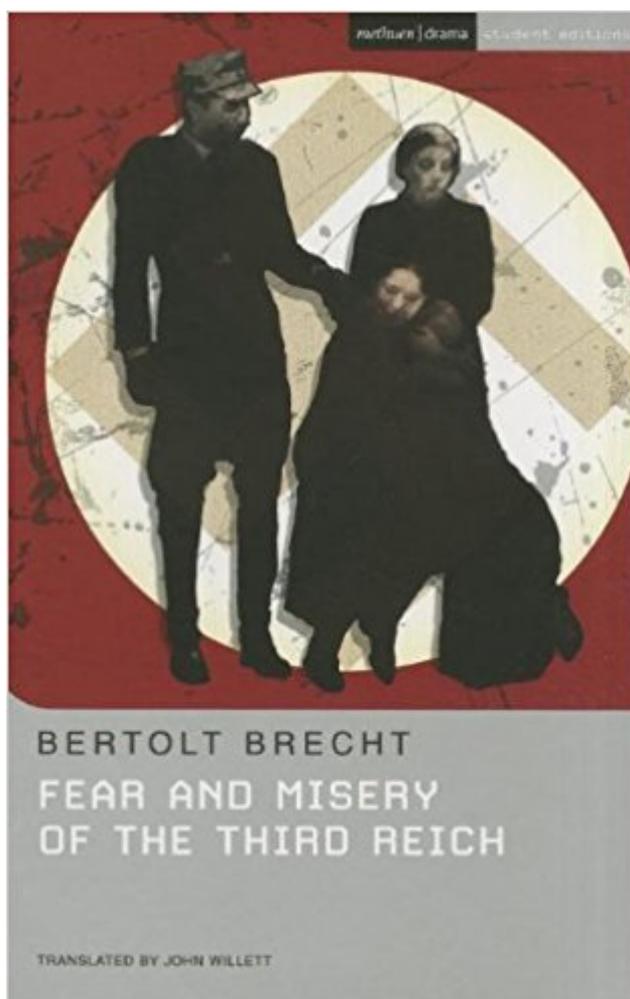


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Fear And Misery Of The Third Reich (Student Editions)



Synopsis

Twenty-four interconnected playlets describe events which took place in ordinary German households in the 1930s. They dramatize with clinical precision the suspicion and anxiety experienced by ordinary people, particularly Jewish citizens, as Hitler's power grew. Written in exile in Denmark and first staged in 1938 it was inspired in part by his recent trip to Moscow where he had been researching tasks for the anti-Nazi effort. This Student Edition features an extensive introduction and commentary and includes: a chronology of the Brecht's life and work; a synopsis of each playlet; an introduction to the context of the play; commentary on themes, characters, style and language; a review of the play in performance; notes on individual words and phrases in the text, and questions for further study.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is an extract from the fourth volume of the Methuen Complete Brecht Plays, now put out by Bloomsbury, and is undoubtedly handy. The editors and translator are the same, and there has been no change to the introduction, text or end-notes. This English version, in fact, is better than the Suhkamp German pocket-text, as it includes 5 extra (viz. discarded) scenes as an appendix. There are two very small anomalies, though: the title page describes the publishing house as 'Bloosmbury [sic] Methurn [sic] Drama' - a bad day for the proof-reader!! And, although saying on the same page that the 'original work' was entitled 'Furcht und Elend des Dritten Reiches', says on the next page

that it was 'Furcht und Elend in das Dritten Reiches [sic]': so is it Fear and Misery *of* the Third Reich (which accords with Suhrkamp), or *in* it? Before one opts for 'of', the 'in' raises an interesting point. Since Brecht asks (p. 96) whether it will be the 'misery that eventually defeats the fear', a thought strengthened by the play's defiant last word 'NO', we could see the Fear and Misery as dialectically opposed, and therefore a conflict *in* the Third Reich and not simply a reflection *of* it. For discussion! Brecht's play, of course, still reads as a razor-sharp probing of the early days of the Third Reich, and today is even more fascinating as an exploration of gestus (as BB himself comments) than politics. Essential reading.

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