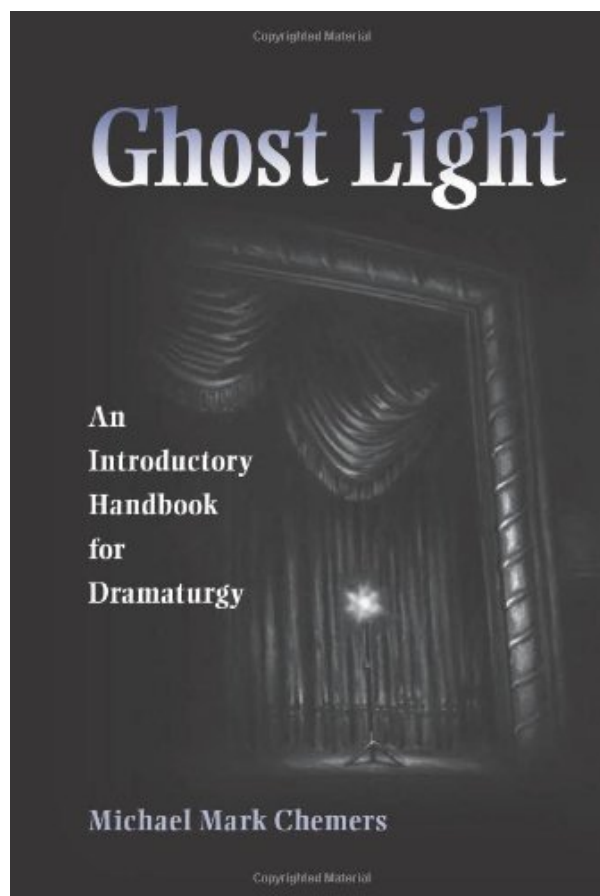
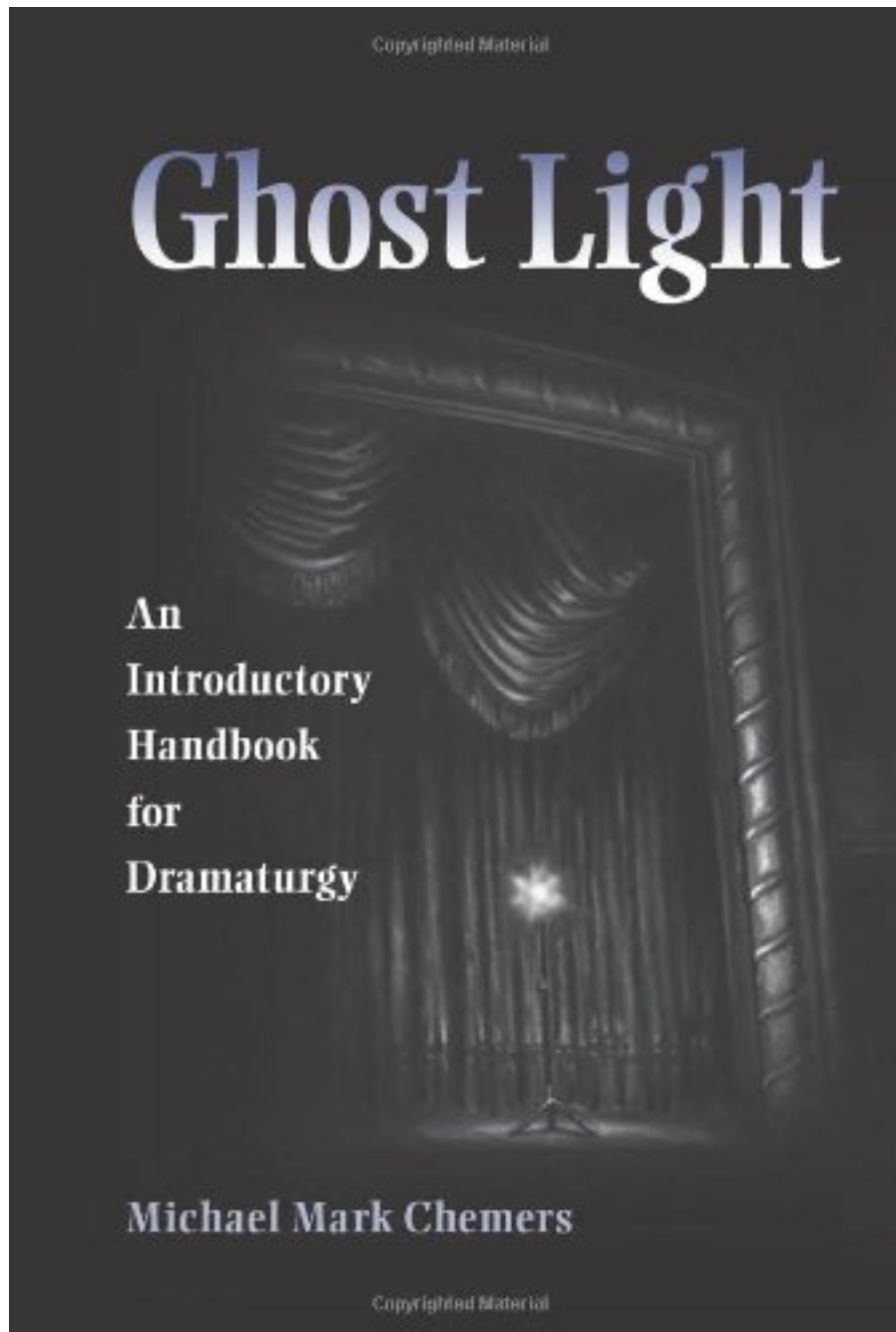


