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# AP<sup>®</sup> Research Academic Paper

## Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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- Scoring Guideline**
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# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH — ACADEMIC PAPER

## 2019 SCORING GUIDELINES

The Response...				
<b>Score of 1</b> Report on Existing Knowledge	<b>Score of 2</b> Report on Existing Knowledge with Simplistic Use of a Research Method	<b>Score of 3</b> Ineffectual Argument for a New Understanding	<b>Score of 4</b> Well-Supported, Articulate Argument Conveying a New Understanding	<b>Score of 5</b> Rich Analysis of a New Understanding Addressing a Gap in the Research Base
Presents an overly broad topic of inquiry.	Presents a topic of inquiry with narrowing scope or focus, that is NOT carried through either in the method or in the overall line of reasoning.	Carries the focus or scope of a topic of inquiry through the method <b>AND</b> overall line of reasoning, even though the focus or scope might still be narrowing.	Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.	Focuses a topic of inquiry with clear and narrow parameters, which are addressed through the method and the conclusion.
Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works <b>OR</b> through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	Situates a topic of inquiry within a single perspective derived from scholarly works <b>OR</b> through a variety of perspectives derived from mostly non-scholarly works.	Situates a topic of inquiry within relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives, although connections to some works may be unclear.	Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives <b>AND</b> logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.	Explicitly connects a topic of inquiry to relevant scholarly works of varying perspectives <b>AND</b> logically explains how the topic of inquiry addresses a gap.
Describes a search and report process.	Describes a nonreplicable research method <b>OR</b> provides an oversimplified description of a method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	Describes a reasonably replicable research method, with questionable alignment to the purpose of the inquiry.	Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.	Logically defends the alignment of a detailed, replicable research method to the purpose of the inquiry.
Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	Summarizes or reports existing knowledge in the field of understanding pertaining to the topic of inquiry.	Conveys a new understanding or conclusion, with an underdeveloped line of reasoning <b>OR</b> insufficient evidence.	Supports a new understanding or conclusion through a logically organized line of reasoning <b>AND</b> sufficient evidence. The limitations and/or implications, if present, of the new understanding or conclusion are oversimplified.	Justifies a new understanding or conclusion through a logical progression of inquiry choices, sufficient evidence, explanation of the limitations of the conclusion, and an explanation of the implications to the community of practice.
Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	Generally communicates the student’s ideas, although errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization distract or confuse the reader.	Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	Competently communicates the student’s ideas, although there may be some errors in grammar, discipline-specific style, and organization.	Enhances the communication of the student’s ideas through organization, use of design elements, conventions of grammar, style, mechanics, and word precision, with few to no errors.
Cites <b>AND/OR</b> attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.	Cites <b>AND/OR</b> attributes sources (in bibliography/ works cited and/or in-text), with multiple errors and/or an inconsistent use of a discipline-specific style.	Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, using a discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few errors or inconsistencies.	Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few to no errors.	Cites <b>AND</b> attributes sources, with a consistent use of an appropriate discipline-specific style (in both bibliography/works cited <b>AND</b> in-text), with few to no errors.

# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

### Overview

This performance task was intended to assess students' ability to conduct scholarly and responsible research and articulate an evidence-based argument that clearly communicates the conclusion, solution, or answer to their stated research question. More specifically, this performance task was intended to assess students' ability to:

- Generate a focused research question that is situated within or connected to a larger scholarly context or community;
- Explore relationships between and among multiple works representing multiple perspectives within the scholarly literature related to the topic of inquiry;
- Articulate what approach, method, or process they have chosen to use to address their research question, why they have chosen that approach to answering their question, and how they employed it;
- Develop and present their own argument, conclusion, or new understanding while acknowledging its limitations and discussing implications;
- Support their conclusion through the compilation, use, and synthesis of relevant and significant evidence generated by their research;
- Use organizational and design elements to effectively convey the paper's message;
- Consistently and accurately cite, attribute, and integrate the knowledge and work of others, while distinguishing between the student's voice and that of others;
- Generate a paper in which word choice and syntax enhance communication by adhering to established conventions of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Women involvement in theater: 6th Century to 2019

