

## **IPTD dissertations completed, 2010-20**

**2020**

**Markenson, Tova**

### **Entrance Forbidden to the Yiddish Theatres: Performance, Prostitution, and Protest in Buenos Aires (1900-1930)**

The Yiddish theatres in Buenos Aires had a bad reputation during the early twentieth century. According to male Yiddish theatregoers, Jewish prostitutes and pimps regularly attended Yiddish plays. Jewish men often claimed that prostitutes' "unrefined" aesthetic tastes depreciated Yiddish theatre repertoire. My dissertation revises the historical record. I apply feminist historical methods to Yiddish theatre ephemera and Jewish migration documents from archival collections in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, Israel, and the United States to show how dominant cultural assumptions impacted Jewish immigrant performances of gender and sexuality in Buenos Aires. Through challenging claims that Jewish pimps financed the Argentinean Yiddish theatres and preferred "trashy" repertoire, this project illuminates the Argentine Yiddish theatre's contributions to the transnational avant-gardes and global histories of Jewish migration.

**2019**

**Kelly, Lisa**

### **Constructing Celebrity: Strategies of Nineteenth Century British Actresses to Enhance Their Image and Social Status**

Celebrity, reputation, and identity were complex issues for nineteenth-century British actresses. This dissertation examines how actresses responded to, integrated, and defied gender norms and social structures as they performed "authentic" identities for consuming publics. I investigate how actresses participated in charity events and bazaars, autobiographical writing, and advertising campaigns in order to rehabilitate and normalize their reputations and to achieve social mobility and acceptance.

I document examples, patterns, and trends of actresses participating in charity events to raise money for social causes over the course of the nineteenth century to show how liveness and proximity to fame drew middle- and upper-class consumers and event organizers to interact with actresses outside of the theatre and created opportunities for actresses to enhance their reputations and use their celebrity to increase the value of goods being sold or personal moments of interaction at events. I examine how actresses controlled the narratives of their lives through their autobiographical writing; responding to their public reputations and creating public identities in which they could situate themselves as representatives of model femininity. I also close read examples of advertisements featuring actresses that appeared in nineteenth-century popular periodicals geared towards women to demonstrate how the images and testimonials of actresses could increase demand for consumer products. The way actresses participated in each of these identity-forming domains also impacted their ability to navigate the other domains more successfully.

In this dissertation I show how actresses reconfigured and capitalized on the concepts of private and public life. I parse how the ideas of reputation and celebrity are used intentionally by actresses to create acceptable public identities and by event organizers and advertisers to increase the value of interactions with actresses and the consumer products they endorse.

**Overbeke, Grace**

**The Forgotten Pioneer: Jean Carroll and the Jewish Female Origins of Stand-up Comedy**

Although Jewish studies, sociology, and performance studies texts abound with productive scholarship on Jewish men and their contributions to comedy in the mid-century United States, there is remarkably scant attention devoted to the equally significant contributions of their female counterparts. Nowhere is that bias clearer than the peculiar case of Jean Carroll—the first Jewish female stand-up comedian, whose name is typically omitted from both histories of comedy and Jewish-American performance writ large. Using evidence from the unpublished archive of Jean Carroll’s scrapbook, documentary footage, and television clips, as well as three kinds of periodicals (Jewish, mainstream, and industry), I have drawn on archival and ethnographic research models to argue that both Carroll’s groundbreaking success and her historiographic erasure reveal the limits of tolerance in the post-WWII United States.

The first chapter functions in part as the most thorough biographical work on Jean Carroll to date, while also making the case that from its inception, stand-up comedy was a forum to rehearse the same subversively autonomous principles that pioneers like Jean Carroll enacted in their own lives. It examines her background as a Jewish child who immigrated to the United States amidst intense xenophobic sentiment (legislated through policies like the Johnson-Reed Act of 1924); and her attempts to wrest control from her abusive father by becoming the family bread-winner, joining the variety circuit at age eight.

The next section builds on this foundation, arguing that although Carroll did not characterize it as such, her career in stand-up comedy was nonetheless a feminist intervention against Jewish male discourse about Jewish mothers and wives as vulgar and demanding. By invoking but then subverting this stereotype with her physical beauty and persona, Carroll was able to capitalize on it while also humanizing it for mainstream audiences. This chapter also examines the entertainment industry’s enduring institutional barriers to being both caregiver and comedian. In a sense, these barriers ended Carroll’s career, as critics found new ‘pioneers’ in rising stand-ups like Phyllis Diller and Joan Rivers.

The third chapter looks at Jean Carroll’s work as a reflection of the complex negotiation of assimilation and difference that American Jews were enacting after World War II. This chapter draws heavily on sociological texts to argue that the shift towards multiculturalism in the mid-1960s was reflected in Carroll’s changing engagement with Jewishness in her act. She still eschewed overtly Jewish content, using instead what Henry Bial would call ‘double-coded’ references to Jewish culture and practices.

However, she became markedly more involved in benefit performances for Jewish organizations, making her Jewishness a cause to champion, not a character to perform.

The final section examines Carroll's far-reaching impact on stand-up comedy. It gives particular focus to Carroll's impact on women stand-up comics. I use testimonies by contemporary comedians (such as Lily Tomlin and Joy Behar) who claim her as an influence, as well as performance analysis of live shows by Jewish female stand-up comics, many of whom continue to use the style of 'confidante comedy' and respond to the same negative stereotypes of Jewish women that Carroll addressed in her work. This observation reveals that while Carroll may be overlooked by most publications, her legacy lives in this alternate archive of women standing up and speaking out.

**Swanson, Amy**

### **(II)legible Bodies: Gender, Sexuality, and Contemporary Dance in Senegal**

This dissertation elucidates the contemporary dance studio and stage in twenty-first century Senegal as privileged sites of knowledge production about gender and sexuality. Entangled within local and global dance lineages, funding structures, and modes of circulation, contemporary choreographers perform their bodies in ways that challenge predominant narratives, both those imagined globally and those locally accepted, about gender and sexuality as they intersect with blackness, Africanness, and Islam. This project examines pedagogical models and select performances by a number of artists at the forefront of contemporary dance in Senegal, including Germaine Acogny and her *École des Sables*, *Andréya Ouamba*, and *Fatou Cissé* among others. It follows a recent trend by contemporary choreographers to center women, gender fluidity, and dissident sexuality in their work against a backdrop of increasing sexual regulation in the public sphere. The project draws connections between the artists' present-day pedagogy and choreography and a broad reorientation away from ethnocentric dance models and towards new forms of internationalization in the 1970s-1980s. I argue that the local/global entanglement and experimentations with gender and sexuality are mutually constitutive characteristics of contemporary dance in Senegal. Contemporary choreographers adhere to a philosophy of *danser autrement*, or dancing otherwise, as they offer performances that play with the boundaries of gender and sexual legibility. Choreographers tactfully negotiate the realities of increased sexual regulation and neoliberalism in Senegal just as they negotiate the demands placed upon their racially marked bodies on international stages to create space for alternative ways of being on the stage and in the world. Primarily based on ethnographic research, my findings draw from approximately eighty interviews with artists and arts administrators, participant-observation in workshops, observations during rehearsals and performances, and performance reviews, programs, and other materials collected from public and private archives in Senegal and France. This project deploys theories of African postcolonial cultural production and theories of gender and sexuality deriving from the African continent to understand the potentiality of performances that challenge existing gender and sexual frameworks, recuperate indigenous performatives, and imagine alternatives. This project seeks to expand understandings of the transnational circulation of concert dance, the significance of the

multiple meaning-making capacity of contemporary dance, and the ways in which gender and sexuality are imagined in Senegal outside of dominant culture.