**GHOST LIGHT: AN INTRODUCTORY
HANDBOOK FOR DRAMATURGY
(THEATER IN THE AMERICAS) BY
MICHAEL MARK CHEMERS**



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Review

“With this practical, accessible, yet idea-rich book Michael Chemers has pulled off a ‘coup de theatre.’ . . . this book documents the rigor, intellectual research, and collaborative skills required of a practicing dramaturg today. Students and professionals alike will find illumination of lasting value in *Ghost Light*.”

—Elizabeth Bradley, New York University

“For a theatrical discipline that is notoriously difficult to teach and even define, *Ghost Light* offers students of dramaturgy a welcome introductory foothold. In one volume, Michael Chemers combines an academically rigorous overview of the field’s historical discourses with an entirely practical guide to everyday dramaturgical work.”

—Ken Cerniglia, Dramaturg and Literary Manager, Disney Theatrical Productions

About the Author

Michael M. Chemers founded and directs the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Production Dramaturgy Program at Carnegie Mellon University’s School of Drama. He is the author of *Staging Stigma: A Critical Examination of the American Freak Show*.

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Ghost Light: An Introductory Handbook for Dramaturgy offers useful and entertaining answers to the confounding questions: “What, exactly, is dramaturgy, and what does a dramaturg do?” According to Michael Mark Chemers, dramaturgs are the scientists of the theater world—their primary responsibility is to query the creative possibilities in every step of the production process, from play selection to costume design, and then research the various options and find ways to transform that knowledge into useful ideas. To say that dramaturgs are well-rounded is an understatement: those who choose this profession must possess an acute aesthetic sensibility in combination with an extensive knowledge of theater history and practice, world history, and critical theory, and they must be able to collaborate with every member of the creative team and theater administration.

Ghost Light is divided into three sections. Part 1, “Philosophy,” describes what dramaturgs do, presents a detailed history of dramaturgy, and summarizes many of the critical theories needed to analyze and understand dramatic texts. “Analysis” teaches the two essential skills of a dramaturg: reading and writing. It includes a “12-step program for script analysis” along with suggestions about how to approach various genres and play structures. “Practice,” the third part, delves into the relationships that dramaturgs forge and offers useful advice about collaborating with other artists. It also includes ideas for audience outreach initiatives such as marketing and publicity plans, educational programs, talkbacks, blogs, and program notes and lobby displays, all of which are often the responsibility of the dramaturg.

Ghost Light was written with undergraduate students in mind and is perfectly suited for the classroom (each chapter concludes with a series of practical exercises that can be used as course assignments). However, dramaturgy is a skill that is essential to all theater practitioners, not just professional or aspiring dramaturgs, making Ghost Light a valuable addition to all theater libraries.

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Helpful start!

By BewareOfOranges

I got this to read for a class on dramaturgy, not knowing much about the subject, and this book quickly changed that! With an easy writing style, it was a quick and entertaining read. And the anecdotes from the author often helped me understand what he was trying to explain the few times I didn't quite get it reading the sentence the first time. It was also an enjoyable quick read, and full of great info from how to do dramaturgy for a show to the profession's history to different types of influences on dramaturgy throughout the ages. I'd recommend it :)!

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good

By Shane

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helps a lot during my undergraduate dramaturgical research process.

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