**AP Research Assignment 2019**  
**Word Count: 4094**

Women involvement in theater: 6th Century to 2019

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## Women involvement in theater: 6th Century to 2019

The idea of drama first began centuries ago in 6th century BC Greece. To be more exact, it originally started in the city of Athens where hymns, known as dithyrambs, were sung in honor of the god Dionysus. Dionysus was the God of many things, including theater. He was worshipped for many years by Mycenaean Greeks<sup>1</sup> throughout the years of 1500-1100 BCE. These hymns were used frequently and were later changed to be used in performances, where participants would dress up in costumes and masks. Even though at this time they weren't called actors, this was the first sign of theater production. The first ever theater productions were performed with just one actor, which was a protagonist, and was also accompanied by a chorus of people who helped him tell the story. As the idea of theater performances grew in popularity throughout the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, more speaking roles were created. They were called the antagonists; this role then reduced the amount of people in the chorus from 50 to 12. The first theater productions were performed in the Theater of Dionysus, in the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century. The Theater was built in Athens in honor of where the idea of drama first began. From then, drama was classified as three different type of genres: comedy, tragedy, and satyr plays<sup>2</sup>. However, even though early theater productions were loved by many, and included the contributed talent of many different people at once, it was all done by men. Ancient Greek playwrights were created by men and the people who executed their playwrights were also men. Women were not allowed to participate in plays and were neither allowed to attend the festival of Dionysus to watch any plays. From this time period to now, women involvement in plays has

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<sup>1</sup> Mycenaean Greeks: The Bronze Age in Ancient Greece, spanning the period from approximately 1600–1100 BC. It represents the first advanced civilization in mainland Greece, with its palatial states, urban organization, works of art, and writing system

<sup>2</sup> Satyr Plays: an ancient Greek form of tragicomedy, similar in spirit to the bawdy satire of burlesque. They featured choruses of satyrs, were based on Greek mythology, and were rife with mock drunkenness, brazen sexuality (including phallic props), pranks, sight gags, and general merriment.

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changed drastically but it did take a long time to get here. As women proved themselves to be of equal or potentially greater talent to men, they were slowly given more access to roles and openings in theater and way of life standards in general. Women were allowed to not only participate in production but to grace the stage, allowing the audience the opportunity to accept a female's place in theater as well. Time lapsed to slowly normalize an equality of gender in theater. Production advanced to enable roles to be less about the character's sex and more about the character's qualities. Join me as we travel through a brief journey of the woman's role in theater and how far gender roles have traveled to become neutralized in today's modern world.

### **Shakespeare Gender Roles**

Much didn't change from the 6th century to Shakespeare's era which was the mid 1500s. Early theater productions still remained to have shows that were created by men to also be portrayed by men in every role; this included William Shakespeare's plays. These plays were written to be performed only by men and for a long time they were, according to the book '*Performance of Gender*' written by Luke Dixon who works at the Middlesex University in the Department of Drama and Theatre Arts. Dixon is also a theatre director in the UK where he worked mostly in the world of contemporary burlesque<sup>3</sup>. "The convention of only men being actors was one which had dictated the representation of humans on stage throughout the documented history of English performance," (Dixon, 1998). By staying with the initial idea of having only men be actors, it kept the expected ideal theater performance without straying away from the roots of where it began. "The dominant convention of Shakespeare's theatre demanded that no women were to be seen on stage as actors," (Dixon, 1998). Even centuries later after

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<sup>3</sup> Burlesque: a literary or dramatic work; a parody.

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theater first began, women were still being turned away from taking part in such a huge aspect of entertainment in society, according to the article ‘*Shakespeare and Gender: the ‘Women’s Part,’*’ written by Clare McManus. McManus is a professor of Early Modern Literature and Theatre at the University of Roehampton, where she specializes in early modern theater. She has written about early modern women’s performance and has edited plays by John Fletcher and William Shakespeare. “The small number of female roles in each play (usually no more than three or four roles that could be described as more than walk-on parts), have shaped and constrained opportunities for actresses on the modern stage,” (MacManus, 2016). Once Shakespeare’s plays started to pick up popularity, he began to add female roles into his plays. Although they were small, they were actual roles. Even to this day, this change is a foundation which continues to evolve performances to include more roles for people who weren't originally designated to play certain parts. The importance of Shakespeare’s decision to be inclusive of women, is highlighted when compared to the contemporary artists of his time. When compared with other playwrights, Shakespeare helped to lead women across the bridge to an acceptance in theater. Although the revolution of gender equality has been gradual and more tedious than equalists could hope for, the acceptance has taken place nonetheless. It is in great thanks to the success of his plays, that Shakespeare was encouraged to broaden the specifics of his characters and give women the opportunity to highlight the roles that should have been given to them from the onset. Shakespeare’s “dominant convention” adapted to his viewer’s acceptances of a multitude of original forms of art interpretation. While plays were still predominantly geared towards their male audiences and often in respect of their female counterparts, the women were given small