**2018**

**Hinds-Bond, Jessica**

**Radical Remakes: Confronting Russia's Literary Heritage on the Post-Soviet Russian Stage**

This dissertation examines dramatic and theatrical remakes of the Russian literary canon in post-Soviet and contemporary Russian playwriting. Remakes are provocative, postmodern engagements with classic texts. They not only rewrite the canonical texts but also problematize their extratextual legacy as cultural objects with accumulated meanings, interpretations, and preexisting histories of adaptation.

I conduct careful and contextualized analysis of eight play texts (dating from 1994 to 2013) and their most significant theatrical productions to understand how young Russians empower themselves through playwriting, rewrite their literary canon, and critique and contend with aspects of contemporary Russian life, from rigidifying gender norms to histories of trauma and war. My examination moves forward chronologically as it moves outward from plays that take on single source texts to those that take on the canon as a whole. Chapters 1 and 2 examine remakes of the novels *Oblomov* and *Anna Karenina*, respectively. Chapter 3 considers remakes of two novellas from a single author, Nikolai Gogol. Chapter 4, finally, investigates two plays that remake famous nineteenth-century plays, works that were already written for the stage. While the early chapters focus on how individual protagonists have been reimagined by contemporary playwrights, my later chapters turn to the question of the utility of and inherent meaning in the canon at large.

I argue that these playwrights deconstruct canonical texts to lay claim to Russia's literary heritage while also asserting the right to make meaning in a post-Soviet space. Moreover, in bringing these works to the stage, the playwrights lay the canonical texts and their own remakes bare for an ongoing process of meaning making, one that takes place through the encounter with the audience. If the Russian literary canon is inherently closed, its prescribed interpretations a product of the long Soviet years in which literature was coopted for its socializing and Sovietizing purposes, then the stage, in which meaning is never fixed, offers the canon its best possible antidote: in this site of living confrontation, these contemporary remakes wrench the canonical texts and the canon itself wide open.

**Hughes, Bethany**

**Playing Indian on Stage 1829-1924**

This dissertation explores performance as a mechanism of racialization and politicization of Native Americans in the United States. I analyze performances of Indians on theatrical stages to define how an embodied repertoire of visual, aural, and kinetic markers, what I call the *Stage Indian*, became codified and circulated within popular theatrical

performance. I discuss Edwin Forrest's 1829 performance of the title role in *Metamora; or, The Last of the Wampanoag* to show how his claims to authenticity and his depiction of Native American identity worked to codify an Indian character in American theatre. *Buffalo Bill's Wild West* performance in 1886-1887 of *The Drama of Civilization* develops the *Stage Indian* further by modifying it based on the Native American performers it employed in the Indian roles and the mythic narrative of American progress it tells. The career of Will Rogers illustrates the persistence and power of the *Stage Indian* by showing an opposite example, a Native American who, though continually claiming Cherokee identity, was repeatedly and insistently read as white. I further explore the construction of the Indian within the United States by analyzing the creation and implementation of two landmark federal Indian laws. The 1830 Indian Removal Act and a resultant treaty, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, demonstrate the narrow political and racial criteria the U.S. government expected from Indians as well as how Native American self-conception challenged those expectations. The 1887 General Allotment Act and records of allotment registration show how race and politics are twin foundations of Indian identity in the United States. Through my analyses of aesthetic and legal performances of Indianness I contribute to conversations of racialized performance in the United States, Native American identity, and the performativity of the law.

**Hunter, E.B.**

### **Enactive Spectatorship in Contemporary Productions of Shakespeare**

People want to be part of well-known, culturally significant stories, but not necessarily as actors. An important but overlooked dimension of spectatorship is participating meaningfully in a performed canonical story as an audience member, aware of one's position as such and also performing as the audience. Existing theory does not explain productions that foreground the relationship between participation and a purported authenticity to a canonical work. To date, meaningful participation has been measured by the audience's ability to affect a given story's outcome. But an audience who could change the narrative of a staged canonical text would disrupt its authenticity. *Macbeth* is not Shakespeare's *Macbeth* if the audience can save Banquo. So how can a production offer meaningful interactivity and still be authentic to a canonical work?

This dissertation maps a new critical model the author calls "enactive spectatorship." By analyzing four contemporary Shakespearean productions that are interactive and assert authenticity, the author demonstrates how specific, consistent production choices devalue narrative impact as legitimate participation and replace this currency with the production's own reward system, thereby reconfiguring what "counts" as meaningful. The rewards that drive this system incentivize audience members to enact a recognizable role, the function of which is to endorse the production as authentic. This endorsement in turn serves to affirm the producers' vision for the role of theatre in the twenty-first century.

This dissertation contributes to theatre studies by exposing the hidden economies that drive scripted events and by identifying a phenomenon that has long been part of the human response to performed stories. The project outlines four discrete but mutually

informing categories of production choice, from which practitioners will be able to derive a practical guide book. And as enactive spectatorship can be seen in scenarios from Shakespeare's plays to Disney theme parks, critical theorists who consider participation in a range of contexts may find this lens helpful for revealing the agendas that often underlie interactive productions and the reward systems producers use to promote audience compliance.

**Lasko, James**

**Epic Fail: A Field Guide to Failure and the Art of Civic Engagement**

My dissertation is an autoethnography, tracking my experience creating the *Great Chicago Fire Festival* for and with the City of Chicago. The production was a nearly unprecedented collaboration between an arts organization and a major municipality. It involved 7 different city agencies and 3 federal departments; more than 6000 city residents assisted its construction and it drew over 50,000 spectators for its finale performance. As an historic document, I draw upon primary sources to track and reflect upon my personal experience balancing the needs of the many stakeholders. Special focus is given to the ways that the practical constraints imposed by our government partners presented themselves over time and how those forces and our responses to them ultimately exerted a powerful influence on the shape of the final production. In explaining the choices and how and why they were made, a literary apology takes form that illuminates the moral and aesthetic judgements upon which the festival was built.

**Mercer, Elliot Gordon**

**Moving Archives and Choreographic Afterlives: Legacy Practice in American Postmodern Dance**

Through an engagement with the work of American postmodern choreographers Anna Halprin, Yvonne Rainer, and Laura Dean, I expose choreographic legacy as an ongoing process of continually rewriting dance history. Halprin, Rainer, and Dean's models for choreographic transmission draw from the legacy methods of repertoire, reconstruction, and reperformance, while simultaneously proposing a new methodology that intentionally foregrounds the experience of loss and actively exposes historical layering. Anna Halprin's use of dance scoring in the development and evolution of *Parades and Changes* (1965) presents a model for repurposing existing creative material in the creation of new performance works, a process of choreographic spolia that exposes Halprin's shifting aesthetic, philosophical, and socio-political intentions in each instance of the dance's reiteration. Similarly working to continuously recontextualize her work, Yvonne Rainer has variously employed and deployed her 1966 work *Trio A* as a choreographic fraction or insertable in her composite works and lecture-demonstrations, creating reflexive juxtapositions that elucidate her career intention of challenging spectatorship. Rather than carrying her dance works into the future, Laura Dean advances a notion of choreography as something to eventually be destroyed or let go, actively foreclosing the possibility of restaging her work following her choice to authorially disengage from the process of choreographic transmission. Halprin, Rainer, and Dean engage experimental processes for structuring performance, utilize unique practices for

representing dances as works on paper, and undertake projects of archive formation in ways that intentionally direct and define discourse on their compositional strategies, choreographic output, and philosophical interventions in dance. These practices propose new relationships between the individual artist and the production of cultural memory, intentionally reshaping the experience, understanding, and embodiment of dance history.

**2017**

**Beck, Lauren R.**

**Ototheatre: Learning to Listen and Perform in Sonically Augmented Spaces**

This dissertation explores a form of performance I call “ototheatre,” which is a mobile and participatory audience experience executed with portable sound technology. Ototheatre is an emergent artistic form that sits at a convergence of contemporary technologies and audience consumption habits. Case studies, including smartphone applications and new theatrical works incorporating novel uses of sound technology, reveal the antecedents and characteristics of this form of theatre. I explore the methods by which these works create intimate, interactive theatrical experiences that extend modes of audience experience.

