

the catchall term for women exhibiting unconventional, excessive, or unwomanly behaviors. She emphasizes cultural assumptions that hysteria was a feminine disease with distinctly theatrical symptomatology and details how this popular and specifically gendered construction of madness was exploited in several of Terry's stage roles, including Ophelia, Lady Macbeth, and Lucy Ashton in *Ravenswood* (after Walter Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor*). Particularly interesting is Conti's suggestion of how Victorians' fears about the "unsexed" "New Woman" of the late nineteenth-century culture influenced Terry's popular performances and also foreshadowed the advent of Henrik Ibsen's female characters, who were soon to start appearing onstage. The chapter on male madness is based on discussion of Irving's famous portrayals of Hamlet, Lear, and Mathias from Leopold David Lewis's melodrama *The Bells*. Unlike the more broad and ambiguous notion of "female hysteria" evoked by Terry's performances, Conti argues that the illness roles of Irving illustrate different and distinct medical disorders.

Although the roles and performances Conti addresses are all relatively well known, and have been dealt with by previous theatre historians, Conti's recontextualization of the performances in the detailed medical and scientific reality of the time makes them newly interesting, and worth a second look.

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Playable Bodies: Dance Games and Intimate Media

By Kiri Miller. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017; pp. xii + 237, 38 illustrations. \$115 cloth, \$31.95 paper, \$21.99 e-book.

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As humans become increasingly entangled with machines in the twenty-first century, the gaming industry has stepped into the field of arts education. Having explored in an earlier book, *Playing Along*, how digital games are shaping the consumption and production of music, Kiri Miller turns in her newest book to dance. Miller's *Playable Bodies* explores how digital dance games have changed the way we make, learn, and conceptualize dance. The book is a must-read for scholars of performance and media not only because it so elegantly theorizes how new media technologies mediate performance, but because it sheds light on an area of digital arts production that performance scholars frequently overlook: video games. More than simply dancing machines, these video games, Miller argues, are "intimate media" that reconfigure "relationships among humans, interfaces, musical and dance repertoires, and social media platforms" (3).

The book's focus appears narrow at first glance insofar as it concentrates on two digital dance game franchises, *Just Dance* and *Dance Central*. However, because of

the differences between these franchises and Miller's multifaceted analysis of them, the case studies prompt rich close readings, wide-ranging arguments, and a sophisticated methodology. *Just Dance* is played via the Nintendo Wii, whose handheld motion sensor tracks the location only of the player's hand, whereas *Dance Central* is played using an Xbox Kinect sensor, which tracks the player's full-body movement. The differences in motion-sensing technology lead not only to different design and marketing strategies but also to the promotion of different kinds of dance style and even attitudes toward dance. Whereas *Just Dance* invites players to lose their inhibitions and dance for pure pleasure, *Dance Central* promotes the practice and joy associated with mastery. As such, each game franchise configures quite distinctly the relationship players have with their avatars onscreen and with other players who either dance alongside them or watch their dance performances. Miller's approach to these digital dance games is capacious, covering the experiences of game players and game makers, including the people who produce and market the games and the choreographers who create the dance routines players are asked to mimic. Her data are drawn from an impressively wide range of sources: participant observation, interviews, surveys, and analysis of web materials of all sorts, including especially such social media as player-produced videos and online commentary on these videos.

Scholars of performance will glean much from reading the book in its entirety, though readers with particular investments will be rewarded by closer investigation of individual chapters. Media and performance scholars will want to read Chapter 1 especially closely. It examines how dance games use surveillance technologies to offer players, in effect, private dance lessons, since they can learn to dance without being watched by other humans. At the same time, the chapter considers what it means that these are social games, designed to be played with a group and/or as part of social media practices in which players share their shameful or successful performances with a wider community. The chapter brilliantly rethinks "existing theories of spectatorship in order to account for media technologies that look back at their users" (33).

Readers interested in embodied difference and performance will be drawn especially to Chapter 2, which contextualizes dance games in relation to blackface minstrelsy and drag shows. While mindful of how dance games invite players to mimic racially marked and gendered performers and performance styles onscreen, Miller emphasizes the extent to which the games also can destabilize essentialist ideas about race and gender. Whereas Chapters 4 and 5 delve more deeply into how dance games remediate race, Chapter 2 examines player reviews of *Dance Central* and YouTube videos created by players to argue that the game "stages gender as choreography" (78). Gender is "cultivated through performative repetition" (88) but "players can choose which repertoires to repeat" (89).

Musicologists and scholars of music and performance will be especially interested in Chapter 3's discussion of multisensory listening in dance games, whereas scholars of dance and movement will want to read closely Chapter 4, which focuses on how video games teach people to dance by adapting the methods of studio dance pedagogy. Miller's focus on digital games opens up a novel way to think about dance technique, which, she submits, "materializes the dancer's body as an interface. . . between the player's intention and the choreography she is learning"

(118). One key way digital games teach dancing is by limiting the feedback they provide to players in a way that is very different from a traditional dance studio, where players have mirrors. Since players must learn the choreography of a dance in real time and in one play-through (without pausing to master particular moves before proceeding on to learn others), dance games develop different solutions for dealing with the “kinesthetic lag” (120) that players perform experience as they try to imitate the choreography of the screen body in real time.

The book’s focus on commercial games leaves Miller navigating a tricky line. She does not want to dismiss the games as mere market-driven initiatives that give players the false sense that they are learning to dance when, in fact, they are led to “experience surveillance as intimate recognition and commodity consumption as a creative practice” (29). She is interested in how the games can change the way players feel about their bodies and how they engage with other commodities they encounter beyond the dance floor. But the book does not, ultimately, explore substantively these broader applications. Although a single book cannot do everything, the reader does wonder whether this one is limited by its focus on commercial games. Independent game designers, academics, and performers have been experimenting with motion-capture technology for quite some time, with many experiments around dance in particular. Some comparison of the commercial dance games with these other sorts of project, even if only brief or passing, might have helped Miller make the kinds of broadscale argument to which she hints in the introduction and final chapter. Nevertheless, this is an important book for anyone wanting to think about media and performance in the digital age, and its findings will remain relevant even as the gaming platforms on which it focuses become obsolete.

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Historians on *Hamilton*: How a Blockbuster Musical Is Restaging America’s Past

Edited by Renee C. Romano and Claire Bond Potter. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2018; pp. 396, 31 illustrations. \$120 cloth, \$27.95 paperback, \$24.95 e-book.

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Hamilton was the first blockbuster theatre hit of the twenty-first century. In 2020 the mania has largely passed, but references are still prevalent: former National Security Advisor John Bolton titled his new memoir *The Room Where It Happened*, on the assumption that everyone gets the allusion. Creator Lin-Manuel Miranda has announced a movie in the works that includes the original