whether scholars or the wider theatre-loving or performing public.

Anyone interested in modern European naturalism and its legacy will want to read *The Theatre of Naturalism*. It raises a number of important questions and challenges us to reconsider the contributions of this often undervalued movement. (Daniel Gerould, Lucille Lortel Distinguished Professor of Theatre and Comparative Literature, Graduate Center, City University of New York) About the Author Philip Beitchman received his Ph.D. in comparative literature from The City University of New York and teaches world literature at Medgar Evers College, The City University of New York. He is the author of *I Am a Process with No Subject* (1988); *Alchemy of the Word: Cabala of the Renaissance* (1998); and *The View from Nowhere: Essays in Literature, Mysticism and Philosophy* (2001). His many translations from the French include works by Jean Baudrillard (*Simulations, Fatal Strategies*) and Paul Virilio (*Aesthetics of Disappearance*).