Podcasts are a new media practice that have multiple theatrical antecedents and otheatrical potential. I analyze a particularly theatrical podcast, choreographer Hofesh Shechter’s *Everyday Moments*, to show new possibilities for individual modes of performance scripted by podcast artists for solo listening. I trace a genealogy that includes the *théâtrophone*, radio drama, and the downloadable podcast to demonstrate how the recorded voice has long been creating remote theatrical experiences for audiences through the use of mediatized sound technology. While radio has been called a “theatre of the mind,” I argue that podcasts can create an intimate, post-humanistic theatre of the body.

I examine artistic sound works that are related to the audio tour to explore ways of mapping space with sound. The case studies I have chosen attempt to help participants to see hidden social, historical, or spatial layers of an unfamiliar site. My research explores how audio walks allow users to create mental maps of memory, history, and experience that engage the user with a place. I argue that sound augments the mapped space for listeners, transporting them into the space rather than placing them outside as observers. I analyze two theatrical audio “tours.” The first, *As If It Were the Last Time* by Circumstance, pulls the participant into the experience of a busy New York street. The second, *Sights* by Trickster p, guides participants around the city of Bern to telephone booths where they listen to site-responsive stories from people who are blind. I then conduct an analysis of my own sound art project, a sonic map of London that uses binaural recordings to guide listeners through my memories of discovering London by foot and underground train in order to push the experience of the audio tour to a virtual realm. I connect all three case studies by focusing on the power of sound technology to help participants create affective maps of urban spaces.

An audio drama/fitness application called *Zombies, Run!* uses mobile sound technologies to create embodied role play for audiences. In a survey of *Zombies, Run!* fans, I found that users shifted their interpretations of the work based on how they wished to engage with it, showing how participants in sound-based theatre individualize their experiences as audience members based on how they synthesize prior knowledge of related media forms. I posit a new mode of theatre performance made possible through a combination of open and serial narrative, embodied and individualized engagement through sound, and easily distributed fan content through internet forums.

I connect the fields of sound studies to theatre studies, and I outline the individual, embodied, and interactive ways that theatre can engage audiences through sound-based technologies.

### **Brandes, Dawn Tracey**

#### **Puppet Life and the Phenomenology of Consciousness**

This dissertation considers how best to define the imagined “life” of the puppet, and how that “life” offers new meaning to narrative puppet productions. In my first chapter, begin with the observation that puppeteers, scholars, and audiences often describe the puppet as an object that appears to “have life,” and I argue that puppet “life” can be best understood in terms of phenomenological consciousness. Following the definition of consciousness offered by the father of phenomenology, Edmund Husserl, I suggest that a puppet appears to be “alive” when it can be imagined to have a consciousness that is embodied and relational: embodied, because the puppet’s imagined consciousness can not be conceived as separate from its puppet body, and relational, because the puppet’s consciousness reveals itself in the ways the puppet interacts with and gives meaning to the world around it.

In the subsequent three chapters, I investigate how this phenomenological understanding of puppet “life” might open up a conversation between the philosophical understanding of phenomenological consciousness and the narratives performed in the puppet theatre. In each chapter, I explore one of puppetry scholar Steve Tillis’s three characteristics of puppet life – design, movement, and speech – alongside theories of phenomenological consciousness espoused by Husserl’s successors: Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Emmanuel Levinas. Each chapter considers the intersection of phenomenological consciousness and puppet “life” as it finds expression in one contemporary puppet performance: Neville Tranter’s *The Seven Deadly Sins*, Handspring Puppet Company’s *Or You Could Kiss Me*, and Redmoon Theater’s *The Cabinet*.

### **Leopold, Elizabeth Fischel**

#### **Commodifying Choreography: The Sale, Licensing, and Appraisal of Concert Dance Repertory**

This dissertation seeks to explain the twenty-first century commercialization of American concert dance through sale, licensing, and monetary valuation. These exchanges and valuation practices occur, in complex and contradictory ways, through government,

private sector, and nonprofit processes – including tax regulation, estate planning, insurance coverage, private and public sales, museum acquisition, and dance repertory licensing practices. To this end, a merging of performance and economic theory with practical tools from various creative industries helps to describe and define a *choreographic commodity*. As the U.S concert dance field shifted from choreographer-centered companies to a repertory model in the later half of the twentieth century, dance licensing practices grew alongside performative museum acquisitions and made way for the emergence of a *choreographic commodity* and the subsequent monetary valuation of concert dance works. I argue that the *choreographic commodity* refers to classed understandings of movement possibility and the body itself, with its monetary value derived from complicated, historical relationships to the commercial exchange of artworks in adjacent disciplines. The actions of private sector and government agencies police the possibility for choreographic value and imbue the *choreographic commodity* with classed ideologies that perpetuate the failing divide between the nonprofit sector and the commercial marketplace. Choreographer William Forsythe's 1987 ballet, *In the Middle, Somewhat Elevated*, is the central case study of this research, revealing how the practice of licensing encounters intense complexity, even resistance, from within the dance studio. Ethnographic retellings of the remounting process illuminate questions of authorship, ownership, bodily habitus, and embodied archives, bringing this research to a focus on the actual, physical bodies of choreography's commodity state. Through this dissertation research, concert dance choreography is revealed as a commercial market entity outside of the perceived safety of an isolated nonprofit sector, shaped by its surroundings and its past, and evolving to respond to and survive within an increasingly commodified landscape.

**Murfin, Ira S.**

**Talk Performance: Extemporaneous Speech, Artistic Discipline, and Media in the Post-1960s American Avant-garde**

This dissertation narrates the circulation and institutionalization of an emergent category of *talk performance* within the late-twentieth century US avant-garde through the career trajectories of three artists from disparate disciplinary backgrounds working in and around the 1970s: theatrical monologist Spalding Gray, poet David Antin, and dance artist and filmmaker Yvonne Rainer. All established themselves through more obviously discipline-coherent work before turning to extemporaneous *talk* as a performance strategy within the shifting critical and cultural environments of post-1960s avant-gardes. Undertaking a comparative study collecting these practices under the label *talk performance*, this project uncovers the processes by which these artists both resisted and relied upon disciplinary structures, and the media technologies and formats that attend those structures, to configure their work within particular arts discourses. Talk performance becomes a provocative site for understanding how minimalist interventions into formal disciplinary categories helped define the reapportionment of the overall art situation in the aftermath of the 1960s along lines of rhetorical and institutional distinction that still persist.

Employing newly available multimedia archives and a historiographic approach to the various narrow disciplinary accounts of the late-twentieth-century American avant-garde that have become standard, this project recuperates traces of an unacknowledged, interdisciplinary set of talk performance practices. Premised on their status as ephemeral, embodied, and collectively negotiated, the practices of these three artists actually prove to be deeply entwined with forms of media other than live performance, as found material on which extemporaneous performance is scaffolded, as means to represent and circulate extemporaneous talk, or as an editorial model for the role that talk plays in realizing a performance. In each case, the aesthetic and procedural tendencies these artists established went on to circulate in or be adapted to secondary media formats that drew on traditional models of authorship to establish their reputations. Paradoxically, these works then tend to circulate more widely and even enter the mainstream based on the authenticating power of their embedded extemporaneity and the status bestowed by their apparent disciplinary resistance. *Talk Performance* articulates a performance history that understands arts disciplines as contingent categories determined by historical situation, critical intervention, and material possibility, upon which the creative and intellectual exigencies of performance practice, scholarship, and criticism are nonetheless built.