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but increasingly more frequent opportunities to share the stage and show that they too could accomplish what men have historically dominated.

**Shakespeare Shows Take A Turn**

After years of repeating the same styled plays that were created for men to perform in, Shakespeare's plays began to change. Women were becoming involved in small and medium roles in plays, but they still weren't given leading star roles like men were more likely to get.

“Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* was first performed in 1599. In 1642, the Puritans<sup>4</sup> closed all the public playhouses in England and when they were reopened eighteen years later in 1660, it was the female actors playing the female roles. For the first time women actors represented women on the English stage” (Dixon, 1998). This was the first time women were presented to the stage to play the roles that were original supposed to be given to them. Although this was an improvement for the late 16<sup>th</sup> century but it wasn't consistent for the years that followed.

“Shakespearean theatre’s habit of exploring gender’s multiple possibilities, and indeed women’s central involvement in this exploration, is not a recent phenomenon... Ellen Terry<sup>5</sup> herself played the cross-dressing Portia of *The Merchant of Venice* while younger actresses performed scenes from *Henry V*” (MacManus, 2016). This early act of feminism went against the fact that there were supposed to be men playing those roles and women weren't expected to nor was allowed to play them. By performing these roles they fought against the injustice of how theatre productions were keeping women away from being casted for roles that were meant for them.

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<sup>4</sup> Puritans: were English Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries who sought to purify the Church of England of Roman Catholic practices, maintaining that the Church of England had not been fully reformed and needed to become more Protestant.

<sup>5</sup> Ellen Terry: a famous actress during the 1870s-early 19th century, a performer at the Shakespeare Hut

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“Shakespearean performance is an arena for exploring desire, sexuality and gender roles and for challenging audience expectations, especially when it comes to the female performer”

(MacManus, 2016). Theater was first meant for entertaining others whether that be performing a fictional or nonfiction play of tragedy or a fiction story of comedy. It allowed the playwrights to be as creative as they could for the characters that they were creating. So in a way this also allows for the actors to be creative with the roles that they were portraying which explains the cross-gender casting that occurred between the 5<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries. Shakespeare's plays opened an entryway for creativity and allowed women to be more adventurous in being a part of theater productions.

### **Gender in Roles**

In 5<sup>th</sup> century Ancient Greece where theater first started, it was strictly forbidden to have females take part in plays or take part in enjoying the show and by viewing it as the audience. But, as stated before, that didn't stop the portrayal of women on stage. Over the years while theater improved and grew as a form of entertainment, so did the relatively new idea of having gender apply to the actor/actress playing the role. “The connection of gender to biological sex and to sexuality is a recent late twentieth century concept” (Dixon, 1998). It wasn't until the early 1900s that people started to connect gender to the way they portray themselves on a day to day basis. During 5th century Ancient Greece, females didn't have many roles in plays when it was first introduced; females were sometimes given one to two roles at most in the first play. In those plays men played the roles of the females and were allowed to cross dress for their character's costume. “The idea of gender as ‘a social construct, made up of learned values and beliefs’ is one which developed alongside the changing performance conventions, which are

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examined in this thesis, in the late sixties and early seventies” (Dixon, 1998). But the social construct of gender which are the learned values and beliefs, were not discovered until the late sixties and early seventies. For example, in the mid-1600s when Shakespeare plays were being performed, his plays displayed the fact that he played around with the idea of gender and sexuality. The themes of masculinity and femininity were very clear throughout Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*<sup>6</sup>, in this play the men continuously attempt to display their masculinity while women seem to flaunt their femininity. But because women weren't allowed on stage, teenage boys played the female parts of the play. This held a problem with correctly depicting the female characters as flaunting their femininity if the entire cast was male. Nonetheless, during this time period it was both common and accepted for teenage boys to play those roles. Since Shakespeare was notorious for crossing boundaries in his plays, having teenage boys play a female role was a part of his exploration and experimentation with the topic of gender and sexuality.

