Appendix: Plays with Homicidal Homosexuals

Published by

Schildcrout, Jordan.
Murder Most Queer: The Homicidal Homosexual in the American Theater.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/36855.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/36855
Appendix: Plays with Homicidal Homosexuals

In writing this book, I have necessarily focused on some plays more than others, and some homicidal homosexual plays were left out altogether. The entries below, while not exhaustive, are an attempt to account for the great number of plays with homicidal homosexuals that inspired this book.

Each play’s title is followed by the author, the year of its premiere, and a brief annotation. If the play is discussed in this book, I’ve noted in parentheses the chapter in which it appears.

_Accomplice_. Rupert Holmes, 1989. A thriller featuring not one but two same-sex conspiracies to kill off an unwanted spouse. (3)

_The Agony and the Agony_. Nicky Silver, 2006. A struggling playwright writes Nathan Leopold into his play, much to Leopold’s dismay. (2)

_All the Kings’ Men_. Glenn Kessler and Brian Salveson, 2003. Teen killer Alex King in prison and missing his forty-year-old lover.

_Angry Fags_. Topher Payne, 2013. Two gay men become vigilantes in response to a gay bashing, but their acts of violence have unforeseen repercussions.

_Atta Boy_. Brian Bowman, 2011. A white gay teenager and a middle-aged Pakistani American man have an affair, eroticizing each other as murderous outlaws. (2)

_Beautiful Child_. Nicky Silver, 2004. A pedophile’s mother imagines that her son is guilty of murder. (6)


_Betty’s Summer Vacation_. Christopher Durang, 1999. A sweet and gentle serial killer ruins Betty’s quiet vacation at the beach. (7)
Beyond Therapy. Christopher Durang, 1981. Bruce is going to leave Bob to marry a woman, so Bob decides to shoot Bruce—with a starter’s pistol. (7)

Blacklips. 1992–95. East Village “performance cult” with queers of every sort enacting gory deaths each week. (4)

Bluebeard. Charles Ludlam, 1970. A wicked doctor tries to create a new gender, but he destroys his failed creations. (4)


Carrie. Erik Jackson, 2006. Stephen King’s outsider revenge fantasy gets a queer spin with a drag queen portraying the telekinetic teen whose prom goes to Hell. (4)

The Castle. Howard Barker, 1985. The “witch” Skinner leads a lesbian feminist revolution in medieval England, and she kills a builder to stop the construction of a patriarchal castle.

The Children’s Hour. Lillian Hellman, 1934. Little Mary claims that her two female schoolteachers plan to murder her. False alarm, since in the end the lesbian Martha kills herself.


Compulsion. Meyer Levin, 1958. Leopold and Loeb as juvenile delinquents in need of help. (2)

Conquest of the Universe, or When Queens Collide. Charles Ludlam, 1967. The evil Tamberlaine makes his conquered foes his sexual slaves and is especially fond of the King of Mars. (4)

Corpse! Gerald Moon, 1984. A gay actor impersonates his twin in order to kill him. (3)

Deathtrap. Ira Levin, 1978. Two lovers plot to kill an unwanted wife and then try to kill each other in Broadway’s longest-running thriller. (3)


The Drag. Mae West, 1927. West’s banned play features a bevy of drag queens, a duplicitous queer cad, and an abandoned lover who commits murder. (1)


Entertaining Mr. Sloane. Joe Orton, 1964. A middle-aged brother and sister blackmail the murderous Mr. Sloane into splitting his “attentions” between the two of them.


Feeling. Paul Cameron Hardy, 2013. The ghost of Jeffrey Dahmer discusses life and love with a distraught graduate student.


Gin & “It.” Reid Farrington, 2010. Stagehands creating Hitchcock’s Rope get caught in their own story of desire and brutality. (2)


Jeffrey Dahmer Live! Avner Kam, 2011. A solo cabaret features the serial killer singing songs and telling the story of his life while in prison. (7)

Jerk. Dennis Cooper, adapted by Gisèle Vienne, 2010. David Brooks performs a puppet show, reenacting his serial murders in Texas in the 1970s. (7)


The Killing of Sister George. Frank Marcus, 1965. The childlike Alice fears that her butch lover June, an actress, will murder her. False alarm, since in the end June’s rival for Alice’s affections, BBC executive Mercy Croft, “kills” June’s character, Sister George.

Lesbians Who Kill. Deb Margolin, 1992. Split Britches’ exploration of the desire to kill, inspired by Aileen Wuornos. (4)
Lilies. Michel-Marc Bouchard, 1987. Unrequited love and an obsession with Saint Sebastian lead to murder in a Quebec boys’ school in the 1890s.
The Lisbon Traviata. Terrence McNally, 1985. The loss of love drives an opera queen to kill. (5)
The Martyrdom of St. Sebastian. Gabriel D’Annunzio, 1911. The saint is imagined as the victim of an unrequited lover, Emperor Diocletian.
The Mousetrap. Agatha Christie, 1952. One of us is a killer, and the masculine woman and feminine man seem like prime suspects. (3)
Murder among Friends. Bob Barry, 1975. A husband and a wife are both having an affair with the same bisexual man, and each has involved him in a plot to kill the other. (3)
My Sister in This House. Wendy Kesselman, 1981. The murderous Papin sisters seen through a feminist lens.
Paradise. David Foley, 2006. Robbie loses his faith in God and love, as inner turmoil turns to violence.
Poison Apple. Sean Galuszka, 2012. Wild Jerry invades the apartment of fastidious Paul. Each seems threatened by and attracted to the other, until one is revealed as a murderer.


Raised in Captivity. Nicky Silver, 1995. The objects of desire for a lonely gay man are all dangerous, including an imprisoned murderer who becomes his pen pal. (6)

The Rocky Horror Show. Richard O’Brien, 1973. A glam rock musical about a transvestite mad doctor trying to create the perfect man and killing his failed experiments. (4)

Rope. Patrick Hamilton, 1929. Two upper-class Englishmen kill a friend for fun. Loosely based on Leopold and Loeb. (2)

Rope Enough. Sky Gilbert, 2005. Two young men suspected of murder claim Leopold and Loeb as their role models. (2)


Shanghai Moon. Charles Busch, 2001. Another of Busch’s tough-talking dames faces the jury over the murder of her Chinese lover. (4)

Silence! The Musical. Hunter Bell, Jon Kaplan, and Al Kaplan, 2011. This camp version of Jonathan Demme’s Silence of the Lambs makes all performances of gender and sexuality rather ridiculous, so the perversion of the killer is actually “normalized.” (7)

Sleuth. Anthony Shaffer, 1970. There’s something queer about Andrew wanting to live with Milo and play murder games with him. (3)


Streamers. David Rabe, 1976. “Rough trade” turns brutal in a barrack room as an African American soldier kills the straight white soldier who interferes with his same-sex relations.


Vampire Lesbians of Sodom. Charles Busch, 1984. Two rivals seduce and suck the blood of young maidens over the centuries. (4) 
Voyage to Lesbos. Five Lesbian Brothers, 1990. Bonnie is going to get married and leave the lesbian sisterhood behind, but one of her ex-lovers murders the groom. (4) 
The Well of Horniness. Holly Hughes, 1983. A killer lesbian is on the loose in this “dyke noir” from the WOW Café Theatre. (4) 
Zombie. Joyce Carol Oates, adapted by Bill Connington, 2008. Quentin P. abducts, lobotomizes, and kills young men in an attempt to create a sex slave. (7)