**Rodman, Tara**

**Altered Belonging: The Transnational Modern Dance of Itō Michio**

This dissertation, “Altered Belonging: The Transnational Modern Dance of Itō Michio,” argues that Itō forged an artistic and social identity out of the very categories of racial and national difference typically used to exclude Japanese from Euro-American society. The strategies he employed provide a paradigm for how performing bodies marked as foreign claim freedom of mobility and a sense of belonging in their adopted communities. Addressing the full span of his career across five decades of performance in Europe, the U.S., and Japan, this dissertation restores the historic and analytic relationships among geographically distinct archives. By uncovering the linkages between his eurythmics training in Hellerau, Germany, his modernist collaborations in London, his nearly three decades dancing in New York and Los Angeles, and his Pan-Asianist activities under Japan’s wartime empire, I recover, for instance, how Itō’s experience of New York stage Orientalism later shadows his Pan-Asianist planned performances for Imperial Japan, and how the universalist ideals of his Hellerau training resurfaced as an ideology of community dance in Los Angeles. The trans-oceanic linkages thus rendered legible are relevant for understanding not only Itō’s career but also the integrated nature of twentieth-century modernism and the strategies by which modern artists refashioned alterity into a basis for creative freedom and freedom of movement.

**2016**

**Bean, Christine**

**Sticky Performances: Food, Meaning, and Embodied Spectatorship in 20th and 21st Century America**

Performances over the past century in the United States evidence an obsession with the notion of “reality”. What was before the late nineteenth century an anomaly (the aesthetic strategy attempting to make what was clearly a performance seem somehow like it was not) has become a standard to which almost all art is now measured, regardless of whether it aspires to be “realist”. This dissertation examines food in performance as one aspect of that trajectory in order to understand the impact that using viscerally “real” materials has had on spectatorship, and artists and creators’ relationship to spectators. Far from being a tangential element, I argue that food in performance showcases the way an ever-increasing priority on “real stuff” complicates spectatorship by offering sensual and personal provocations alongside more metonymic, cultural associations. In this way, the project takes seriously the range of experiences found in performed moments with food (from pleasure to revulsion to anxiety), drawing attention to embodiment and affect in spectating. I argue that sensual interruptions have increased as experimentations with reality deepen and expand across performance genres in the 20th and 21st century. My case studies range from realist theatre like Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, feminist performances like Karen Finley's *Shut Up and Love Me*, reality television like Anthony Bourdain's *No Reservations*, and theatrical-culinary hybrids like Rick Bayless in *Cascabel*, which I critically analyze through a combined archival and ethnographic approach. Taken together, this study illuminates both the consequences of including sensually provocative materials in performance, and the strategies artists have deployed to manage the effects of food as an unruly substance.

**Geigner, Megan**

**Staging Chicago's Immigrants: Immigrant Discourse, Civic Performance, and Hyphenated Identity**

This dissertation investigates how Irish, Polish, and Italian immigrant communities used public performances to speak back to national anti-immigrant discourse in Chicago between 1890 and 1920. Amidst negative newspaper articles, restrictive immigration laws, and caricatured stage performances that portrayed non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants as incapable of becoming Americans, I argue that immigrant parades, exhibitions, festivals, and theatre practices developed the recognizable and acceptable category of the ethnic-American. These types of civic performances affected both the members of immigrant communities and those who did not identify as immigrants. For members of diverse immigrant communities, these performances shaped the symbols, narratives, and characteristics that would be included in unified Irish-, Polish-, and Italian-American identity. For native-born audiences, the performances provided evidence that immigrants could be patriotic Americans who enriched the city's culture. Case studies include St. Patrick's Day, Polish Constitution Day, and Columbus Day parades; the groups' exhibits (or lack thereof) at the World's Columbian Exposition; erection of statues in Chicago parks; feste (processions in honor of saints); feiseanna (Irish cultural festivals); parish drama clubs; and rallies for World War I. Complicating earlier arguments about white ethnics becoming Americans by engaging in racism, I show how these groups made claims to Americanness not by assimilating into white, Protestant, Anglo culture, but by embracing and performing their liminal racial categories and their Catholicism, performing their ethnicity's historical contribution to the United States, and

demonstrating how their homeland and religious traditions aligned with American civic values. Using theories of utopian performance, cultural and diasporic identity, critical race, and embodiment, I reconsider the genealogy of American acceptance of new immigrants, understandings of early twentieth-century assimilation, and the role of the arts—specifically theatre and performance—in creating acceptable, ethnic-American, hyphenated identity.

2015

**Cox, Jordana**

**Propaganda for Democracy: Dialogue and Dissemination in the Federal Theatre Project's Living Newspapers, 1936-39**

Devised by theatre artists and journalists, and full of statistics, facts, and quotes, the U.S. Federal Theatre Project's (1935-9) "Living Newspapers" adapted news conventions to dramatize social issues. My dissertation shows how these plays theorized democratic participation by addressing a growing tension between two standards of civic discourse: the frank, face-to-face dialogue symbolized by the town hall and the one-way, mass-mediated dissemination represented by the newsreel, loudspeaker, and motion picture.

I identify and analyze this tension in three conventions that recur across the genre. The first is the conjunction of performance duration and temporalities of the print newspaper. The second is the interaction of an omniscient loudspeaker and an inquisitive "Little Man." The third is a juxtaposition of moving bodies and projections of the printed word. Whether by highlighting the flatness of a printed, founding document, making a humble protagonist "talk back" to a loudspeaker, or manipulating the temporality of a news story, Living Newspapers uniquely imagined civic engagement for mass democracy.

My methods and interventions engage, primarily, theatre history and communication studies. I use scripts, photos, design sketches, promotional materials and other primary documents to reconstruct conventions in performance and reception. Engaging theatre semiotics and reception analysis, I bring into conversation canonical debates in democratic theory and motifs of civic engagement developed and revised in the theatre. To American theatre history, I add that the dialogue-dissemination divide was a constitutive tension in the composition and reception of the FTP's Living Newspapers. My contributions to communication studies are two-fold: first, I show how a poetics of liveness, comprising shared time, interactivity, and embodied texts, scaffolds histories and theories of democratic dialogue; second, I offer these histories and theories a generative democratic experiment – one that addressed a still persuasive opposition in American public culture.

**Della Gatta, Carla**

**Shakespeare & Latinidad: The Staging of Intracultural Theatre**

This dissertation examines Latino-themed Shakespearean productions in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, focusing on the dramaturgical strategies and performance analytics for reading cultural-linguistic divide. I address ethnic adaptations within the United States in an effort to read contemporary American performance in light of a changing demographic.

This study combines analyses of live performances, dramatic texts, films, and interviews. Part One of the dissertation is comprised of two chapters of an original theatre history of Latino-themed productions, adaptations, and appropriations of Shakespearean plays.

Chapter One details the origins of Latino Shakespeares from 1957 with Joseph Papp's work at the Public Theater and the premiere of *West Side Story* on Broadway, uniting two parallel theatrical histories of Latinoizing Shakespeare and the physical spaces that gave way to their intersection. Chapter Two offers snapshots of various productions to illustrate the breadth of Latino Shakespeares in the twenty-first century. Here I argue that funding limitations greatly affect programming, as does the concept of fatalismo which affects a high number of *Romeo and Juliet* productions and adaptations.

Part Two charts the influence of *West Side Story*, the most dominant and provocative depiction of Latinos in American theatre history. Chapter Three reads *West Side Story* through Whiteness Studies and Masculinity Studies and addresses how the musical adaptation maps onto productions of *Romeo and Juliet* today. Chapter Four defines "The *West Side Story* Effect," or the layering of cultural-linguistic division onto Shakespearean plays that have no such division.

Chapter Five provides a close reading of two productions that invoke Latino themes of indigeneity and memory and it addresses the politics of the rehearsal room.