### **Cross-Gender Casting**

Cross-Gender casting has occurred since the beginning of theater; it was the first way the actors had the ability to physically portray their roles. Cross-Gender casting went on for many centuries and it still occurs today, according to the book *Cross-Gender Casting* written by Richard Hornby a professor in the Theater Department at the University of California. Hornby is an internationally-recognized expert on dramatic literature and performance. He has been a

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<sup>6</sup> *Troilus and Cressida*: a tragedy by William Shakespeare, believed to have been written in 1602. It was described by Frederick S. Boas as one of Shakespeare's problem plays. The play ends on a very bleak note with the death of the noble Trojan Hector and destruction of the love between Troilus and Cressida.

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professional actor for 40 years and has directed over 50 productions. “German Expressionism<sup>7</sup> is a genre that also usually needs elbowroom, huge settings, and notoriously shadowy lighting effects are supposed to dwarf the human figure” (Hornby, 1996). German Expressionism affects each play because it completely makes up how the plays will be written. When plays are written, the time period’s culture is directly reflected in the work. Each play that is created, shows elements of that time period’s rules in the society during that time. For example, during medieval times in Germany, a German writer by the name of Hrotsvitha<sup>8</sup> began to write plays that went against the standard society’s perception of females. During this time, many scripts were based just on powerful men and men controlling the whole show, but in Hrotsvitha’s playwrights, she wrote about female characters with strong and noble personalities. This greatly contradicted the view of women that most people in her society held, which depicted women as weak in character. “Then women were at last allowed on stage in England after the Restoration of 1660, they turned the tables on Elizabethan custom by playing male as well as female roles” (Hornby, 1996). Restoration theater<sup>9</sup> allowed a lot of playwrights to be more creative and different than the standard playwrights before. Once Charles Stuart<sup>10</sup> was restored to the throne in 1660, theaters reopened after an eighteen-year ban. Lifting this ban allowed restoration theater to become a way to celebrate the end of the Puritan rule which had strict moral codes. Since theater changed so

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<sup>7</sup> German Expressionism: is a cultural movement that is challenging to define as it is not distinguished by a singular style or method of creation, but rather is better described by both the mindset of the artist creating the work and the generation he or she lived in.

<sup>8</sup> Hrotsvitha: Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim was a 10th-century German secular canoness, dramatist and poet who lived at Gandersheim Abbey, established by the Ottonian dynasty. She wrote in Latin, and is considered by some to be the first person since antiquity to compose drama in the Latin West.

<sup>9</sup> Restoration Theater: “Restoration comedy” is English comedy written and performed in the Restoration period from 1660 to 1710. Comedy of manners is used as a synonym of Restoration comedy.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Stuart: Charles II was king of England, Scotland and Ireland. He was king of Scotland from 1649 until his deposition in 1651, and king of England, Scotland and Ireland from the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 until his death.

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much, it was a great advancement in having women take part in theater productions. Females also were allowed to take on cross-gender roles which men previously were only allowed to do. “In the mid-1800s, the first American-born actress of the top rank, Charlotte Cushman, played Iago and Romeo, the latter to her sister Susan’s Juliet” (Hornby, 1996). Charlotte Cushman, an American-born actress who had a full contralto register voice, allowed her to play both male and female roles. This allowed for more of an easier entryway for women of the same ability, who could take on roles as Charlotte did. “Some fifty professional actresses in the nineteenth century are known to have played Hamlet, including Sarah Bernhardt. The performances were not seen as gimmicks. “The modern sense of . . . cross-dressed portrayal as a stunt or trick, a dog walking on its hind legs, seems to be a matter of cultural relativism<sup>11</sup>” (Hornby, 1996). Following in the footsteps of Charlotte Cushman, Sarah Bernhardt took part in playing the role of Hamlet during the nineteenth century. These didn't just show that theatre artists were trying to make a point about women involvement in theater, they was real roles- given to these women to play lead male roles.

