

LONELINESS AS A MOTIVATING THEME IN THE PLAYS OF TENNESSEE WILLIAMS

by

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ABSTRACT

In at least half of the dozen plays written by American playwright Tennessee Williams (1914-) and produced during the last two decades, the theme of loneliness is used as a motivation strongly affecting the course of the action of the dramas. Notable examples are The Glass Menagerie (1945), A Streetcar Named Desire (1947), Summer and Smoke (1948), Camino Real (1953), Orpheus Descending (1955), Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (1955), and Sweet Bird of Youth (1959). The theme is essential in the short play, The Mutilated (1964) and of lesser, but still consequential significance, in The Rose Tattoo (1950). Through detailed analysis of the aforementioned plays, the thesis demonstrates the importance of the theme of loneliness in the work of one of America's leading contemporary authors.

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