**Lodewyck, Laura**

**Performance, War, and Homecoming: Transformation in Contemporary American Theatre with Veterans**

This dissertation examines the socially transformative potential of contemporary theatre projects that engage the experiences of military service members and families. I argue such theatrical performances can communicate the effects of exposure to physical and psychological violence, including sexual trauma, on military service members and their families. I contend that performances engage participants productively on a social level by leveraging familiar Western theatrical tropes such as "catharsis," which helps provide manageable, socially acceptable ways to publicly discuss emotionally intense and stigmatized topics. I consider how two programs, *Theater of War* and *The Telling Project*, use theatre's status as an interactive site of community in order to raise awareness on issues particular to wartime, support military veterans, families, and service members, and address civilians' purported lack of understanding of military experiences. I use audience observations, personal interviews, and post-show surveys to collect information on how participants feel that they have been affected by the theatrical event. In so doing, this dissertation begins a theorization of a typology of transformation by addressing the intersection of live theatrical performance and the "telling" or sharing of traumatic memories.

2014

**Calder, David**

**Visible Machinery: Street Theatre and Industrial Space in Contemporary France**

Faced with a global economy over which they have little direct control, municipal governments increasingly rely on a vibrant cultural scene to attract tourists, residents, and capital and call upon artists to create surplus value and jobs. I argue that the creative economy amounts to a neoliberal re-scripting of the relationship among art, work, and space. Such a re-scripting is underway in cities and towns throughout the de-industrializing global North. How this re-scripting occurs is the first question that propels this dissertation. The second is how theatre companies attempt (or merely claim) to commemorate industrial heritage while participating in the creative economy. I address these questions by examining the conversion of three French industrial sites into centers of street theatre production. The three street theatre companies at the heart of my project - Nantes' La Machine, Corbigny's Metalovoice, and Villeurbanne's KomplexKapharnaum -- use their factory spaces to create machine-centric spectacles that explicitly commemorate their communities' industrial pasts and alternately celebrate or challenge France's supposedly postindustrial future. Industrial economy and creative economy come together in the bodies, spaces, and aesthetics of my case studies. The work of these companies is thus both economic and historiographic.

The first chapter offers a revisionist history of contemporary French street theatre and demonstrates how the phenomenon is inextricably linked to shifts in the nature of work and labor. In Chapter 2 I reveal the contradictions undergirding the creative city model by examining how the workers of La Machine must simultaneously embody the roles of creative professionals (Nantes' future) and heavy industrial laborers (Nantes' past). In Chapter 3 I explain how creative economic policies shape the relationship between artistic and industrial production in non-urban areas and explain how local workers and their histories are re-incorporated into a scenario of development. In my final case study I argue that KomplexKapharnaum's production process -- involving ethnographic and archival work in the community -- and its aesthetic -- based on ironic engagement -- create a parallel urban project and an alternate model of redevelopment.

**DiSalvo, Gina**

**The Unexpected Saints: Hagiography and Early Modern Theatre**

This project examines the English saint play, a form of drama that has been traditionally identified as religious, Catholic, and medieval. I argue, instead, that the saint play is an innovation of the secular, Protestant, and early modern stage. I offer a new history of the early English theatrical depiction of saints that includes a range of performance practices, investigate early modern saint plays as an intertheatrical repertory, and define the differences between theatrical performance and religious practice. This project begins by establishing that the theatrical representation of saints in the Middle Ages ranged from folk drama to fully dramatized versions of saints' lives. More often than not, medieval theatrical events consisted of play with saints rather than producing plays of saints. In

contrast to medieval practices, early modern drama produced nine plays between 1592 and 1641 that attest to a recognizable dramatic genre. My examination of the early modern saint play concentrates especially on four Jacobean virgin martyr plays produced at the Red Bull Theatre: *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605) by Thomas Heywood, *A Shoemaker, A Gentleman* (c.1618) by William Rowley, *The Virgin Martyr* (1620) by Thomas Dekker and Philip Massinger, and the anonymous *Two Noble Ladies*, and the *Converted Conjuror* (c.1619-22). These plays created saints through a series of embodied tropes -- angelic apparitions to musical accompaniment, the presence of books as apotropaic devices, the smiting of devils, and the miraculous validation of virginity -- that I term the repertoire of sanctity. Through analysis of the plays, historical records, devotional literature, and hagiography, I demonstrate that the saint play was initially founded upon an affirmation of the Protestant Reformation, as exemplified by the sanctification of Elizabeth I in Thomas Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605). However, as the genre developed, dramatic conventions of sanctity became divorced from both Protestant and Catholic religious cultures. This project on the unexpected spectacles of saint plays in the time of Shakespeare intervenes in the study of religion and early modern drama in order to reveal the differences between theatre that produces make-believe and cultural practices that performatively enact religion.

2013

**Armstrong, Sara**

**Teaching Rhythm: Learning the Body**

This dissertation examines three training programs—Eurhythmics, the Suzuki Method, and Jump Rhythm Technique—that in various ways place students' bodies in relationship to rhythm in order to develop their abilities as performers. Using data drawn from ethnographic fieldwork, semi-structured interviews with instructors and students, and published descriptions of these pedagogies, this project considers the ways that conceptual and experiential models of the body that circulate in these training programs are related to the ways that rhythm is operationalized as a content area of instruction. I argue that, rather than existing as phenomenological or ontological given that is constant across time or culture, rhythm is a concept that is intimately connected to the sociohistorical circumstances in which it is deployed. Rhythm is definitionally related to the body, I suggest, and as attitudes and understandings about what the body can and should do change, what rhythm is understood to be and how one is expected to relate to it change as well.

This investigation offers useful analytical tools for clarifying a concept/skill (rhythm) that is privileged in the arenas of performance training and artistic production but which often traffics unexamined. It also offers a model of how one might rigorously engage with performance training. This model counters the prevailing scholarly impulse to record and disseminate the instructional methods of well-known pedagogues in the performing arts without examining the theoretical infrastructure of their approaches or the effect their practices have on students. The way in which this study critically encounters the activities of the performance studio honors the very real impact student backgrounds have on the experience of teaching and learning, recognizing the way that past training, racial identity, and peer relationships influence educational outcomes.

**Carnwath, John**

**The Institutional Development of Municipal Theatres in Germany, 1815 – 1933**

This dissertation examines the development of Germany's municipal theatres from an institutional perspective, focusing on the ways in which formal and informal agreements such as laws, contracts, and social conventions formed the institutional framework that characterizes this type of theatre. Since local government support is a defining feature of municipal theatres, the question why German cities started subsidizing theatres in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries receives close attention throughout this study.

The introductory chapter reviews theoretical arguments for and against public arts subsidies and develops a rigorous typology of theatres in nineteenth and early-twentieth century Germany. Chapter 2 traces the development of the theatre industry in Germany between 1875 and 1929 based on the annual publications of the German Stage Workers' Union (Genossenschaft deutscher Bühnen-Angehöriger). Statistical analysis of the relationship between the emergence of publicly subsidized theatres and variables such as

population size, employment, religion, and geographic location informs the selection of a diverse set of case studies.

The case studies are presented in paired comparisons in chapters 3, 4, and 5. Chapter 3 examines two major commercial centers, Hamburg and Frankfurt a.M.; chapter 4 focuses on two industrial cities, Krefeld and Chemnitz; and chapter 5 compares two smaller municipalities, Bautzen and Passau. Each chapter begins with an overview of the cities' respective theatre histories, which is followed by detailed analyses of the debates that took place at key turning points in the institutional development of the municipal theatres. To close, each chapter highlights factors that significantly shaped the developments in each case.

The final chapter concludes that subsidized municipal theatres were not introduced as part of a cohesive cultural policy; rather, municipal governments granted support for theatres in response to specific, local predicaments. Funding decisions were often reached as short-term solutions to immediate concerns, with little thought given to theoretical justifications or long-term consequences. Organizational deficiencies in joint-stock theatre companies, the growing influence of labor unions, heightened nationalism and the controlled economy during World War One, and the political rise of the working class all significantly contributed to the institutional development of municipal theatres.