### **Feminism in Theater**

Women involvement in theater has come a long way since the beginning of theater in Ancient Greece. Permanent changes that are still used today were not sealed in history until the mid-20th century, according to the book *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre* written by Elaine Aston a professor in the Contemporary Arts department at Lancaster University. Elaine has Ph.D. programs of research in the field of feminism, theater and performance which will

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<sup>11</sup> Cultural Relativism: Cultural relativism is the idea that a person's beliefs, values, and practices should be understood based on that person's own culture, rather than be judged against the criteria of another.

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account for credibility to support my research. “By 1985, the year of the first British academic women’s theatre conference held at Warwick University, a ‘feminist thinking,’ or rather re-thinking, of theatre history was shown to be well underway” (Aston, 1995). England was one of the first countries to help improve women involvement in theater, they corrected their plays that was originated from their country and found ways to incorporate a woman's presence as an actress. “The feminist concept of women ‘hidden from history’ impacted on literary criticism in two ways. First, it motivated feminist critics to understand how and why women, like Molly’s ancestor, had been buried by man-made history, and, second, it initiated the recovery of their ‘lost’ female ancestors” (Aston, 1995). History as a whole, has a knack for hiding away female involvement in many occurrences. For the most part, female involvement in theater has especially been hidden from history and many people do not even realize it. It took a very long time for women to be proudly shown in theater productions, and also respected for the role that they played.

### **Women in the Workplace**

Woman equality in the workplace has become a very important topic. At first there was no equality and as of late we are doing a lot better to fix that problem. As described earlier in the text, women weren't allowed to be actresses. They also were not allowed in creating the production and helping with stage preparation or anything in that nature, according to the article *Women Push for Equality On and Off Stage* written by Suzy Evans a New York-based entertainment and lifestyle journalist, whose writing has been featured in The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Hollywood Reporter, Billboard, Backstage, The Huffington Post, Fast Company, Dwell, and several other outlets. “Fifty-one percent of the population is female, and

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yet only about 24 percent of all plays produced across the country in the coming season are written by a woman” (Evans, 2014). It’s a shocking discovery to find out that more than half of the population is female and only twenty four percent of all plays produced around the country are written by a woman. After so many years of women having to sneak around to create plays and also to play the lead role in them, there are still not enough women being put in the role to *write* plays. “The Pulitzer Prize<sup>12</sup> and all finalist nods go to women in 2014 and 68 percent of the Broadway audience is female, but you don’t have a single new play by a woman on Broadway in the 2013–14 season” (Evans, 2014). To find out that the Pulitzer Prize and all finalist nods go to women in 2014, but there wasn't a new play by a woman on Broadway in the 2013-2014 season shows that many women nowadays aren't that interested in producing plays and now during modern times, we may just be going back on history. “Another issue at hand is that for all the world premieres by women that may get produced, many struggle to get second and third productions around the country” (Evans, 2014). Even though we have made it out of the darker times issues still continue to arise from women in the workplace. Even if a woman is able to make it big with a play she wrote, she may very well struggle to continue to keep up that reputation of being a good playwright and to continue to have successful theater productions around the country. In comparison to men who have multiple shots to continue being a successful playwright in this industry, women are only seen to have one shot. “Female composers might be the worst off as far as parity goes, as LPTW’s Off-Broadway study shows that just 14 percent of composers, 9 percent of lyricists and 7 percent of music directors and conductors were women in the 2013–14 Off-Broadway season” (Evans, 2014). A job that doesn't

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<sup>12</sup> The Pulitzer Prize: an award for achievements in newspaper, magazine and online journalism, literature, and musical composition in the United States.

