

mous plays, the history of theatre in England, and its intersections with early modern historiographical practices. In its own interdisciplinary aspirations, then, the volume questions the given methodologies for theorizing audiences and their subcultures. Identifying limitations provides a framework by which to articulate new ground in need of coverage—as Clare argues, certainly, traditional source study has had its day. Rather than as Shakespeare’s theatre or industry, is it possible to frame a methodology where we instead talk about the theatrical marketplace in which Shakespeare worked? Perhaps what is most courageous about Clare’s work then is her willingness to begin to contest using Shakespeare’s works as a principle of inclusion—and maybe someday taking him out of the equation altogether.

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***Coloring Whiteness: Acts of Critique in Black Performance.* By Faedra Chatard Carpenter. Theater: Theory/Text/Performance. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2014. Cloth \$80.00, Paper \$34.95. 312 pages.**

Faedra Chatard Carpenter’s *Coloring Whiteness: Acts of Critique in Black Performance* examines the manifold ways African American playwrights, performers, and visual artists have engaged signs and tropes of whiteness in their work to contemplate and interrogate the complexities of racial identities and conditions. Analyzing an impressive range of plays, comedy sketches, street theatre, visual art, film, and voice-over work from 1964 to 2008—a time period bookended by the passage of major civil rights legislation and the election of Barack Obama as the first African American President of the United States—Carpenter sharpens particular focus on the strategies African American cultural producers have deployed to “(1) ‘color’ whiteness; (2) deconstruct notions of white superiority, privilege, entitlement, and purity; and, (3) complicate perceptions of blackness” (29). In question throughout this rigorously researched and compellingly written study are the dominant narratives and ideologies that continue to sustain whiteness as an unmarked norm while obscuring the capaciousness of other racialized identities. For many African American artists, a practice of defamiliarizing whiteness in their work has proven vital to exposing the “fallacies associated with racial designations” (3).

To carry out her close readings of expressions and enactments of whiteness in black performance, Carpenter employs a fresh, multifaceted methodology informed by her training and experiences as a scholar-educator and professional dramaturg. Accordingly, in addition to offering cogent textual and performance analyses, she brings critical attention to the creation, development, and production of the dra-

matizations of whiteness she explores in the book. She also incorporates excerpts from original interviews that she conducted with various playwrights, directors, performers, and other cultural workers—including most of the artists whose work she examines in the text—as a way to center matters of artistic vision and intention, as well as critical and audience reception in her analysis. The integration of critical and creative inquiry throughout *Coloring Whiteness* is among the book's most exemplary and distinguishing features. In embracing what she cites as a “dramaturgical approach,” Carpenter opens crucial space to attend carefully to what each of her case studies is *doing* in both theory and practice.

Organized chronologically, the book's five chapters and coda function somewhat independently. Across each, Carpenter interrogates the meanings and messages of whiteness reflected in the examples of expressive art she considers. She also elaborates on the critical concepts she develops—*tinted whiteface*, *optic whiteface*, *nonconforming whiteface*, *naturalized whiteface*, *linguistic whiteface*, and *presumed aural whiteness*—to help describe, identify, and index “some of the ways whiteness can be presented, interpreted, and applied in African American cultural production” (23). Chapter one, for example, turns attention to Douglas Turner Ward's *A Day of Absence* (1965) to consider how, by calling for the use of “optic whiteface”—that is, whiteface that is “opaque, paintlike, and bright white” (24)—in the one-act play and its often forgotten 1967 television presentation, Ward brings into relief the constructed nature of whiteness, thereby destabilizing its hegemony.

Carpenter's interrogations of tropes of whiteness in theatrical texts continue in chapter two. Reading playwright Lydia Diamond's 2005 stage adaptation of Toni Morrison's seminal novel *The Bluest Eye* (1970), the chapter specifically takes up the strategies Diamond employs to reinvigorate some of the novel's meditations on the ramifications of privileging and prioritizing whiteness, including the playwright's deliberateness in selecting plotlines and passages to dramatize. Carpenter mostly supplies rich dramaturgical insights about the process of theatrical adaptation in the chapter. She also offers distinctive interpretations of Diamond's play and Morrison's novel that will surely prove illuminating for admirers of *The Bluest Eye*.

Carpenter moves away from theatrical texts to explore enactments of whiteness in other performative mediums in chapters three, four, and five. Spotlighting the performance work of visual artist Danny Tisdale and the bodily transformations of pop artist Michael Jackson, chapter three considers the ways presentations of “naturalized whiteface”—that is, “the intentional process of ‘whitening up’ through artistic intervention, elaborate makeup, plastic surgery, or medical technology” (24)—can serve as a means to critique the valuing of whiteness socially and economically and to reveal the malleability of racial categories. Chapter four calls attention to the ways Dave Chappelle engages with whiteness in his sketch comedy show, *Chappelle's Show*, to wrestle with notions of “mixedness” and to challenge “rigid notions of biologically based racial absolutes” (163). While several

books have critically examined *Chappelle's Show's* disruptions of dominant racial narratives and tropes in recent years, including Michele Elam's superb *The Souls of Mixed Folk: Race, Politics, and Aesthetics in the New Millennium* (Stanford University Press, 2011), Carpenter's observations about the series are particularly astute. The chapter's discussion of Chappelle's "Clayton Bigsby" and "The Racial Draft" sketches are some of the book's most compelling, in fact, offering incisive commentary on the knottiness of new millennial mixed-race discourse and racial politics. Carpenter follows it up with a generative exploration of the ways "audiences imagine whiteness in the aural performances of African Americans" in chapter five (28).

Carpenter analyzes interdisciplinary artist Jefferson Pinder's short film *Afro-Cosmonaut/Alien (White Noise)* (2008) in the final pages of *Coloring Whiteness*; a still from the video also graces the book's cover. Capturing Pinder in the process of "whiting up," the work provides a fitting beginning and end to Carpenter's comprehensive examination of expressions of whiteness in black performance. In analyzing the aesthetic practices of Pinder, Carpenter squarely positions *Coloring Whiteness* within a growing body of scholarship that bears witness to the significance of black performance as a fecund site of inquiry. Concomitantly, she vitally contributes to conversations in a number of fields—theatre, performance, literary, critical race, and cultural studies, among others—that will no doubt find the book an invaluable resource for thinking through questions of race and performance in the twenty-first century.

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***Animal Acts: Performing Species Today.* Edited by Una Chaudhuri and Holly Hughes. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2014. Hardcover \$90.00, Paper \$36.00, 246 pages.**

In *Animal Acts: Performing Species Today*, editors Una Chaudhuri and Holly Hughes have pooled their substantial academic, artistic, and editing experience to gather eleven performance texts that engage with the proliferating interdisciplinary field of animal studies. Ten of the performances were presented between 2004-2013. Rachel Rosenthal's *The Others* (1984) ends the collection as an invaluable counterpoint. Developed prior to the millennial "animal turn" in critical theory, it is the only piece to utilize the presence of live animals on stage. This fact points to the extent to which theatrical animals and animality are, in fact, produced via the discourse and semiotics of the stage. Major figures from animal studies provide