### **Kirk, Keith Byron**

#### **Eulogy as Social Movement Narrative: Performing Commemorative Discourse in African American Civil Rights Funerals**

In this dissertation I show how African Americans come to understand themselves as beneficiaries of the legacies provided by the deceased. The legacies referenced are the result of symbolic loss and were delivered in narrative form through the performance of eulogy and funeral oration. Engaging the complexities of two similarly located narrative types I demonstrate each as specifically constructed narratives that shift contexts of known civil rights action, reorder the moments of African American experience, and historicize the lives of the deceased through socially charged performance. Beginning with the funeral of Emmett Till I will show how commemoration combines with recruitment and mobilization efforts and how each was for a time placed in the service of positive movement outcomes. As the affects of continued symbolic loss and direct action moved through to the funeral of Medgar Evers, a shift to biography as tool in the eulogy of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King reflected similar shifts in movement efforts. Finally, with the funerals of Rosa Parks and Coretta Scott King, problematic attempts to reengage earlier movement successes were reflected in the eulogy conveyed by Rev. Joseph Lowery as politically charged folkloric narrative.

Each instance of eulogy was accomplished by enacting multiple genres. Martin Luther King sought to construct legacy for both self and movement through his performance of self-eulogy while commemorative discourses performed in remembrance of Rosa Parks were folkloric in nature resulting in a dual narrative of both a performed and lived Rosa. The eulogies I consider in this document are located within the funeral services of civil rights icons recognized as vital to the survival of a social movement that grew during a

tumultuous period stretching from the August 1955 funeral service of Emmett Louis Till to the April 1968 funeral of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and, further, to include a period of attempted reengagement as epilogue that ended with the February 2006 funeral of Coretta Scott King.

2012

**Bhasin, Christine**

**Nuns on Stage in Counter-Reformation Venice (1570-1750)**

This dissertation examines the theatrical performances of cloistered women in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Venetian convents. It traces how the convent's dramatic tradition complemented and/or diverged from other religious and popular dramatic traditions at the time, and it challenges received histories that still overlook women's participation in early modern theatrical production. My discovery that nuns in one out of every two Venetian convents performed publicly, before audiences of men and women, religious and lay, significantly revises current understandings of class and gender relations as well as theatre conventions of the early modern period. By reading across a variety of sources including church and state archival records, printed plays and dedications, and popular literary and journalistic publications, this dissertation first substantiates the nuns' performance tradition from the angles of production and reception. It reconstructs the world of convent theatre from dramaturgical details gleaned from close analysis of local anti-theatrical measures and their subsequent violations, the logistics and gendered symbolism of a convent parlor *mise-en-scene*, the relationship between convents and the Venetian press, and printed plays bound for the Venetian cloister. In particular, this study investigates the nuns' intersection with professional playwrights Luigi Groto, Paolino Fiamma Crocifero, Iacomo Donati, Fabio Glissentini, Francesco Pona and Giacinto Andrea Cicognini, proving there to have been indelible links between the city's sacred and secular theatrical realms. It also tracks evidence of musical crossover through the influences of Venice's burgeoning operatic empire and the ospedale's oratorio tradition upon convent theatrics. Finally, this dissertation explores the figure of the Venetian nun-as-actress through the writings of Venetian nun Arcangela Tarabotti and playwright Carlo Goldoni, both of whom address the highly produced religious ceremonies during which the city witnessed the nun's performative transformation into a role she would play for the rest of her life. In short, this study argues that the life of a Venetian nun was far from truly cloistered and her theatrical and ceremonial offerings were entertainment products on the open Venetian market, making her representative of a new breed of early modern actor.

**Forsgren, La Donna**

**In Search of Our Warrior Mothers: Black Female Subjectivity in the Dramas of Martie Evans-Charles, Sonia Sanchez, and Barbara Ann Teer**

This dissertation consists of three case studies that examine black female subjectivity as represented by leading female dramatists of the Black Arts Movement (1965–1976): Martie Evans-Charles, Sonia Sanchez, and Barbara Ann Teer. The Black Arts Movement endorsed a black aesthetic as an artistic tool used to not only valorize black culture, but also incite political activism against racist social practices and governmental policies in the United States and abroad. In doing so, the Black Arts Movement altered the critical reception of black history and culture within academic discourse. The aim of this study is to recuperate dramas written by black women playwrights of the Black Arts Movement,

many of which still remain unpublished.

This study situates the rise of black feminist drama as a development within the Black Arts Movement, not a sharp break from it. By analyzing the ways in which Evans-Charles, Sanchez, and Teer's dramas express "feminist attitudes," I revise our current understanding of the growth of black feminist drama in the United States. I maintain that the plays written by Evans-Charles, Sanchez, and Teer laid the groundwork for a wave of black feminist drama frequently attributed to the 1976 premiere of Ntozake Shange's *For colored girls who have considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*.

I have selected the dramas of Evans-Charles, Sanchez and Teer because their work indicates incredible artistic skill, an attribute that garnered for them critical acclaim and mention during the 1960s and 1970s. Drawing on archival research, as well as my experience interviewing Sanchez, the family members of Evans-Charles and Teer, and Black Arts Movement artists, I argue that despite operating within a masculinist context that equated the collective well being of black people with black male agency, Evans-Charles, Sanchez, and Teer centered their dramas around black women, validated female aspirations for autonomy, and explored women's roles in the struggle for liberation from white hegemony.

**Zien, Katie**

**Claiming the Canal: Performances of Race and Nation in Panama, 1904-1999**

This dissertation analyzes constructions of identity and community in Panama and the Canal Zone throughout the twentieth century, with emphasis on three phenomena: U.S. imperialism, transnational African diasporic networks in the Americas, and anticolonial nationalism in Latin America. Chapter One examines the formation of the Panama Canal Zone in the early twentieth century, describing intersections of international and local forces in the Canal Zone, which shaped the identities of the Zone's civilian and military populations. In Chapter Two, I document attempts by West Indian Panamanian community leaders to promote the integration of West Indian-descended groups in Panama through the use of performance practices. I focus on the concert promotion company of West Indian Panamanian impresario George Westerman, which promoted a transnational sensibility of black cosmopolitanism by engaging African American performing artists on tours to Panama.

The third chapter analyzes formations of racial and national identity as well as class, gender, and sexuality in Panama's most significant work of theatre, *La cucarachita mandinga* (*The Little Mandinga Cockroach*). This comic operetta has been mounted numerous times between its premiere in 1937 and the most recent production in 2006. Over decades, Panamanian governing bodies have adapted the play's textual and performance elements to disseminate anticolonial and nationalist polemics. I trouble conventional readings of the play by addressing the nuances of its protagonist, who is represented simultaneously as an Afro-descendant female, a repugnant cockroach, and the Panamanian nation-state. Finally, my fourth chapter analyzes two ceremonies that commemorated the Panama Canal's transfer to Panamanian sovereignty in 1999. Discussing production components and processes, I examine trans/national discourses

and relationships among spatial materiality, memory, and symbolism in the two performances' distinct constructions of that which I term 'critical utopia.' Linking all four chapters are themes of national identity, race, spatial configurations, and performance practices. Through these case studies I seek to situate Panama and the Canal as important sites for analyzing the cultural, social, economic, and political implications of transnational flows of people, goods, political ideologies, and cultural influences in the Americas.

2011

**Curtin, Adrian**

**Staging Sonic Modernity: Sounding Out the Modernist Theatrical Avant-Garde**

This dissertation provides a sonic history of the modernist theatrical avant-garde (experimental theatre artists of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries), examining how avant-garde artists incorporated aspects of sonic modernity into their work. Sonic modernity describes the manifold ways in which modernity was constituted by sonic phenomena, including changes in acoustic conditions, the proliferation of new sounds, modern conceptions of sound and hearing, alterations in modes of listening, technological innovation, the invention of new media, and new forms of communication. I show how avant-garde artists associated with symbolism, realism, expressionism, futurism, dadaism, and surrealism dramatized and staged particular aspects of sonic modernity: namely, acoustic interiority (an experience of subjectivity conducted primarily through auditory means); sonic technologies (such as the telephone and the phonograph); linguistic experimentation (e.g., modern attempts to create a practical, artificial language); and sonic affectivity (the use of sound to affect physiological, emotional, and psychological constitutions). I investigate the manner in which avant-garde theatre artists engaged the conceptual and communicative possibilities as well as the experiential realities of sonic modernity: in other words, how they dramatized and staged new sounds, ways of hearing, and modes of expression.