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get enough recognition are the composers who provide the music for these plays, it is a very important job for the play to turn out well. This also seems to be a very male dominated field in the theater business and females make up fourteen percent of the composers; that's including lyricists, music directors and conductors. There is a type of audition called a blind audition; from a study it shows that female musicians that go through blind auditions are more likely to be considered for the part in the symphony that they wanted. "The study found that blind auditions for symphonies increased a woman's likelihood of making it past the preliminary round by 12 percent" (Evans, 2014). There is also still some discrimination against musicians who audition for roles to be a part of the symphony, according to the book *No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater* written by Angela Pao an associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University. Angela Pao's primary fields of interest are performance studies, intercultural theater and cross-cultural representations, and the literatures of ethnic minorities and cultures in North America and Europe. In the past, a process similar to the blind audition were used. "By the 1970s, the term color-blind was being applied to this approach, but in popular usage it was also often being used rather indiscriminately to include various color-conscious strategies that were being devised" (Pao, 2011). Color-blind casting is the practice of casting without considering the actor's ethnicity, skin color, body shape, sex and/or gender. This allowed for many actresses to be considered for a role that wouldn't necessarily fit them, but they were allowed to play the role nonetheless. "The most enthusiastic supporters of what has commonly been called nontraditional casting<sup>13</sup> see these practices as a form both of social action and of artistic exploration" (Pao, 2011). With the use of color-blind casting,

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<sup>13</sup> Nontraditional Casting: the casting of ethnic minority actors in roles where race, ethnicity, or gender

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actresses were allowed to be very creative for the role they were auditioning for and later on got the opportunity to portray that role.

**19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Century**

We have come a long way from how theater first was in 500 BC Ancient Greece, even though we have made a lot of improvements there is still a lot more to improve, according to her book *Race and Gender in the Broadway Chorus* written by Kellee Aken who has a Bachelor's Degree from the University of Pittsburgh, a Master's Degree from the University of California-Davis and a Ph.D from the University of Pittsburgh. Her knowledge on theater is extremely detailed, because she has also directed many plays and served as the programming supervisor at Gateway to the Arts. "The late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries were a period of rapid change and development for the United States, and this change was reflected on the stage, which was the nation's most popular form of entertainment for the first half of the twentieth-century" (Aken, 2006). Even though it was documented that England started making changes in theater first due to the amount of women who were rebelling against the normal lifestyle of not taking part of theater. "The reputation for moral laxity that attached itself to all actors, but especially women, was quickly applied to the chorus girl, who was often using the spectacle of her body, as well as any actual talent she might have as a dancer or singer, to earn her living. Woman displayed as sexual object is the *leitmotif*<sup>14</sup> of erotic spectacle: from pin-ups to strip-tease, from Ziegfeld to Busby Berkeley, she holds the look, and plays to and signifies male desire (Mulvey 162)" (Aken, 2006). However, because it took so long for women to enter

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<sup>14</sup> Leitmotif: a recurrent theme throughout a musical or literary composition, associated with a particular person, idea, or situation.

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the theater workforce, their initial jobs in theater were not respectable enough. Men were allowed to have role in theater where they had a lot more dignity for themselves while the only way for women to be brought into the entertainment business was to have no dignity for themselves, according to the essay that was created by the University of Washington with no listed author but is filled with a huge amount of reliable sources. Their website has University of Washington libraries are filled with many different topics as well as reliable sources. “Theater crowds in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had gained a reputation as unruly, loud and uncouth. The improvements made to theaters in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century encouraged middle-and upper class patrons to attend plays, and crowds became quieter, more genteel, and less prone to cause disruptions of the performance” (Washington Libraries). Plays changed from being for every group of people and class type then turned into being just for the middle-and upper class people who were able to attend plays. This introduced a new group of people who were more properly behaved, from then it set the ideal way of acting once you were attending a play. “The life of actors and actresses in the mid-19th century was very hard, requiring great physical stamina. In addition to a grueling performance schedule, actors must withstand stagecoach and early riverboat travel in addition to makeshift lodgings” (Washington Libraries). Also, the training for the roles in plays were very tiresome, but in the end very much worth it. After years of not being able to take part in the entertainment business, women were given the chance to show that they were cut out for this type of work. They proved their determination and dedication to the roles. “Except for the lowest ranks of actors, these salaries were good for this period, especially for women, even though they were paid less than men in comparable roles” (Washington Libraries). This was in a way an improvement because women were never able to make a living salary from

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being an actress. Even though it shares the problem that we still have today with how women wages are lower than men, it still is seen as a massive improvement.

