

# THEATRE CODE OF ETHICS

A part of the great tradition of the theatre is a code of ethics that belongs to every worker on the legitimate stage. This code, while tacit, has been observed throughout the centuries and will continue long after us. It is not a superstition, nor a dogma, nor a ritual that is enforced by law. It is an attitude — an attitude toward your work, your associates and your audiences. It is a self-discipline that, far from robbing you of your individuality, increases your personal esteem and dignity through a cooperation and common effort that can only result in all that is meant by "good theatre".

1. THE SHOW MUST GO ON! I shall never miss a performance.
2. I shall play every performance to the best of my ability, no matter how small the role and regardless of personal problems.
3. I shall respect my audience regardless of size or of whom composed.
4. I shall never miss an entrance nor cause a curtain to be late by my failure to be ready.
5. I shall forego all social activities that interfere with rehearsals and I shall always be on time.
6. I shall never leave the theatre building or stage area until I have completed my performance. Curtain calls are a part of the show.
7. I shall remember my business is to create illusion; therefore, I shall not break the illusion by appearing in costume and make-up off-stage or outside the theatre.
8. I shall not let the comments of friends, relatives or critics change any phase of my work without proper consultation. I shall not change lines, business, lights, properties, settings, costumes or any phase of the production without consultation with and permission of the director or producer or their agents, and I shall inform all people concerned.
9. I shall always accept my director's and producer's advice in the spirit in which it is given, for they can see the production as a whole and my work from the front of the house.
10. I shall remember a production is a collective effort demanding my utmost cooperation; hence I shall forego the gratification of my ego, for the demands of the play.
11. I shall be patient and avoid temperamental outbursts, as they create tension and serve no useful aim.
12. I shall respect the play and the playwright and, remembering that "a work of art is not a work of art until it is finished", I shall not condemn a play while it is in rehearsal; furthermore, as long as I am a part of the production, I shall never "wash dirty linen in public."
13. I shall never blame others who have worked with me on the production for my own failure.
14. I shall never make caustic criticism of another artist's work from jealousy or from an urge to increase my own prestige.
15. I shall make the public I meet off-stage respect my work, and me and I shall be gracious in accepting praise or censure.
16. I shall handle stage properties and costumes with care for I know they are a part of the tools of my business and are a vital part of the physical production.
17. I shall observe backstage courtesy and deportment and I shall observe the rules of any specific theatre in which I may work.
18. I shall never lose my enthusiasm for theatre because of disappointment and failures. They are a part of the show business.
19. I shall always direct my efforts so that when I leave it, the theatre will be a better institution for my having worked in it.
20. I shall never tell fellow actors or the director what to do, and how to do it unless asked. I shall only state my opinion when asked.