This study combines analyses of dramatic texts, historical productions, musical scores, sound recordings, works of visual art, and aesthetic treatises so as to locate resonances between social phenomena (indices of sonic modernity) and cultural expressions (indices of sonic modernism) and to consider these as interacting and mutually constitutive enterprises. Consequently, it provides a praxis-based account of theatrical modernism that interrelates the work of theatre artists with that of social theorists and commentators, composers, visual artists, novelists, and linguists, connecting artists of different nationalities and aesthetic affiliations in order to outline a previously unknown history of sonic experimentation. Furthermore, it reveals avant-gardists to have been more than just social agitators and provocateurs but to have provided oblique cultural refashioning and social commentary. This dissertation demonstrates that theatre sounds matter, even, or especially, if the acoustic phenomena in question are strange, little understood, or seemingly lost to history.

**Hedman, Nathan**

**"Theaterlogik": Public Thinking as Theater in Lessing's Philosophical Dramaturgy**

A significant trend in postmodern philosophy is the use of the theater as a tool for thought. This development is particularly striking when one considers that for a large part of Western philosophy the theater represented precisely what it strove against: the "ephemeral," the "artificial," the "deceptive," the "sensuous," the "irrational," in a word, the "false." So, why this philosophical change of heart in regard to the theater? I propose that in decisive ways the emergence of this postmodern "thinking through the theater" took root in the soil of the eighteenth-century German Enlightenment---before Nietzsche

and Kierkegaard, the Idealists, the Romantics, even before Kant---in the arid plains of German rationalism. Specifically, I argue that Gotthold Lessing, the famous playwright, dramaturg, and critic, is central to this emergence of theater in philosophical debate, not despite his rationalism, but because of it. Lessing's playful, ironic style was criticized by one of his interlocutors as so much "Theaterlogik." By elucidating the crucial elements of this "Theaterlogik" I demonstrate how the theater subtly infiltrated philosophy from the margins as fulfillment, provocation, or change of subject, to conventional structures of logic. Those theatrical elements are: theater as event (Chapter 1), theater as public (Chapter 2), theater as mimesis (Chapter 3), and theater as performance (Chapter 4). When pairing any of these with "logic" the antagonism with the theater is acute. Are not the laws of logic universal, impersonal, foundational, and intellectual? Lessing's thinking through the theater demonstrates that logic might be more complicated than that, proffering a Theaterlogik in its place that significantly anticipates postmodern philosophy at the heart of the Enlightenment. The conclusion is that the essential continuity between the Enlightenment and postmodern philosophy demonstrates a shared concern in delinking language, epistemology, aesthetics, and history from inherited theological categories. In this way, Lessing's "thinking through the theater" paves the way for the purely immanent thinking we have come to associate with postmodernism.

**Sahakian, Emily**

**French Caribbean Women's Theatre: Trauma, Slavery, and Transcultural Performance**

With a focus on cultural memory, this dissertation investigates French Caribbean women's plays and their performance at Ubu Repertory Theater, a pioneering French-American theatre in New York. After a theoretical introduction and a historical chapter investigating slavery and its remembrance in the Francophone Caribbean, each chapter is divided into two sections, the first examining the play, and the second its production at Ubu. I rely on theories of collective memory and cultural trauma to read Ina Césaire's *Fire's Daughters*, Maryse Condé's *The Tropical Breeze Hotel*, and Gerty Dambury's *Crosscurrents* as plays that dramatize a link between the past (the Middle Passage, slavery, and sexual relations between enslaved women and white men) and present-day behaviors, attitudes, and pain. I argue that these plays work to revise problematic practices of remembrance in France and the Antilles. These practices dissociate slavery from its local context; make the trauma of enslaved women's rape a secret; divide Antilleans of different races, ethnicities, genders, and social classes; and associate resistance almost exclusively with Haiti. In a second section of each chapter, I examine the production and reception of these plays at Ubu. Through dance, song, casting choices, publicity, and onstage relationships, Ubu artists constructed a transcultural narrative of trauma with which American spectators were meant to identify. Creating transcultural trauma, however, involved conflicts and misrecognitions, and Ubu's process also conjured the interracial tensions of the New York theatre scene. While performing trauma transculturally can bring people together across cultural, linguistic, and national boundaries, it can also generate misunderstanding and divisions.

**Shaw, Rashida**

**Theatrical Events and African American Audiences: A Study of Contemporary "Chitlin Circuit" Theatre**

This dissertation captures the dynamics of black theatrical spectatorship at length through a sustained examination of multiple contemporary "Chitlin Circuit" productions, written, directed, and produced by African American practitioners David Talbert, Je'Caryous Johnson and Gary Guidry, and Tyler Perry, respectively, that reveals the ways in which their theatre-making operates in relation to their attending black audiences.

Contemporary "Chitlin Circuit" Theatre is a unique subset of African American musicals that melds religion, comedy, African American vernacular materials and the popular musical forms of Gospel and R&B music into contemporary narratives about urban African American life. Using a series of snapshots from each playwright's oeuvre, I analyze the ways in which differing methods of contemporary "Chitlin Circuit" theatre-making strategically aim and subsequently achieve black spectatorial engagement. Through interdisciplinary methods of research that span across theatre, performance studies, sociology, film and dance studies, I develop an audience-centered research approach that evaluates theatrical audiences through primarily qualitative and embodied forms of research. I demonstrate that the making, doing, and viewing of Contemporary "Chitlin Circuit" Theatre is an interactive and evolving process in which African American practitioners and spectators collaboratively engage in the production of black theatre. In all cases, I uncover how black audiences act as co-producers who position themselves as critical spectators who reject, sanction, and/or confirm on stage content based on how well the material mirrors their individual experiences outside of the theater. Ultimately, through an examination of the plays, the practitioners, and the spectators of Contemporary "Chitlin Circuit" Theatre, this dissertation brings black spectators, who are seldom acknowledged within the field, to the forefront of an American theatre reception study and, in so doing, underscores the necessity of considering the implications of race within examinations of theatrical events.

2010

**Hatton, Oona**

**Taking on History: Children's Perspectives on Performing the American Past**

This dissertation explores how children (ages five-twelve) engage with the past through performance. Three case studies treating nineteenth-century western US history yield information about a spectrum of performance activities ranging from living history to community theatre to doll play. Reflecting on Richard Schechner's concept of "restored behavior," Paul Connerton's description of how culture is "sedimented" in the body through performance, Joseph Roach's notion of reenactment as a marriage of memory and imagination, and Joni B. Jones argument that embodied behavior is a way of knowing, I demonstrate how children's perspectives and experiences at the Sutter's Fort Environmental Living Program; in the Ramona Outdoor Play; and with the American Girl doll Josefina Montoya support, challenge, and revise such theories regarding how and why we perform the past.

In order to reframe these significant but "adultcentric" notions of performance, I utilize child-focused ethnographic methods that enable me to immerse myself in children's cultures. Working and playing alongside my young informants, I discover how children's perspectives differ from those of parents, teachers, and other adult supervisors. Reflecting on issues such as historical accuracy, the conception of heritage, the performance of race, and the pedagogical value of enactment, I argue that while young performers may develop a relationship to the history they perform, the features of that relationship are frequently determined by individual interests and interpretation, and not the agendas (benevolent or otherwise) of adult producers.

