

Browsing for Plays - a cheat sheet

Theatre librarian:

Laura O'Brien | lobrien@wellesley.edu | x3497
wellesley.edu > Library and Technology

Research guide:

- Library website > Research Guides > **Theatre**

Browsing vs. Searching for Plays

Searching: The best and quickest way to search for a particular playwright or play is to use the library catalog (<http://luna.wellesley.edu>) and note the exact call number. The catalog can be searched by TITLE, NAME, or SUBJECT. (Advanced search features allow you to combine authors & titles in searches, and limit by format or date.)

Browsing: You will not find all the plays in a single section as you would in a public library.

Below are call number ranges where plays can generally be found. It does **not** cover every call number where plays are located. Use the catalog if you cannot find a particular play or playwright.

Anthologies and Collections

Call numbers

PN6111-6120

Play anthologies – collections of plays on a variety of themes from various playwrights

PN2080

Monologues

PR1243-1272

Collections of English Drama

PS623-634

Collections of American Drama – these two areas have collections of

plays on specific topics and include series like *Best American Plays*

Browsing for Plays - a cheat sheet

Outside of anthologies, plays (like poetry and novels) are organized by author. To find a single play by or collected plays of a particular British or American playwright, go to the section that corresponds with the time period in which they were writing.

Below is a breakdown of call numbers for British and American play locations showing the call numbers for each time period.

- Keep in mind that these sections contain not only playwrights, but also include **poets** and **novelists**.
- These sections also contain **criticism**—works by an author will come first, followed by criticism of their works.

Plays by Author - British

Call numbers	Time period of author's writing career
PR2417-3195	English Renaissance (1500-1640)
PR3300-3785	17th & 18th Century (1640-1770)
PR4000-5925	19th Century (1770 – 1899)
PR6001-6049	1900-1960
PR6050-6075	1961 – present (current playwrights will be here)

Plays by Author - American

Call numbers	Time period of author's writing career
PS700-893	Colonial Period
PS1000-3390	19th Century
PS3500-3549	1900-1960
PS3550-3576	1961 – present (current playwrights will be here)

For additional help:

- Ask me anytime! Email me to ask a question or to schedule a meeting (lobrien@wellesley.edu), or contact me via chat on the **Theatre Subject Guide**.
- Drop by the **reference desk** in Clapp (Mon – Fri 10:30am – 4:30pm)