**Conclusion**

Throughout history women's involvement in theater has been through its ups and downs. Even though at first women were never seen nor heard to have anything to do with the creation of theater and for centuries it developed into a stronger foothold for women to make their mark in the performing arts. Setbacks include societal demands, shifting priorities, family obligations with war and the need for women to supplement to men's preferences. However, women have been steadfast in their drive to contribute and participate equally in arts and all aspects of a citizen's role in modern society. As equality has gained not just popularity but lawful demands, doors are now open for gender to become blind on a whole. It started with Hrotsvitha and Shakespeare being among the first, but now there are countless women and men who have supported the gender-blind state that we have now entered.

## Women involvement in theater: 6th Century to 2019

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## Women involvement in theater: 6th Century to 2019

**Source 1:**

Aston, E. (1995). *An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre*. Lancaster, UK : Lancaster University

Elaine Aston is a professor in the Contemporary Arts department at Lancaster University. She has a distinguished record of publication in the field of feminism, theater, theory and performance. Ms. Aston is also a founding member of the Feminist Research Working Group of the international Federation for Theatre Research as well as the Senior Editor of the IFTR Journal *Theatre Research International*. Elaine has PhD programmes of research in the field of feminism, theater and performance which will account for credibility to support my research.

Her book ‘*An Introduction to Feminism and Theatre*’ was her second monograph. This book discusses how feminism has improved throughout the years and how it will improve even more in the years to come. This book goes on to discuss how theater studies re-frame the study of drama. It shows the study of theatre in its historical, theoretical, and practical contexts which will bring a whole new addition to my research. By using these three different point of views it will produce a ‘new’ theorized field of theater study. This will help show the importance of feminism in recent thinking about theater history.

According to Elaine Aston, theater studies examine the history of playing spaces, performance conditions, audience compositions, and the various artistic, social and political functions assigned to theater at different times. This book states that “understanding the cultural and material conditions of theater past and present is central to a feminist re-framing of theater history”. This statement raises questions that ask how and why women’s work has been ‘hidden.’ (256 Words)

**Source 2:**

Evans, S. (2014). *Women Push for Equality On and Off Stage*. New York, NY  
americantheatre.org

Suzy Evans is a New York-based entertainment and lifestyle journalist, whose writing has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *Billboard*, *Backstage*, *The Huffington Post*, *Fast Company*, *Dwell*, and several other outlets. Ms. Evans is now currently the managing editor of *American Theatre*, and she is also a regular theater contributor for *The Hollywood Reporter* and *Billboard*. Suzy Evan received her degree in English and Theater from UCLA, and she received her Masters in Journalism from Northwestern University. Because of how much experience she has it gives her the credibility to be a source.

Her article ‘*Women Push for Equality On and Off Stage*’ focuses on efforts to close theater’s gender gap. Suzy Evan’s article shows statistics that fifty-one percent of the population is female, and yet only about 24 percent of all plays produced across the country in the coming season are written by a woman, living or dead. Out of those 24 percent, only two female playwrights can land their plays on the Top 10 Most Produced Plays list for the coming season. This article gives me information on today’s era and theater ways and how they are improving everyday.

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In Suzy Evan’s article, she interviews many people to support her findings and defend her argument. One of the studies she included in her article is the study from Susan Jonas and Suzanne Bennett. This study shows that 17% of plays in the 2001-02 season were written by women. The goals of this study was to achieve equal representation on American stages by 2020 with a goal to reach gender equality which would fall on the anniversary of women’s suffrage in 2020. (280 Words)

**Source 3:**

Hornby, R., (1996). *Cross-Gender Casting*. New York, NY: The Hudson Review

Richard Hornby is a professor in the Theatre Department at University of California. Richard Hornby is an internationally-recognized expert on dramatic literature and performance. He has been a professional actor for 40 years, and has directed over 50 productions. He is also the regular theater critic for The Hudson Review. His research areas consists of Literature, History and Criticism which will account for credibility to support my research.