This project contributes to how we conceive of the mechanics and significance of performance by incorporating accounts of children's experiences into research on public explorations of the past. I argue that performance facilitates the opportunity for children to create their own contexts for historical material, reiterating, contradicting, or re-framing the narratives they are offered. In addition, my findings demonstrate how child-centered methods can offer new perspectives on previously examined social phenomenon, including but not limited to acts of performance.

**Njus, Jesse**

**Performing the Passion: A Study on the Nature of Medieval Acting**

At the core of medieval theatre are the actors and their audiences. My dissertation describes and analyzes medieval acting as it might have been understood in its own time. I focus on performances of Christ's Passion not only because the Passion narrative permeates medieval devotional and theatrical performance alike but also because the life of Christ was the ultimate paradigm towards which other stories and lives inevitably groped. I argue that participating in Christ's life as a performer or audience member was always both a religious and theatrical experience. Medieval performance---both devotional and theatrical---encouraged audience participation, and medieval spectators

were highly engaged with the performances. The level of audience participation encouraged and enabled the socio-political critique of contemporaneous events through the restaging of sacred history. Devotional performance was not solely devotional, nor theatrical performance purely theatrical, and it is impossible to understand either without reference to the other. My answer to the primary question, "What did it mean to act in the Middle Ages?," relies on a religious practice known as *imitatio*, in which men and women reenacted the lives of saints and other holy figures. The practice of *imitatio* existed throughout Western Europe, and I believe that performances of vernacular Passion Plays owe a great deal to this religious form of mimesis.

Due to the lack of previous studies of this precise nature and to the wide swathe of material I needed to cover, I divided my dissertation into two halves. The first half analyzes the elements I believe provide the necessary background for an understanding of medieval vernacular performance, including Saint Francis of Assisi, the female solo-performer Elisabeth of Spalbeek (c.1246/7-1304), and Englishwoman Margery Kempe. In the second half, Chapter Four focuses on medieval theatrical audiences for Passion Plays and on the plays themselves, while Chapter Five evaluates the actors and stagecraft of the theatrical Passions and their connection to devotional performance. The final chapter glances at the post-medieval period with two early modern case studies: the devotional performer Maria Maddalena de Pazzi (1566-1607) and two of Shakespeare's history plays, 3 Henry VI and Richard II.

**O'Connell, Samuel**

### **Hybrid Works: Performers and Audiences in Popular Music**

In this dissertation, I argue that popular music consists of hybrid works and texts that exist across music, media, and performance. In so doing, I demonstrate how an interdisciplinary approach can help us investigate the variety of encounters between performers, audiences, recordings, and performances as they occur across media and within specific cultural and historical contexts. Working between disciplines, I draw on scholarship in theatre and performance studies, media studies, cultural studies, and popular musicology in order to develop an interdisciplinary conceptual model for understanding the relationship between recordings and performances as cultural texts and the ways in which performers and audiences interact with one another through their specific encounters with these texts. I argue that a hybrid work model for popular music can help us understand the relationship between our cultural texts and our historical, social, and cultural contexts. As a result, I focus this dissertation around specific case studies that help us address critical inquiries into such important and unresolved issues for popular music's hybrid characteristics including: authenticity, liveness, musical personae, and genre.

I base my articulation of this interdisciplinary approach to popular music on the close analysis of selected twenty-first-century case studies. By focusing on interrelated twenty-first century works, texts, and contexts, I may more completely accomplish both my aims of developing a conceptual model that may account for popular music's hybrid characteristics while also demonstrating popular music's relationships with its historical contexts. First, I analyze hybrid works Neil Young and Green Day chart the discourse of

authenticity surrounding their textual variations across albums, concert performances, and theatrical adaptations. Then, I look at broadcast benefit concerts after 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina in order to investigate the relationship between a specific text and its context while also demonstrating that popular music's texts are hybrid themselves. Finally, I analyze the discursive space between separate works in order to explain the genre shift and changing performance personae of the Dixie Chicks since 2002 as a result of audience feedback based on conflicting horizons of expectation, genre rules, and musical personae. Ultimately, through these case studies, I argue that we cannot understand popular music solely through the study of either recordings or performances; instead, we need an interdisciplinary understanding of the intersections between the production and consumption of both recordings and performances as understood by performers and audiences.

**Sherman, Jonathan**  
**Spaces of Play: A Phenomenology of Stage Presence**

In this dissertation I propose a methodology for describing the phenomenon of stage presence by drawing on my theatre training with Jacques Lecoq and on the philosophy of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. I begin from their shared commitment to ambiguity and their understanding of space as an embodied and imaginative relationship that orients us to a system of possible actions. I contend that stage presence involves a loss of certainty regarding the center of these systems, that it is a shared relationship of disorientation between performers and audience members. It is thus neither a possession nor a quality of an individual but a kind of relationship between active agents. Their experience of disorientation occurs in arrangements of privilege and power that I examine by extending experiments in cognitive science to consider how attention is allotted in different varieties of theatrical performance. By figuring attention as a resource and tool of performance, I outline the construction of its politics, its economies, and its ethics, all of which are implicated by the hierarchies associated with stage presence. In particular, I use a phenomenology of space to establish that an ethics underlying stage presence depends on our sense of being oriented to one another. Through performance analyses I posit that these responsibilities are obscured in the centripetal space of charismatic and virtuosic performers while the centrifugal space involved in stage presence foregrounds them.

This work intervenes in the study of performance by emphasizing the shared perceptual relationship between performers and attendants instead of assigning agency to one or the other in older models of the "disciplining gaze." I draw focus from the politics of presence to its ethics, the shifting codes of responsibility negotiated in our attending to each other, and I provide one of the first extrapolations of Merleau-Ponty's ethics into the realm of performance. My work also inaugurates the first extended analysis of space in Lecoq's pedagogy and addresses an absence currently distorting the legacy of this influential pedagogue.

**Smith, Daniel**  
**Libertine Dramaturgy: Reading Obscene Closet Drama in Eighteenth-Century France**

The eighteenth century in France saw increases in the number of public theatres for a variety of tastes and in the popularity of private theatricals. At the same time, the libertine novel became established as a genre that offered explicit depictions of sexuality and often incorporated theatrical elements, including framing sex acts as performance. My dissertation interrogates how libertinage and theatre overlap by examining a corpus of obscene comedies anthologized as *Theatre gaillard*. These plays mix conventions drawn from neoclassical and popular theatre with the content and language of libertine literature, thus occupying a paradoxical position between reading and performance. The 1782 *Theatre gaillard* includes nine plays: two brothel plays (*Le Bordel* and *L'Appareilleuse*); two plays that had previously circulated with libertine poetry (*La Comtesse d'Olonne* and *Le Luxurieux*); four mock tragedies that develop a carnivalesque relationship to classicism (*Alphonse L'impuissant*, *Le Temperament*, *La Nouvelle Messaline*, and *Vasta, reine de Bordelie*); and one libertine convent play that mobilizes both female and male same-sex practices with particular reference to popular erotic novels (*Les Plaisirs du cloître*). I contend that readers of these plays engaged with them on multiple levels ranging from private reading for sexual stimulation to critical interpretation leading to discussions of social, political, and aesthetic concerns in the public sphere. This analysis extends to the eight engravings, which employ erotic and ironic strategies simultaneously.

Because of their uncertain production history and their ambivalence toward theatrical conventions, the *Theatre gaillard* plays present an ideal site for reevaluating relationships between text and performance and articulating the tensions between private and public aspects of reading practices. This study recuperates readers of plays in theatre history and expands dramatic literature's contribution to the history of sexuality, with particular reference to prostitution and same-sex practices. I combine textual analysis and book history to argue that the sexual transgressions depicted in obscene plays might not only cause arousal, but also develop humorous social commentary on gender roles, aesthetic commentary on the value of theatre and classicism, and political commentary on the monarchy and aristocracy.