

Anti-Ritual, Critical Domestication and Representational Precision in Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter*

Norman The door right opens sharply.(44) Placed in its ritual context, *The Dumb Waiter* is part of an archetypal pattern. Such a gloss gives Burkman insight into the ritual connotations of what for her are far from ambiguous concluding moments of *The Dumb Waiter*, ending the play prior to Ben shooting Gus does not make the play any less ritualized or inevitable: The absence of a shot clarifies for the audience the nature of that silent moment of recognition for Ben. The virtue of a play that ends previous to Ben's murder of Gus is that the ending tableau offers a clear visual demonstration of the play as an interactive multi-faceted ritual. Gus stumbles in. He is stripped of his jacket, waistcoat, tie, holster and revolver. In Burkman's terms, Gus and Ben are victim and victor antagonists inextricably joined to create the complete tapestry of the play. Ben turns, his revolver leveled at the door.(149) 1.