His book ‘Cross-Gender Casting’ shows how the roles of men and women have been used by both genders since the beginning of theater production, male actors would play women in ancient Greece, Rome, Elizabethan England and Mandarin China. Also Japanese still believe that only a man can embody the ideal of pure femininity. This shows how women's importance in early theater was not needed. Women playing men has a less respected tradition, but it goes back as far as the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This book also explains “cultural relativism” of our own time that sees acting in terms of personality. This is when an actor is supposed to play only himself or herself on stage or in film, as a continuation of the likeness exhibited in talk shows, interviews and everyday behavior. This shows the difference of how theater was portrayed when it first started and how it’s portrayed during this era. This source provides a look into the past of theater and what was practiced when it was first introduced to the public. It also gives me good information to include, so I can compare and contrast today to the past. (260 Words)

**Source 4:**

MacManus, C. (2016). *Shakespeare and Gender: the ‘woman’s part’*. London: University of Roehampton

Clare McManus is a Professor of Early Modern Literature and Theatre at the University of Roehampton, where she specializes in early modern theater. She has written about early modern women’s performance and has edited plays by John Fletcher and William Shakespeare.

Clare McManus’ article explains that in Shakespeare's time, female parts were played by male actors, while more recently, actresses have taken on some of his most famous male roles such as Hamlet and Julius Caesar. Shakespearean performance allows actors to explore desire,

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sexuality and gender roles. As much as it challenges the actor, it also challenges the audience especially when it comes to the female performer. It's becoming common in the 20th century that actresses took male parts which are called 'breeches' roles. This article shows the feminist principle that skilled female actors should have equal of access to roles. This comes from the all-female production of Julius Caesar which was directed by Phyllida Lloyd. Because of this, the production offered its performers a great range and allowed a number of roles, other than what the standard repertory allowed.

Theater starting from the years of Shakespeare allowed actors/actresses to be more open to more roles. Over time that changed, by using this source it will give me more information of how theater was when it was first introduced and how it compares to theater today. Women's roles in theater has increased, which allows for more variety in roles. This source will allow me to share how they are improving in the theater world. (255 Words)

**Source 5:**

Pao, A., (2011). *No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater*. Ann Arbor, MI : The University of Michigan Press

Angela Pao is a Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at Indiana University. Angela Pao's primary fields of interest are performance studies, intercultural theater and cross-cultural representations, and the literatures of ethnic minorities and cultures in North America and Europe. Angela Pao's book (which is based on non-traditional casting as a social and culture practice) is called 'No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater' which was published by the university of Michigan Press in 2010. Her book also received the Association for Theater in Higher Education's 2011 Outstanding Book Award. Based on her achievements and field of expertise, it gives her enough credibility to use her as a source.

Her book 'No Safe Spaces: Re-casting Race, Ethnicity, and Nationality in American Theater' shares her thoughts on non-traditional casting which is the casting of ethnic, female or disabled actors in roles where race, ethnicity, gender or physical capability are not necessary to the characters' or play's development. This book goes against the original thought of 'Non-Traditional' casting and renaming it 'Traditional' casting because this is the rule every theater production should follow. This allows diverse cast, which would most likely be a better play.

According to Angela Pao, "Scholars working in these areas have conducted complex investigations into the nature and forms of racial, ethnic, and national identity and difference, moving away from traditional conceptual and geographical boundaries." This shows the improvement from the original thinking what casting for a theater play meant and what the current casting for a theater play means now. (256 Words)

# AP<sup>®</sup> RESEARCH 2019 SCORING COMMENTARY

## Academic Paper

**Note:** Student samples are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors.

**Sample: J**

**Score: 1**

This paper scored a 1 because it has a very broad topic (women in theater over the course of 2500 years), which makes every step of the inquiry process difficult. The paper uses appropriate scholarly literature, but because the topic is so expansive, the paper does not really situate its inquiry within a specific scholarly conversation. Much of the paper is a loosely connected “search and report” process shifting from gender roles in Shakespeare (page 4) to cross-gender casting (page 8) to women in the workplace (page 11). As a result, it summarizes what is already known, rather than attempt to discover something new.

This paper was not a 0 because, while its claims are much too sweeping and not sufficiently backed up by citation (“The idea of drama first began” page 3), there is a topic of inquiry.

This paper did not score a 2 because it does not describe any sort of method. Its topic does not narrow throughout the paper. Rather, the paper’s topic shifts substantially throughout.